

INTERACTION STRATEGIES IN THE SKILL AND CONTENT COURSES IN EFL CLASSES

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ABSTRACT: Studies to reveal the factors contributing to the effectiveness of language instruction are still underway. This study disclosed the phenomenon in EFL classes focusing on the interaction strategies in skill and content courses, which use English as the target language. This study uses a descriptive qualitative method. Having been collected by observation, recording, and interview, the data were transcribed, identified, and classified, then analyzed by description, quantification, and comparison. The findings were that, despite both employing a learner-centered approach; the interaction strategies are divergent due to different instructional goals. First, in the skill courses, the students' talking time is greater than the teachers' talking time, and the opposite fact exists in the content courses. Second, the interaction patterns in the skill courses indicate more student-active learning than in the content courses. Third, directive acts were performed more in the skill classes, and assertive acts in the content classes. Fourth, the native language was used more in the content than skill classes. The implication is that the interaction strategies should be varied following the pedagogical purposes to optimize the effectiveness of language teaching in an EFL context.

KEYWORDS: content course, instructional language, interaction strategy, pedagogical speech acts, skill course.

1. INTRODUCTION

Studies are still underway to reveal the factors contributing to language instruction's success. That is especially important in an EFL setting because the natural target language learning context, which is supposed to be significantly influential, is nonexistent. Therefore, efforts must be made to establish a supportive and effective environment for language teaching and learning. One of the efforts is varying interaction strategies using the target language in the language instructional process (Fielden & Agudo, 2023). Due to their significance as indicators of language teaching quality, the interaction strategies in this study include the distribution of the talking time (Noboa & López, 2020; Haliti, 2018; Kostadinovska-Stojchevska & Popovikj, 2019), interaction patterns (An et al., 2021; Kuyyogsuy, 2019; Thi & Thuy, 2021), the performance of illocutionary acts (Azizah, 2019; Faturrochman et al., 2021; Suryandani & Budasi, 2021), and the use of native language (Roslina, 2021; Sundari & Febriyanti, 2021).

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The EFL curriculum contains two categories of courses: skill subjects and content subjects. The former aims at the development of a set of language abilities, such as listening, speaking, reading, writing, vocabulary, grammar, and translation, or an integrated English Intensive Course, and the latter at increasing knowledge of and/or understanding about the language, like Linguistics, Literature, Sociolinguistics, Psycholinguistics, and Pragmatics. As their purposes are divergent, the instructional strategies are different. The skill subjects require the learners to practice a lot, and the content subjects demand the students just to understand the content. Classroom interaction strategies are applied to serve those differing purposes. A question arises as to what interaction strategies characterize the instructional process of the skill subjects and that of the content subjects. This paper attempts to answer these guiding questions: (1) what are the characteristics of interaction strategies in the skill and content classes? (2) In what way(s) are they relevant to the nature of those courses? As the study was conducted in an EFL context, where the teachers and learners are non-native speakers of English (NNSE), it is expected to give empirical insights about the nature of EFL classes. Several studies have been conducted concerning interaction strategies in an EFL context. Related to the quantity of teacher-talking time (TTT) and student-talking time (STT) in language instruction, Kostadinovska-Stojchevska & Popovikj (2019) studied the proportion of time spent by the teacher and students talking and claimed that teachers and student-talking time should ideally be 30%-70% of the lesson time. It implies that in the language instructional process, students should speak more than the teacher. This agrees with Haliti (2018), who also revealed the need to increase student talking time and decrease teacher talking time in relevance to the main aim of language teaching and learning, which is to improve students' language ability. Slightly different from those two studies, Noboa & López (2020) carried out practical action research, which concluded that there were different techniques to maximize adult students' speaking time to practically use the target language. Regarding interaction patterns, Kuyyogsuy (2019) found that an interaction pattern of pair-works in which peers gave feedback was effective in improving students' writing skills. Furthermore, Thi & Thuy (2021) revealed that the interaction patterns mostly used in online classes under study were teacher-student, especially when the teacher talked to the whole class and addressed some individuals. An et al. (2021) discovered that in English Medium Instruction (EMI) high school classes, in teaching the content subject, such as science, there was a tendency for the teacher to dominate the interaction and students had low participation. Those studies imply that interaction pattern is a significant factor that influences the effectiveness of language instruction, thus making it important to study further.

