

ESP Classroom Interaction : Contextual Factors and Teaching Facts

التفاعل الصفّي في قسم اللغة الانجليزية المختصة : العوامل المصاحبة لواقع التعليم

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Abstract:

Interaction as skill is not only an effective element in the enhancement of the learners' communicative skills, but it also helps the teaching and learning process run smoothly. Interaction as a classroom activity is becoming more and more useful in English learning. Indeed, language learning is the outcome of the process where learners interact with each other and their teacher and expose different language forms. With regard to current study, more focus will be on the interaction process in ESP classroom which would differ partially or totally from interaction in General English class. To achieve such aim, the study is going to investigate the issue of interaction from different perspectives such as the teacher, the student, the text book and the learning environment and evaluate how all these elements together would overlap in the process of ESP classroom interaction. As being the core element in the shaping of ESP course, more talk will be devoted to the importance of the students' needs identification (Needs Analysis) since learners generally show more interaction and are highly motivated to topics that revolve around their field of study.

Keywords: Classroom Interaction, Communicative Skills, ESP Classroom, General English, Textbook

الملخص :

التفاعل كمهارة ليست مجرد عنصر فعال في تعزيز مهارات التواصل لدى المتعلمين، لكنه يساعد أيضًا في تشغيل عملية التدريس والتعلم بسلاسة وكذا أصبح التفاعل كنشاط في الفصل الدراسي مفيدًا أكثر فأكثر في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية. في الواقع، تعلم اللغة هو نتيجة العملية التي يتفاعل فيها المتعلمون مع بعضهم البعض ومع معلمهم ويكشفون أشكال لغوية مختلفة. فيما يتعلق بالدراسة الحالية، سيتم التركيز بشكل أكبر على عملية التفاعل أثناء حصة لغة الإنجليزية المتخصصة والتي قد تختلف جزئيًا أو كليًا عن التفاعل في فصل اللغة الإنجليزية العامة. تحقيق هذا الهدف، ستبحث الدراسة في مسألة التفاعل من وجهات نظر مختلفة للمعلم والطالب والكتاب النصي وبيئة التعلم نفسه ثم تقييم كيفية تداخل كل هذه العناصر معًا في عملية التفاعل أثناء حصة لغة الإنجليزية المتخصصة. باعتبارها العنصر الأساسي في تصور درس لغة الإنجليزية المتخصصة، سيتم التركيز أكثر على أهمية تحديد احتياجات الطلاب نظرًا لأن المتعلمين يظهرون بشكل عام مزيدًا من التفاعل ولديهم دوافع عالية للموضوعات التي تدور حول مجال دراستهم.

الكلمات المفتاحية: ال تفاعل الصفي مهارات الاتصال الإنجليزية العامة قسم الإنجليزية المتخصصة الكتاب المدرسي.

1-Introduction

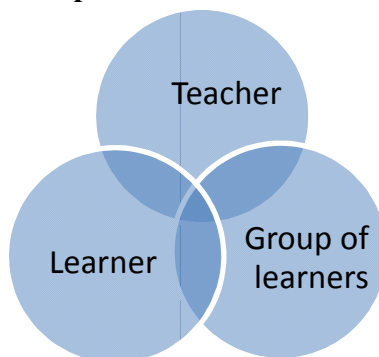
Both language teachers and students give importance to the issue of language interaction as much success of language learning is seen in the ability to use the language in meaningful interaction to others. Naturally, meaningful interaction involves the ability to understand the ability the other's speaking and also the ability to express one's opinions and ideas to others. The issue of interaction has received much of the experts' talk and interest in the field of EFL in general; yet few studies have been devoted to tackle the issue of interaction in ESP classroom. ESP which mainly concerns with the teaching of specific disciplines for students with specific needs may deserve more attention for the subject of interaction in such types of classroom. One skill that ESP teacher aims at developing in the learners is their ability to achieve meaningful communication in their field of study using English. However, in the core achieving a meaningful communication, there is the element of classroom interaction. With regard to ESP learning environment, many factors would interfere the process of classroom interaction such as the ESP teacher course presentation, the teaching materials' preparation, the student's motivation to the ESP course itself and some other contextual factors.