Concerning the teacher's performance of illocutionary acts in the classroom, Saidah (2021) after carrying out library research by analysing various articles about teacher's speech acts, exposed that the most dominant act performed by the teacher in EFL classes was directive because the classes were student-centered (Bremner, 2021). She further claimed that the directive act was used to ask students to do activities; hence, students were active. Faturrochman et al. (2021), furthermore, in agreement with Saidah, discovered that the teacher used directive acts dominantly because the teacher believed that such acts would stimulate students' active involvement in the learning process. On the other hand, Husna (2022), having conducted research at Senior High School Bosowa Makassar, found that the teacher performed five acts: assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declaration, but the most dominant was an assertive act (41%), and the least was a commissive act (4%). This finding agrees with the study conducted by Santosa and Kurniadi (2020), who also discovered that the most frequently used act by the teacher was assertive because when the data were being collected, the teacher gave students a test practice to be discussed in the following meeting. They claimed that speech acts were constrained by the teaching approach applied in the classroom. Related to the use of target and native languages in EFL classrooms, Sundari and Febriyanti (2021) revealed that most teachers used mixed languages—target and native languages—during the language teaching and learning process. Only a few of the teachers used the target language to give instruction. Almoayidi (2018) discovered that the use of native language in the teaching of EFL has a negative effect, and teachers are required to use the target language as much as possible. Alshehri (2017), on the other hand, discovered that the native language was sometimes useful for teachers some pedagogical purposes, such as explaining vocabulary.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In the mid-1980s, Krashen formulated five kinds of hypotheses related to SLA that include the acquisition-learning hypothesis, the input hypothesis, the natural order hypothesis, the monitor

hypothesis, and the affective filter hypothesis (Schütz, 2019). This study will focus on the acquisition-learning hypothesis and input hypothesis. According to Krashen, "acquisition" differs from "learning" in acquiring a foreign language (FL). "Learning" is a conscious activity in which an individual puts effort into understanding the structure of the FL, while "acquisition" is an individual's subconscious activity in acquiring the skills to adopt the FL into the mind (Friedrichsen, 2020). The input hypothesis deals with "acquisition" and is determined by how comprehensible the information one receives (input) is. This input should have a slightly higher difficulty level than the language skill already possessed. Krashen produced the formula $i + 1$; here, i represents the current language skill, while 1 represents the input with a slightly higher difficulty level (Chen, 2022). Krashen and Chen (2022) explained that four characteristics determine an ideal input: 1) The input information should be comprehensible and understandable, 2) The learning activity has to be relevant and exciting, 3) The input should not solely prioritize the grammatical structure of the FL, since it focuses more on the "acquisition," 4) The amount of the comprehensible input should be sufficient. The success of acquiring a new language is arguably determined by the interaction involving non-native speakers (NNS) and native speakers (NS). Interaction can be defined as an action between two or more people that produces an effect on both parties as a result. Interactions in foreign language learning could occur between NNS and NNS or between NNS and NS. Michael Long further developed Krashen's theory on this interaction in the 1980s. Krashen in Al-Khateeb (2014) claimed that a comprehensible input can be achieved when a meaningful interactional process happens in learning a foreign language, while Long mainly focused on the importance of quality instead of quantity in the interactional process. The interactional process in SLA will have more beneficial results if it involves interaction with NS, face-to-face interaction, and an accurate form of interaction (Long in Al-Khateeb, 2014). The learning process itself is associated with changes in three domains, as suggested by Benjamin Bloom: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. The cognitive domain is mind-based and mainly related to thinking or the mental process. The affective domain deals with attitude and behavior based on the learner's emotions and feelings. The Psychomotor domain emphasizes the learner's physical skills to produce outcomes based on movement skills (Eshun & Mensah, 2013; Hoque, 2016). These three learning domains, despite having different definitions and areas, are closely related and become the parameters for deciding the aims and goals of teaching. In non-English speaking countries, it is common for non-native English speaker teachers (NNEST) to switch or mix codes between English and their first languages (L1) in the EFL teaching process. Such bilingualism is a needed bridge to accommodate students, particularly those with low English proficiency (Brown, 2001; Fathimah, 2016; Harmer, 2010). On the other hand, if the EFL teaching process is performed in full English, it will result in ineffective input for the students because the difficulty level is too high. By switching and mixing L1 and English, NNEST can improve the tangibility of English exposure for EFL students (Fathimah, 2016).

Classroom practice is implemented using a learner-centered approach (Ouchaouka et al., 2021; Sanjana, 2020), where students are activated to be involved in activities and produce target language utterances. The activation of students can be observed in the form of teachers' employment of interaction patterns (Ahn, 2019; Thi & Thuy, 2021) during the language teaching process. Learner-oriented interaction patterns imply that students are actively learning. Opdal's (2022) statement is noteworthy when he says that learner-centered education should not necessarily imply the dismissal of teacher's lecturing.

3. METHODS

This study employed a descriptive qualitative method. The research site consisted of six regular classes of three skill subjects and three content subjects in the English Department. The skill courses were English Intensive Class, Reading Comprehension class, and Speaking Class. They are English lessons that aim at improving students' English proficiency. The content courses were Sociolinguistics, Morphosyntax, and Psycholinguistics classes. They aim to develop students' knowledge and understanding of the subjects. In both kinds of classes, English was mainly used as the medium of instruction (EMI).

3.1 Research Subjects

The research subjects were six teachers; three were teaching the skill courses, the other three were the content courses, and 180 students were in the six classes. All teachers of the skill courses have got a master's degree in language teaching education and more than ten years of teaching experience. For the content subject, one is a professor in ELT and has more than thirty years of teaching experience;

the other two have a master's degree in applied linguistics and more than five years of teaching experience. Such academic qualifications and experience signify the quality of English language instruction. They are all non-native speakers of English and, by all means, also have idiosyncratic and personal teaching preferences and styles. The students were adult university students between 20 and 23 years old enrolling in the English Department. It was assumed that they were motivated to learn English and participated seriously in the instructional process. Despite some variations in the learning styles, motivation, and experiences, as they were following the same curriculum and belonging to the same educational context, the skill and content classes became comparable.

3.2 Data Collection

The data of the classroom instructional process were collected by observation, recording, and interview. Before observation and recording, to minimize the research impact and to maintain the validity of the data, rapport was established, and the class was habituated to the observation and recording. While observing, field notes were taken and recording was aided by Sony PX470 Digital Voice Recorder. That was to facilitate the transcribing and analyzing processes. Each class lasted 100 minutes, and observation and recording were done authentically by putting the recording device in the middle of the class (Karabuga, 2021). The records of skill and content classes were then transcribed orthographically and validated several times by rechecking. When the transcripts had been confirmed valid, four data sets were prepared from each transcript: (1) timed data set (to calculate TTT and STT) (Hitotuzi, 2017), (2) activity-based data set (to identify interaction patterns), (3) function-based data set (to identify speech acts) (Flores Salgado, 2011), and (4) bilingual data set (to identify native language (NL) use). An in-depth interview was done with six teachers and eighteen students (three from each class) to collect data about the use of interaction strategies during the language teaching process. As a qualitative descriptive study, the subjects were constrained by pre-determined criteria rather than by number. The description was complemented with some quantification of numerical data representing the interaction strategies of talking time, and NL uses.

3.3 Data Analysis

The data were then analyzed according to the research purposes following the procedures of calculation, enumeration, and comparison. Calculation was done to the talking time and NL uses, while enumeration to interaction patterns and pedagogical acts. To calculate TTT and STT, the time spent by the teachers producing utterances was totalled and so was that by the students, and then the percentage of TTT and STT were counted in proportion to the recorded time (Hitotuzi, 2017). For this, the unit of analysis was words per minute. To disclose interaction patterns, each type of teacher-student interaction was given codes (e.g. T-Ss, T-S where T means teacher, S means student, and Ss mean students) and described. The unit of analysis was the presence of interaction patterns. The data were then analyzed for research purposes following the procedures of calculation, enumeration, and comparison. The calculation was done for the talking time and NL uses, while enumeration was done for interaction patterns and pedagogical acts. To calculate TTT and STT, the time spent by the teachers producing utterances was totalled, and so was that by the students, and then the percentage of TTT and STT were counted in proportion to the recorded time (Hitotuzi, 2017). For this, the unit of analysis was words per minute. To disclose interaction patterns, each type of teacher-student interaction was given codes (e.g., T-Ss, T-S where T means teacher, S means student, and Ss means students) and described. The unit of analysis was the presence of interaction patterns.