2- Classroom Interaction

2.1 What is Classroom Interaction?

Various definitions have been given to classroom interaction. Cazden (2000), for instance defined classroom interaction as the activity that allows learners to develop their critical thinking, share ideas and develop their speaking and listening skills. Rivers (1987, p.57) explains the Latin roots of the word : 'agere' meaning 'to do' and 'inter' meaning 'among'. It denotes the action done by the human being affects the other people through interaction. According to Ellis (1990) , interaction is defined in the second language learning context as the process in which learners can interact with each other and their teacher and expose different language forms after they are exposed to the target language .By relating interaction to communication , Brown (2001, 165) states , "...interaction is, in fact, the heart of communication: it is what communication is all about". Pinter (2006) sums up these definitions by saying that classroom interaction refers to any interaction that takes place between teachers and learners and between learners themselves. Classroom interaction is also defined as a two-way process between the teacher and the students and between the students themselves in the learning process whereas all these participants exercise a reciprocal influence on each other (see figure 1).

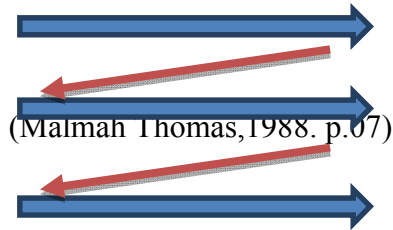
Figure 1 : Participants in the Classroom Interaction



Malmah Thomas (1987, p .Vii) admits that the importance of interaction in the learning process when she states that « *the classroom interaction serves an enabling function : its only purpose is to provide conditions for learning.* ».Malmah Thomas (1988, p.6) mentioned that interaction is more than action followed by a reaction .Indeed , it is about acting reciprocally and acting upon each other .She adds that the teacher having a sound lesson plan for action is

only the beginning since things get more complicated when the plan is put into action .What happens in reality is that the teacher’s plan of action evokes some sort of student reaction which would itself react an action evoking a reciprocal reaction in the teacher which would influence his subsequent action along the stages of the lesson and provokes a pattern of mutual influence and adjustment (see figure 2) .

Figure 2: Teacher and Class Reciprocal Action and Reaction



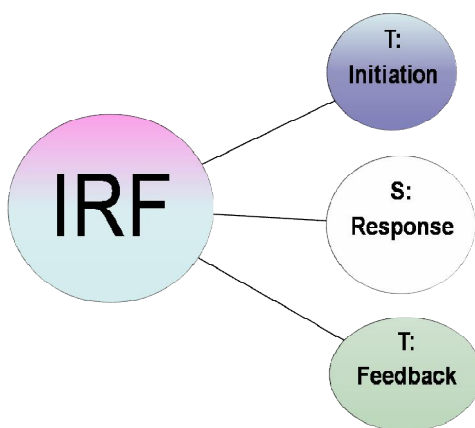
Malmah Thomas(1987 , p.08) asserts that interaction is a two way process situation that has the potential for co-operation and conflict .In simple words , where there is a conflict between the teacher and the learners , communication breaks down and where there is co-operation between both sides, an effective communication is established. Cazden (2000) provides a deep meaning to classroom interaction when he states that in the language classroom interaction pattern, the role of language extends beyond communication of mere information to the establishment and maintenance of relationships in the classroom. Beside the medium through which teachers teach, classroom interaction allows L2 learners to demonstrate what they have learnt (Johnson, 1995).Alexander (2000) defines classroom interaction as a complete sequence containing initiation , response and feedback (IRF).The three patterns will be discussed in the following section in detail.

2.2 IRF Interaction Pattern

The classroom interaction falls in a three part sequence exchange pattern between the teacher and the learner known as the IRF pattern. The IRF pattern consists of teacher’s initiation, learner’s response , and teacher’s feedback on the response including the assessment , correction and comment (Sinclaire and Coulthard, 1975).Silverman (1997) describes the conversational exchange in the classroom in the logic order of « *teacher : question ; pupil : answer ; teacher :evaluation* ». For Other scholars, such as Nassaji and Wells (2000) , the *F* stands for feed back or follow up. Mehan (1979) and Cazden (2001) used the term IRE instead where the last *E* refers to evaluate. In the IRF pattern, the initiation is often performed by the teacher and the student(s) is supposed to provide the response to the teacher’s elicitation (Cazden ,2001).The teacher again is supposed to provide feedback for the student(s) response in the last stage of the

IRF pattern . In the sequence of interaction , the teacher may provide feedback by using phrases like ‘ *Good* ’ , ‘ *That’s right* ’ or ‘ *No* ’ , ‘ *that’s not right* ’(Hall and Walch, 2002) .Being traditionally as the ‘*primary knower*’ allows the teacher to give feedback to the student’s response and convince the student that this was or not the response that the teacher was aiming for .However and as far the current study context is concerned , the ESP teacher is no longer the primary source of knowledge (see 2.1).Thus ,the evaluation of students’ response in the ESP classroom may need more talents and flexibility from the ESP teacher where the ELT focus has shifted from the teacher- centred approach to the learner –centred approach (Nababan1993).Hence, the IRF pattern is an approach that is more common in traditional classrooms where the teacher has control over the topic and pupils’ contribution in class (Ruby, 2008).Yet, the IRF pattern can sometimes be initiated by the student who can also have the follow up move (Sunderland 2001) ; a fact that allows the ESP teacher to cope with newly assumed role of the ESP learner in the context of the ESP classroom .Candella (1999) confirms that the students while undertaking the IRF initiation process can use different tactics to intervene with the teacher’s plans. Hence, the IRF interaction pattern allows for a constantly power teacher student initiation exchanging roles (Thornborrow 2002 ; Manke 1997). We shall discuss strategies for providing feedback along with designed interactive activities that would promote ESP learners interaction in the remaining section of this paper. Yet, the new assumed role by the learner in the ESP classroom stimulates our interest to discover what power potential the students exercise on the teacher in the IRF classroom interaction pattern.

Figure 3 : The IRF Pattern



2.3 Teacher –Student Power Relationship in the IRF Pattern

One advantage of the IRF interaction pattern is that it can examine the power of the student in classroom interaction as it can contribute to his or her talk (Sunderland 2001). Moreover, it enables the learners to take on roles as active participants in the interaction, a role that is not necessarily made in the teacher's plans in the different situations of the classroom interactional exchange. Hence, learners are no longer seen as passive learners ('vessels to be filled') who are expected to come up with the 'right' answer (Webster and Roe 1998; Webster et al. 1996). A fact that was clearly shown in Candela and Sunderland's studies claiming that students can take various roles in the IRF pattern and not just the ones previously assigned by the teacher. In this regard, Rampton (2002, p.500), for instance, pointed out that in the teacher-dominated German lessons, the students "*used a range of tactics... to assert themselves as individuals unwilling to submit unquestioningly to the current regime*". Accordingly, Lemke (1990) confirms that the number of the participants in the classroom are likely to shape the interaction in the classroom and change the IRF direction pattern from the planned stream to the unexpected or momentarily break of the classroom interaction. Indeed, the teacher cannot fully gear the students' interaction as being previously planned since according to Candela (1999, p.156), "*students can break away from the teacher's control even when the discursive structure has the IRE form*". Candela (Ibid.) argues that the teacher's plans can be broken by the students by "*denying the teacher's orientation, by refusing to participate, or by defending alternative versions of particular topics*" in their response.