To expose teachers' illocutionary acts, employing Illocutionary Force Indicating Device (IFID) (Flores Salgado, 2011), the data were assigned codes (e.g. gre=greeting, ord=ordering, etc.) and tabulated. The unit of analysis was utterance-based. To uncover the NL uses, their patterns (e.g. NL utterance, code-switching, and translating) were described and the quantity of NL chunks was counted in proportion to the whole utterances. The unit of analysis was NL words, phrases, sentences, and/or sentence fragments. Finally, to reveal teachers' comments and students' responses to the use of interaction strategies, the interview results were analyzed thematically. Comparison was done to all of the four interaction strategies in the skill classes to that in the content classes to reveal the features of those classes in relevance with their pedagogical purposes.

4. FINDINGS

This part presents the findings of interaction strategies in the teaching of skill courses and content courses in EFL classes. The strategies include: (1) the quantity of TTT and STT, (2) interaction patterns, (3) the teacher's speech acts, (4) the use of NL, and (5) the teacher and students' responses to

those interaction strategies. Before presenting the findings, the teaching procedures in the classroom, i.e. the lesson stages in both skill and content subjects are presented. Despite some varieties in the lesson stages due to differing subjects and teachers' personal preferences of teaching styles, the main activities and classroom proceedings among the skill classes were obviously more divergent than in the content classes. While in a Reading Comprehension class, the main activities were in the forms of more students' doing silent reading and answering comprehension questions, in a Speaking class, their activities were mainly in terms of making more monologs and/or dialogs; in content classes, on the other hand, classroom stages were more typical, containing teacher's opening, students' presentation, classroom discussion (question-answer), and teacher's wrapping-up. Table 1 below presents an example of classroom proceedings in a skill class, i.e., an English Intensive Course and a content class represented by a Sociolinguistics class.

Table 1. The Lesson Stages in Skill and Content Courses

No.	Skill Class	Content Class
1.	Opening (T-Ss), (greeting and lead-in)	Opening (T-Ss), (greeting and lead-in, reviewing previous topic, approaching the new topic)
2.	Pre-activity (S-S), (Students in pairs matching pictures with words)	Main activity (S-Ss), (Student presenting material aided by Power Point Slides)
3.	Whilst-activity (T-Ss), (Whole class listening and repeating sentences with specific words related to the taught topic)	Main activity (S-Ss), (Student/ presenter leading a class discussion / question-answer)
4.	Whilst-activity (S), (Individual student constructing sentences about the topic)	Main activity (T-Ss), (Teacher taking over the class to re-explain, to reclarify materials, and to answer unanswered questions)
5.	Whilst-activity (S-S), (Students in pairs interviewing partners about the relevant topic)	Post-activity (T-Ss), (Teacher wrapping-up)
6.	Whilst-activity (S), (Individual student doing exercise)	Closing (T-Ss), (Teacher closing and leave-taking)
7.	Whilst-activity (T-Ss), (Whole class listening to identify the points being talked about by speakers)	
8.	Whilst-activity (S), (Individual language focus, listening while identifying regular/irregular verbs)	
9.	Whilst-activity (S-S), (Pair work telling partners about the relevant topic)	
10.	Post-activity (S-Ss), (Student to the whole class telling the class about the partner)	
11.	Post-activity (T-Ss), (Teacher wrapping-up)	
12.	Closing (T-Ss), (Teacher leave-taking)	

Notes: T = Teacher S = Student Ss = Students

4.1 The quantity of TTT and STT

As the talk is among the factors that affect the quality of language instruction, the amount of teachers' talk and students' talk is determined by the instructional aims, the teaching strategies, and the participants' (teachers and students) personal characteristics. In this study, the data show that in the skill courses, TTT tended to be less than STT, while in the content subjects, TTT was more than STT (see Table 2).