3. Factors Influencing Classroom Interaction

Various factors are seen to influence the students' classroom interaction. These factors are related to the teacher, the student to the course content and the learning context as a whole. With regard to the classroom learning context, Klausmeier (1961) identified six main factors that might affect the teaching-learning processes: "*Learner characteristics, teacher characteristics, learner and teacher behaviours, group characteristics, physical characteristics of the behavioural setting, and outside forces.*" The behavioural setting refers to the affective, cognitive and psycho-motor activities performed by teachers and learners. Similarly, Gurney (2007) sums up in a range of key factors that may help establish a good learning interactive environment. This includes:

- ✓ *Teacher knowledge, enthusiasm and responsibility for learning;*
- ✓ *Classroom activities that encourage learning ;*
- ✓ *Assessment activities that encourage learning through experience ;*
- ✓ *Effective feedback that establishes the learning processes in the classroom ;*

- ✓ *Effective interaction between the teacher and the students, creating an environment that respects, and encourages and stimulates learning through experience.*

3.1 Teacher

It seems clear that the teacher plays a major role in the classroom interaction process and that important factors influencing his interaction with the students are teacher-centred. The teacher is supposed to create the teaching environment that would stimulate student's interest to interact and learn. Gurney (2007) states that beside the knowledge and enthusiasm to the subject, the teacher is responsible "*for creating a learning environment that will effectively nurture the student's desire to learn and to accept the challenges of thinking and inquiring into all that is offered by the teacher.*". According to Gurney, in the creation of such learning environment, the teachers need to challenge the prejudices of the teaching system and be ready to reflect on the nature of teaching to the extent that the teaching environment should reflect their reflective practices in their applied teaching methods and followed procedures. In fact, both teacher and student need to share their knowledge to create this reflective learning environment. When both of them become learners and get engaged to discover the world of the subject, the amount of interaction will increase along with the passion that teacher would have for his subject and stimulate his interest in it. Both teacher and student, the two uniquely engaged in the classroom interaction, are directed by what they think (Wittrock, 1986). The teacher needs to reflect on the students' fears, beliefs, attitudes and conceptions and maintain that as a basis for making decisions in the selection of the teaching materials, course design and action in learning. During the learning the teaching and learning process, the teacher should assume the role of a psychologist who is able to create that supportive learning environment where students are encouraged to take risks and make errors while experimenting the different language forms in the different contexts and registers.

Yet, as far as the research idea is concerned, it might be more useful if more light is shed on the factors that are closely related to the ESP teacher though both EGP and ESP classroom teaching and learning environment context still share common features with regard to the factors that may influence the classroom features. After all, teacher education aims to develop defined competences and a general capacity to deal with settings and requirements that are not fully predictable (Richards and Farrell, 2005 and Widdowson, 1983) and whatever sort of teacher training, it is often dealt with in the context that mainly incorporates associated elements to language teaching such as classroom management, Lesson

planning, giving feedback or effective eliciting or questioning (Richards, 1998 , p. xiv).

3.2 Teacher's Affective Factors

Teacher's affective factors also have an influence on classroom interaction and can enhance foreign language learning. Indeed , it was Krashen (1982, P. 31) who prominently raised the issue of learner's psychology and its relation with the learning process by introducing the notion of the *Affective Filter hypothesis* among the five central hypotheses in second language acquisition (*the Acquisition Learning distinction* , *the Natural Order hypothesis* , *the Monitor hypothesis* and *the Input hypothesis*). Gardner et al (2004) also confirmed that affective factors have a direct influence on language acquisition and achievement. Williams and Burden (1997, p. 28) mentioned that education must focus on developing the affective factors in language teaching .This can be achieved by helping the learner to become a individual who can make sense and construct meaning in his own world. They suggested a model where they depicted the learner as an individual with affective needs and reactions which need to be considered as part of learning. Tooman (2006) supports the author's view when she states that educators must focus their efforts and empathy on the human growth and the integration of the person's mind , body , spirit , emotions , relationships in and outside the classroom. Along with that, other scholars raise the issue of empathy as being an important factor that remains central in the teacher –student relationship and whose application is likely to improve the teaching effectiveness. By definition, the word empathy comes from Greek *empathia*, or 'feeling into' as a term that refers to the ability to perceive the subjective experience of another person (Goleman 1995). Davis (1994, p.57) defines it as "*the tendency to spontaneously adopt the psychological point of view of others in everyday life*" , so it is about 'walking in another's shoes or putting ourselves in another's skin' , that is what the term empathy would exactly mean .Noddings (1986) draw a relationship between empathy and caring which is described as being reactive , responsive and , most importantly , receptive. Moreover , caring is an activity that involves considering the other's of point of view , his needs and his expectations from us .As a matter of fact , it is the teacher's profound empathy and care that provide the right climate for the students' effective learning(Cooper 2002).Cooper views positive empathy as an effective means for student' class engagement improvement in learning , valuing and sharing views. In fact , the empathetic behaviour from the teacher affects the students' degree of behaviour , However , according to Cooper (*ibid.*) , the learning context can always reveal constraints that might represent a powerful factor to the teacher's ability to employ his empathy in a way that would best meet his students' needs .As it has already been mentioned , we shall devote part of our discussion to some relevant learning context factors that might influence the students' learning behaviour. Arghode and Lechuga (2011) state that by

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showing empathy ,teachers can establish a strong feeling of attachments to their students and , thus , “*can create bonds which nurtures cohesiveness.*” They also confirm that the teacher’ empathy can provide the students with a supportive learning environment ; a fact that “*encourages them to participate, without hesitations, in classroom.*”

Similarly , Wang (2005) believes that educators should help the learners develop their self-awareness as a whole individual who understands others and sensitive to human feelings and emotions and as an active student who is involved in learning and the way learning is taking place. Researchers have also mentioned the element the effect of *immediacy* , defined as as “*that communication which enhances closeness to one another*”(Sanders & Wiseman, 1990).It indicates strong relationship which can have a positive effect on the students’ affective outcomes (Gorham & Zakahi, 1990; Sanders& Wiseman, 1990; Powell & Harville, 1990;).With regard the affective factor in ESP classroom , Stern (1992) mentioned the *affective objective* among the four types ESP teaching objectives that include *proficiency, knowledge* and *transfer*. According to Stern(ibid.) , *proficiency* refers to the mastery of the four language skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking. *Knowledge objectives* entails the acquisition of linguistic (the systematic analysis and awareness of language aspects) and cultural information (control of socio-cultural rules).*Transfer objectives* refer to the ability to generalize from what has been learned in one situation or another .The *affective objectives* concern is to develop positive feelings towards the subject of study.

3.3 ESP Practitioner

However ,the ESP teacher has other things to worry about with regard to the specificities of the teaching and learning environment he is involved in since despite the fact that the subjects of specific content, such as politics in the present study , tend to attract the more and more number of students , the linguistic demands of the discipline seems to be an obstacle for these students .In this regard , Dudley-Evans and St John (1988, p.1) state that ESP has sometimes moved away from trends in general ELT in the sense that the main concern of ESP has always been, and remains , with needs analysis , text analysis , and preparing learners to communicate effectively in the tasks prescribed by their study or work situation. Identifying the students’ needs remains one factor that would enhance students’ interaction in the ELT settings in general and in the ESP classroom in particular .As it has been discussed in chapter two , Hutchintson and Waters (1987) descibed ESP as an appraoch to language teaching that is based on the learner’s reasons of learning. Eventually ,the term reasons cover sub-concept that include wants , needs , and all factors that may affect the way learners learn(subjective needs).Hence , Restrepo (2000) explains that for successful learning

teachers in such specific content areas need to do a self-examination to their daily in order to adjust it to a way that would respond adequately to their working environment , the needs of their students and their sociocultural agenda. Identifying the students might be depicted as a challenge for ESP teachers, yet on the other side, students are more attracted to study ESP because they are based on their needs and they are highly motivated to learn about topics and texts that are related to their field of study or work.