Table 2. The Quantity of TTT and STT

No.	Classes		TTT Minute	%	STT Minute	%	Class Talk Time	%	Silenc e	%	Class Time
1.	Skill classes	A	32	36.8	55	63.2	87	87	13	13	100'
		B	17	32,7	35	67.3	52	52	48	48	100'
		C	20	22.2	70	77.8	90	90	10	10	100'
Averages			23.3	30.4	53.3	69.6	76.6	76.6	23.4	23.4	100'
2.	Content classes	D	65	67.7	31	32.3	96	96	4	4	100'
		E	58	67.4	28	32.5	86	86	14	14	100'
		F	71	78.9	19	21.1	90	90	10	10	100'
Averages			64.7	71.3	26	28.7	90.7	90.7	9.3	9.3	100'

Notes: TTT= Teacher-Talking Time
A= English Intensive Course
B= Reading Comprehension Class
C= Speaking Class

STT= Student-Talking Time
D= Sociolinguistics Class
E= Morphosyntax Class
F= Psycholinguistics Class

The percentages of teachers' and students' talking time were counted in proportion to the time of all classroom talks. The percentages of class talking time and silences were calculated in proportion to the available class time. Despite 100 minutes being available for class time, thus the length of the records, it was found in the skill course that only 76.6 minutes (76.6%) were spent by the teacher and students speaking (making oral production). The rest, 23.4 minutes (23.4%), were silences. The silences were due to the shifts of activities (when the teachers and students were not speaking but moving physically), the teacher's and/or students' writing, the students' doing written exercises and/or silent reading, and the teachers' or students' waiting time for others' responses. Compared to the content courses, the class talking time was more than that in the skill classes. It was 90.7% consisting of teachers and students' talks in the forms of both monologs and dialogs. The teachers' monolog was when they were explaining, clarifying, exemplifying concepts, whereas the students' monologs were when they were making presentation of the topic prior to the discussion session. The dialogs were mostly manifested in terms of questions and answers. Regarding the quantity of TTT and STT, the table shows a difference between the skill and the content classes. In the skill classes, the TTT (30.4%) was less than the STT (69.6%), while in the content classes the TTT (71.3%) was more than the STT (28.7%). The teacher's talks in this case included not only the actual teacher's speech but also oral texts from audio/video exposure. Any talk exposed to the students is input, which is effective in promoting acquisition as long as it is abundant and comprehensible regardless of the sources. The STT is manifested not only their speech but also their reading texts aloud because it was also exposed input to the students' auditory senses, hence potential to promoting acquisition (Krashen, 2013).

Those facts imply a consistency in the nature and main aims of the subjects. As the skill courses are intended to raise students' language proficiency, the class strategy was conducted through students practicing using the target language productively by being more actively engaged in oral production. In contrast, since the content courses are aimed at improving students' knowledge and understanding, it was reached by the teachers' giving more explanation, thus producing more teacher talks while students were receptively attentive.

4.2 Interaction Patterns

Interaction patterns were identified based on the field notes and the transcripts that contained moment-to-moment activities the teachers and students interacted in all of the six skill and content classes. The data show that the interaction patterns in the skill courses were different from that in the content courses. This is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Interaction Patterns

No.	Skill Classes	Content Classes
1.	T - Ss	T - Ss
2.	S - Ss	S - Ss
3.	S - T	S - T
4.	T - S	

5.	S – S
6.	Ss
7.	S

Notes:

T = Teacher	S – Ss = A student talks to the whole class
S = Student	S – S = Two students work in pairs
Ss = Students	S = Each student works individually
T – Ss = Teacher talks to the whole class	Ss = Students work in small groups
S – T = A student talks to the teacher (e.g. to ask questions)	

The table shows that the interaction patterns in the skill classes were more varied than those in the content classes. In the skill classes, students worked in pairs, conducted small group discussions, and sometimes worked individually, while in the content classes, they did not do them. This implies that in the skill classes, students were more active than in the content classes and practiced using the target language more productively. Probing the data, it was found that despite the same pattern, T – Ss (Teacher talks to the whole class), for example, in the skill class, T-Ss contained more instructions, orders, and questions whereas, in the content subject, it comprised more explanations, clarifications, and exemplifications. Regarding the pattern S-Ss, where a student talked to the class, the difference lies in the length and frequency. In the skill class, a student talked to the whole class when s/he was reporting the result of small group discussions that had just been conducted in the class. Representatives made a brief report of each group. Hence, more students were involved in reporting. The speech was shorter, the frequency was higher, and more students got a chance to talk. This was because group discussions were held several times during the lesson, focusing on different topics. In the content subject, on the other hand, this pattern S-Ss, where a student talks to the whole class, was longer but done only in one activity. The classes started with the teachers' opening and apprehension phase, then led the students to approach the topic to be discussed. After that, the students chosen to prepare the material came forward and presented the material to the whole class and led a whole-class discussion. It was a presentation and discussion phase lasting approximately 30 minutes. Then, the teacher took over the class to continue the instruction. In this stage, the teachers re-clarified the topics and answered some questions that were not satisfactorily explained during the students' presentations. That was not only to improve but also to reinforce students' understanding.