Besides, ESP teachers might use other strategies to promote the students' classroom interaction. Previous research into ESL classroom interaction has shown , for instance , that teachers highlight the most appropriate language used form in terms of general academic or discipline- specific register (Gibbons, 2002, p. 4). Along with the use of the specific terminology and in a study that aimed to investigate how two psychology professors made their subject content more comprehensible to non-native speaker students , Wesche and Ready (1985) found out the two professors used more self-repetitions and rephrasing , particularly for each newly introduced concept. In a similar study area, Basturkmen and Shackelford (2014), undertook an investigation with students in the Department of Accounting in Zealand .Before undertaking the study, the two researchers mentioned that their keen interest was to understand how the accounting teachers manage to help their students with language in their teaching. After eight recorded teaching hours, the results revealed that the two content lecturers often used vocabulary-related episodes while teaching after they already assumed that their students did not have a full understanding of the technical vocabulary being used; a fact that that urged them to take a step to help their students with vocabulary.

Another factor that may affect the ESP students' class interaction might be related to the selection of the teaching materials and the degree of appropriateness with the students' needs and interest and their authenticity. We shall leave this aspect to be discussed with the context factors influencing classroom interaction. After having viewed the main related –teacher factors that might affect the classroom interaction, we shall highlight major aspects related to the student behaviour and that might affect his interaction in ELT classroom in general and in ESP context in particular.

4. Student

A language learner is required to speak and listen to other learners and to interact with the language course teacher as well to develop his communicative language skills. This can be achieved by the participation in a variety of 'real purposes' interactive activities in the different class stages .During the classroom interaction process , diverse factors might affect either positively or negatively the student' s learning behaviour. This covers mainly 'unobservable' factors that play a role in shaping the classroom interaction such as, "*Teachers' and learners' psychological states, including their beliefs, attitudes, motivations, self-perception and anxiety, learning styles, and cultural norms, which are considered effective factors in shaping classroom interactions*"(Tsui, 2001).Here is a description of

the some common factors that might influence the student's interaction in a language class.

4.1 Learner's Motivation

Motivation is also considered as an unobservable factor that has an influence on the students' classroom interaction .Most teachers agree on the importance of motivation for students to take ownership of successful language learning. Hall (2011) considers motivation as a key factor to accomplish any activity .According to him, "*It is difficult to imagine anyone learning a language without some degree of motivation*". Similarly, Loewen and Reinders (2011 ,p.119) define motivation as "*a psychological construct that refers to the desire and incentive that an individual has to engage in a specific activity*". Dornyei (2014 , p. 20) depicts it as the driving force for the long –term second language learning process and mastery and that "*the learner's success will largely depend on the level of motivation*".

Yet, our main concern is to depict the relevance of the aspect of motivation to the ESP classroom learning ; the current study target theme. This would start with Melendy ' s (2008) definition to motivation which he describes as a process that starts with a need that shapes a behaviour that lead the individual to achieve a determined goal. Hence , language learning motivation is enhanced with the presence of a need and a goal to be fulfilled ; two basic key features of the ESP classroom learning process. One of the important task for an ESP teacher is to identify the learners' needs to set long term course objectives .This can be achieved by the NA approach ; a concept that was lavishly explored in the Second Chapter of the present study , through Target Situation Analysis (TSA) and Present Situation Analysis (PSA).

Strevens (1988) lists four reasons that make the ESP courses motivating for the student:

- The fact that it focuses on the learner's needs , they waste no time;
- they are relevant to learners;
- they are successful in imparting learning;
- they are more cost-effective than General English courses.

Liuliene and Metiuniene (2006) also found a direct relationship between the learners' motivation and their needs and wishes, thus they insisted on understanding the learners' needs before instruction. Similarly, Chambers (1980) pointed out that the pupils are likely to lose the point of the activity suggested to them when they fail to see the relationship between the activity and the world in which they live.

With regard to the ESP course motivation, students are naturally motivated to learn the English language when it is the useful means to study the subject course and when it is directly related to their professional needs .i.e in the ESP language learning context, students would never see to learn a subject separated from the language of that subject .In this regard, Ushioda (1998 ,p.83) points out: “....the language learner, unlike the researcher, seems unlikely to perceive the motivation for language learning to be wholly independent of the motivation (or lack of motivation) for other areas of learning .”

5.Contextual Factors

A number of studies have mentioned that there is also a direct relationship between the institutional, social and physical setting and the students’ course involvement and classroom interaction (Shavelson & Stern, 1981; Johnson, 1996).Such contextual factors might include large classes , student’s discipline , the teaching materials , the students’ different level of proficiency , the student’s resistance to the new methods of teaching , examination pressure , curriculum learning objectives , and a shortage of resources (Yang ,2015) . Hence, before starting the course, the language teacher should explore ‘the territory’ of the students’ learning context. This entails providing answers to questions like:

- Who are my students ?
- What do I want them to learn ?
- What tools do I have at my disposal ?
- What circumstances will affect the way I deliver the course ?
- What the characteristics of the learning environment (staffing, resources, facility, and time) ?
- What are the content considerations ?
- What are the characteristics of the learners and the language status ?

Finding appropriate answers to these questions will help the teacher to set up the goals for an effective learning environment.

One important feature that helps keeping the learning environment highly interactive is the potential of creating changing classroom structures that would fit to frequent newly adopted classroom management systems (Paul et al., 1993). The learner’s attitudes towards the English language learning and the response to it is one of the various factors that might have a negative influence on the EFL learning process. With regard to the political science students involved in the current study and their attitudes to the English course, it appears that most students are not usually motivated to attend the English course for a variety of reasons. One of which was owed to the little importance granted to the English module in the curriculum in terms of the teaching hours and the granted coefficient. Furthermore, the students admitted that they do not see a relationship

between the course content and their career after graduation. Consequently, they feel demotivated and less cooperative in the classroom.

The choice of the topic and the students' lack of vocabulary seem to be another obstacle that is preventing students' classroom interaction. With regard to the EFL teaching in the Algerian context, a study was carried out by Idri (2014) where she investigated the reasons behind the failure among Algerian students advanced learners in their oral communication class. The study which was conducted with ten teachers in the department of English at Bejaia University and sought to identify their evaluation to the BA students' oral communication skill revealed some interesting findings. The teacher admitted that students lacked sufficient time and opportunities to practise their English in classroom due to overcrowded classes. They also lacked the diversity in terms of content and choice of the topics; a fact which put limits to their English vocabulary repertoire and reduce their exposure to real-life situation context. Moreover, teacher seemed to be preoccupied with correcting students' grammar and pronunciation mistakes rather than developing their vocabulary and their communicative competence. The teachers also mentioned that the students were deprived of the out-of-class English speaking support beside having no exposure to native English since there is no contact with native speakers. The findings also revealed that the students had a limited vocabulary which prevent them from keeping their communicative act on beside their desire to rapidly communicate their messages without concentrating on the language items they are using when they communicate. The study ended by suggesting a range a teaching techniques and pedagogical implications that would enhance the students' speaking skill. These entail providing the students with a broader-knowledge about the English speaking countries culture and provide them with a variety of real and appropriate life instances of communicative contexts. Furthermore, when correcting students' mistakes, teachers should give more importance to fluency and the communicative competence development and should develop tasks and oral activities taking into consideration their students' needs and level of interests.