The pattern S-T, where a student talks to the teacher, was infrequent. The data show that it happened in the skill classes when a student asked about the meanings of words and in the content classes when a student asked the teacher to re-explain some concepts. This infrequency is possibly cultural because, in Indonesia, it is a general phenomenon that when students are given a chance to ask or give comments after a certain presentation, they rarely raise their hands to respond. The pair works, individual works and small group discussions were found only in the skill classes but not in the content classes. Pair work was frequently done, lasting two to five minutes. The results of observations showed that pair-works were usually done as a preliminary step toward a more in-depth discussion on a new topic. Students working in small groups (Ss) were also found in the skill classes. It was intended to give students more opportunities to practice communication using the target language. Students working individually (S) happened when they were reading texts, answering post-reading questions, doing writing tasks, and/or doing grammar exercises.

4.3 Classroom Speech Acts

Types of speech acts performed in the classroom may also indicate the strategies of the instructional process. When the teacher uses a lot of questions and students respond, for example, it implies that the instruction is more interactive than the class, where the teacher uses more assertive acts to give students information, and the students are just listening. The speech acts performed by teachers and students in all six skill and content classes were identified in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Classroom Speech Acts

No.	Skill Classes	Content Classes
1.	Expressive: - Greeting (T)	Expressive: - Greeting (T/S)

- Praising (T)	- Thanking (S)
2. Directive:	Directive:
- Ordering (T)	- Ordering (T)
- Giving instructions (T)	- Giving instructions (T)
- Checking comprehension (T)	- Checking comprehension (T)
- Requesting (S)	- Requesting (S)
- Asking questions (T/S)	
- Grouping/pairing (T)	
- Nominating (T)	
- Calling attention (T)	
- Correcting (T)	
- Drilling (T)	
3. Assertive:	Assertive:
- Announcing a task (T)	- Announcing a topic (T/S)
- Responding (T/S)	- Responding (T/S)
- Giving feedbacks (T)	- Explaining (T/S)
- Controlling/shifting a topic (T)	- Exemplifying (T)
- Summarizing (T)	- Summarizing (T)
	- Commenting (T)
4. Commissive:	
- Promising (T)	
5. Declaration:	Declaration:
- Dismissing (T)	- Dismissing (T)

Notes: (T) = Performed by Teacher (T/S) = Performed by Teacher or Student
(S) = Performed by Student

Besides some similarities, differences are also found between the speech acts in the skill and content subjects. Most of the acts were done by the teachers, and only a few were by the students. In the skill classes, five types of acts were performed: expressive, directive, assertive, commissive, and declaration. The teachers in both classes gave greetings and dismissal to open and close the class. Ordering and giving instructions were done by the teachers to order students to do a task and to instruct them how to do it. Checking comprehension was used differently in the skill from the content classes. In the skill classes, it was done to check if the students knew what and how to do the tasks, while in content classes; it was aimed to check if students understood the point. In the skill classes, comprehension checks were preceded by orders and instructions, whereas in the content classes, they were done following explanations and clarifications. The teachers also performed summarizing to wrap up the points of that day's lesson and respond to students' questions and requests. The acts performed by students in the skill courses were asking questions and responding, while it was only a request in the content course. Students asking questions and responding imply that the acts were done to practice the target language. The request in the content course, as observed in the data, was done by students when they requested the teacher to re-explain a concept in the taught material. The teacher gave feedback in the skill course after the students finished the task, just like commenting on the content course. The difference was that feedback in the skill classes was language-wise, while commenting in the content classes was content-wise. The table shows that the skill classes contained more varied directive speech acts than in the content classes, whereas, there were more diverse assertive acts in the content classes. That indicates that in the skill classes, students were more stimulated and activated to actively practice the language to promote acquisition and to improve language ability, and in the content classes, students were given more insights to increase understanding and knowledge.

4.4 Native Language Uses

The findings of native language use include the type of uses and their frequencies. The frequency was revealed by counting the percentages of each use of native language utterance in proportion to all utterances (target language (TL) and native language (NL)) in the classroom process. An utterance is the smallest unit of communication, manifested in complete sentences and/or sentence fragments (Langan, 1986). The numbers in the following table represent the NL talks produced by teachers and students in three skill classes and that in three content classes. The average numbers of

utterances (TL and NL) in the skill classes were 194 utterances, and in the content classes, 213 utterances.

Table 5. Native Language Uses

No.	Skill Classes				Content Classes 213			
	Types of NL use	Classes	N	%	Types of NL use	Classes	N	%
1.	NL utterances	A	10	5.1	NL utterances	D	12	5.6
		B	6	3.1		E	9	4.2
		C	13	6.7		F	11	5.1
2.	Code-switching	A	5	2.6	Code-switching	D	7	3.3
		B	4	2.1		E	5	2.3
		C	2	1		F	6	2.8
3.	Translation	A	3	1.5	Translation	D	8	3.7
		B	7	3.6		E	9	4.2
		C	8	4.1		F	11	5.1
4.	Average NL use		19.3	9.9	Average NL use		26	12.2

Notes: NL = Native Language

N = Number of occurrences

A= English Intensive Course

D= Sociolinguistics Class

B= Reading Comprehension Class

E= Morphosyntax Class

C= Speaking Class

F= Psycholinguistics Class

The uses of the native language were found more in the content classes than in the skill classes. They were used in three different ways. In the skill classes, the NL utterances were used by some students in interaction among them when they were doing tasks. This contributed more to the use of NL in the skill classes than in the content classes. Code-switching was used by the teachers when instructing the students to do tasks, and translation was also used when they answered students' questions about vocabulary meanings. In the content classes, NL utterances were also produced by some students intervening in the class discussion. Code-switching was produced by the teachers when giving examples during their explanations. Teachers also used minimal translation of some terminologies. Concerning the teachers' comments and students' responses towards the use of interaction strategies, the teachers said those strategies were used authentically and naturally to maximize instructional effectiveness and try to be consistent with the pedagogical aims of the courses. Moreover, in the students' view, they did not even feel that the interactional strategies were intentionally prepared and conducted independently of the courses. They thought that they were just normal proceedings that made the lessons enjoyable because they felt they had sufficient chances to practice using the target language.

5. DISCUSSION

The objectives of the teaching subjects determine the interaction strategy. In skill courses, the purpose of which is for the students to acquire language ability, and in content courses, which aim to acquire knowledge, the interaction strategies are divergent. They depend on the intensity and nature of activities required to achieve the target. Although both classes are applying a learner-centered approach, the manifestation of classroom interaction strategies seems dissimilar.

The quantity of STT is more than TTT in the skill classes, and the opposite happens in the content classes. This phenomenon is consistent with the principle of language acquisition in that learners need to practice using the target language more to promote acquisition. Since the main aim of the skill courses is to improve learners' language ability (psycho-motoric aspect), the learners must practice a lot the target language. Consequently, STT is greater than TTT. In contrast, since the main objective of content courses is to develop students' knowledge (cognitive aspect), they are demanded just to understand; the TTT is more than STT because teachers need to explain more to help students understand. This finding is in line with Kostadinovska-Stojchevska and Popovikj's (2019) claim that among the characteristics of the learner-centered class is greater STT than TTT and that student-active learning enhances English competence (Abusalem et al., 2024). However, that should be taken cautiously because the learner-centered approach is not a direct variable affecting the volume of STT and TTT, but the instructional goals and activities are. This is evidenced by this study's finding that both skill and content classes employed a learner-centered approach. Yet, the amount of STT and TTT remained similar due to the

activities during the instructional process. The greater amount of STT implies students' activeness and predicts the effectiveness of language instruction. When the teaching aim is to improve students' language ability, as in the skill class, the more students speak, the more effective the learning will be. This confirms Weizheng's (2019) statement that students' active interaction promotes better mastery of the target language. The TTT, however, is not unbeneficial. In the content course, as far as comprehensibility is concerned, the greater its amount, the better because it promotes language acquisition and enriches insights to raise students' knowledge and understanding (Krashen, 2013).