5.1 Classroom Facilities

The availability of the classroom facilities including visual aids and technological equipments might also have a direct effect on the students' classroom interaction. Thus, the integration of such technologies by the language teacher in the EFL classroom becomes a fundamental issue. Indeed, many educationalists have pointed out to the useful pedagogical effects that the use of the technological tools in education can have of the learning environment. Brushet

et al.(2008) have stated that student use ICT (Information and Communication Technology) as a tool to discover learning topics , solve problems , and provide solutions to the problems in the learning process. Fu (2013) has also seen that ICT enables learners to

“... all types of texts from beginning to advanced levels with ease through computers, laptops, personal digital assistants (PDAs), or iPads. More specifically, these e-books may come with some reading applications, which offer a reading-aloud interface, relevant vocabulary-building activities, games related to reading skills and vocabulary acquisition, and more. Therefore, ICT involves purpose designed applications that provide innovative ways to meet a variety of learning needs.”

Koc (2005) went beyond the classroom context when he stated that ICT can help students to *“communicate, share, and work collaboratively anywhere”*. Teleconferencing classroom, for instance, can bring students from all the over the world to gather for a topic discussion .This may inspire them to explore new concepts and find solutions to new emerging issues.

The incorporation of the visual aids in EFL classroom teaching has proved to be a useful tool in enhancing students’ motivation and interest towards the course. In recent years, teachers and material designers have started to use the different types of instructional media such as slides projector, type recorders, language laboratory, ect.. to increase students’ classroom interaction

5.2 Textbook

Like the other teaching materials and visual aids, the textbook should facilitate the teaching and the learning task for both teachers and students respectively. Not just that it should be adapted to meet the students’ needs but it seems necessary that any textbook should be more appealing to the students’ tastes and level of interest. Generally speaking people need something to talk about , thus , textbooks should incorporate topics and communicative purpose tasks that should stimulate students’ interests and enhance their interaction. According to Scarino and Liddicoat (2009), any teaching material that aims to enhance the students’ classroom interaction should involve the ability to use language as a starting point to generate ideas, responses and interpretations through interaction .It should also involve seeking opinions, reasoning and deeper complex understanding by probing responses, drawing out, analysing and building on personal experiences. Most importantly, the participants are asked to get engaged in open dialogues in which they have opportunities to explore their own perceptions and understandings. Eventually, the language use should focus more on developing language abilities to meet interactional needs rather than limiting interactional opportunities to current language capabilities.

And because interaction is purposeful (Scarino and Liddicoat ; *ibid.*), ESP textbooks designers can benefit from the advantage of texts' authenticity feature in ESP classes. As it has been mentioned in 2.4, authentic materials enhance ESP learners' motivation, yet; the ESP teachers need to edit such books from time to time to enable their learners deal with it as a comprehensible input. However, teachers should be careful when adapting any selected materials and texts since some studies showed that students' interaction is better attained on complex texts rather than contrived and simplified ones. In a study carried out on Japanese students, Ellis et al. (1994) confirmed that the students of English reached a high level of comprehension and vocabulary acquisition when dealing with complex texts compared to when being exposed to premodified version of texts without interaction opportunities. VandenBranden (1997) in a study carried with upper primary school, identified three elements that could influence the text comprehension and, thus, students' interaction: "*(a) reading the original (complex) text, (b) reading a premodified version, (c) reading the original text with opportunity to discuss the text with a peer, and (d) reading the original text in a group of pupils with the researcher present and opportunities for interaction.*" Being the only class manager, the teacher has a crucial role of making the correct use of these elements in a way that would enable him adapt the authentic texts to the different students level of language mastery by constantly varying texts (Gilmore , 2007).The ESP practitioner also needs to adapt the ESP texts according to the students' pedagogic needs and implement them in a teaching syllabus built on tasks of communicative purposes.

6. Conclusion

The study was an attempt to shed light on the main roles that both teachers and students share in an ESP classroom. Compared to EFL classroom, other factors would interfere to boost the interaction activity in the ESP classroom such as the learners' needs itself; a factor that is typical to an ESP learner .Raising the students' awareness and helping them identifying the need would not only raise their motivation to learn English relevant of the target discipline, but would also encourage them more to take care of all factors that may influence their specific area of language learning. These include all factors that are related to their specific language learning context such as the textbook , the classroom facilities and all learning resources.

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