Another insight this study implies is that the learner-centered approach, characterized by student-active learning, applies to both skill and content classes, but their manifested activities differ. In the skill classes, students actively do a range of tasks, e.g., pair works, small group works, and individual exercises, and the teacher manages, gives instructions, controls, and gives facilitations. In the content classes, students also do tasks, such as making at-home preparations and presenting and discussing materials with the whole class. The teacher designs, guides, and explains to help them gain knowledge and understanding. In sum, the manifestation of a learner-centered approach in the skill and content classes is similar in student-active learning but different in practical activities. Interaction patterns as an indicator of the implementation of learner-centeredness may be parallel with the proportion of STT and TTT, meaning that the more chance students are given to interact, the more speech they produce, the more active they are, the more time they practice, the better their ability will be. This is in agreement with Haliti, (2018); Smit et al. (2022); Thi & Thuy (2021) who share the same view that interaction pattern among class participants (students and teacher) is an important factor to gauge the effectiveness of learner-centered language classroom process. Collaboration is also important in promoting effective learning (Mardiani & Hanifah, 2023). Pedagogical illocutionary acts performed by the teachers and students can also reflect how the instructional process is conducted and, to some extent, portray its efficacy. When the teacher frequently uses directive acts in the form of open, informative questions, for example, it implies that students are stimulated, activated, and more involved in the thinking process. Hence, they get more opportunities to practice producing the target language because they must give productive responses to the questions. Nevertheless, when the teachers use more assertive acts by giving explanations, descriptions, or clarifications while students are only listening, it indicates that the students are inactive, receptive, and less interactive in the instructional process. Although this is not ideal for stimulating student-active learning, it could still be beneficial in teaching content courses whose main aim is to enrich insights to raise knowledge and understanding. It revealed that both the skill and content classes implemented a learner-centered approach, as evidenced by the student's active involvement in productive tasks, which might be addressed to two factors. First, it is due to the teachers' belief that learning would be effective when more students' senses are stimulated to be perceptive (Dale, 2021). Second, it is because of the teacher's personal preference for teaching styles that are influential on students' willingness to be engaged in classroom communicative activity (Chen et al., 2022). The use of native language (NL) during the language instructional process of skill and content subjects is natural in the EFL context where the classroom participants (teachers and students) are non-native speakers of English. Although some language teaching experts require that the use of the target language as a medium of instruction is ideal because it provides input to the learners, thus promoting acquisition (An et al., 2021; Krashen, 2013), some EFL teachers still view that the use of native language is sometimes needed especially for efficiency reason of communicative process. Besides, EFL learners often feel more secure and get closer psychological bonds when they interact using their native language rather than the target language.

6. CONCLUSION

As the EFL curriculum consists of two categories of subjects, namely skill subjects whose target is to acquire English language ability and content subjects whose goal is to gain knowledge about the language, their instructional strategies are divergent. The former requires much psycho-motoric, practical use of the target language, while the latter demands students' cognitive knowledge and understanding. Since both classes are implemented following a learner-centered approach, activities in the content classes are aimed at raising knowledge and promoting language ability. However, it can hardly be the other way around. To serve those purposes, teachers employ different interaction strategies in their teaching process, which include management of TTT and STT, interaction patterns, the performance of pedagogical speech acts, and the use of the native language. The quantity of students speaking exceeds that of the teacher in the skill classes, and the opposite exists in the content classes.

The interaction patterns in the skill classes are more varied and tend to be more learner-centered than those in the content classes. In the skill classes, the teachers performed more directive acts because that stimulated students to respond more actively. In contrast, in the content classes, the teachers employed more assertive acts where students merely strived to perceive knowledge. The use of native language in the skill classes is less than in the content classes. All those findings are reasonable because, in an EFL context, the terminal objective of the skill subject is the acquisition of language ability. Such a purpose can be reached by making students more active in practicing and using the target language. Acknowledging that the present study had limited sites and subjects, it is suggested that future studies take more sites from each of the skill and content classes to discover the effects of those tendencies to confirm the pedagogical implications that the more actively students practice using the target language and are involved in the language instructional process, the more effective the learning would be.

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