

# Empirical Analysis of Teacher Talk Based on SLA Theories—Evidence from Zhengji High School

Xiaohu Huang<sup>1\*</sup>, Chong Lian<sup>1</sup><sup>1</sup>School of Foreign Languages, Yancheng Teachers University, 50 Kaifang Avenue, Tinghu District, Yancheng, Jiangsu, China, 224002DOI: [10.36348/sijll.2024.v07i02.001](https://doi.org/10.36348/sijll.2024.v07i02.001)

| Received: 01.01.2024 | Accepted: 06.02.2024 | Published: 10.02.2024

\*Corresponding author: Xiaohu Huang

School of Foreign Languages, Yancheng Teachers University, 50 Kaifang Avenue, Tinghu District, Yancheng, Jiangsu, China, 224002

## Abstract

In China, due to the lack of a real language learning environment, the main place for students to contact English is the classroom. Therefore, teachers' discourse in the classroom has an important impact on learners' language acquisition. Specifically, on the one hand, teacher talk can organize and manage classroom teaching. On the other hand, it is conducive to students' language input. At the same time, senior high school is a key period for students to learn English. The impact of excellent teacher talk on students' language acquisition is beneficial. As a result, at this stage, it is vital to study teacher talk. Based on the input hypothesis proposed by Krashen and the interaction hypothesis proposed by Long, this article selects a senior teacher and her class in Zhengji senior high school in Jiangsu Province as the research object, and uses the method of naturalistic observation to observe and record the teacher's discourse in the classroom. Then, through the analysis of the data, the current situation of English teachers' classroom discourse in senior high schools is investigated in three ways in this thesis: the quantity of teacher talk, questioning methods and feedback methods, analyzes the existing problems, and tries to offer some sound counsel. Through research and analysis, this article draws the following conclusions: 1. Teachers are fully aware of the main role of students in classroom discourse, are changing the traditional teacher-centered teaching model, and strive to make students more involved in classroom activities. 2. Teachers should reasonably use the method of questioning in the classroom to combine display questions with referential questions, so as to cultivate students' innovative thinking ability. 3. Teachers should use a variety of feedback methods to continuously stimulate students' learning motivation and increase the number of possibilities for kids to develop language.

**Keywords:** Teacher talk; questioning; feedback; second language acquisition.**Copyright © 2024 The Author(s):** This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY-NC 4.0) which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium for non-commercial use provided the original author and source are credited.

## INTRODUCTION

English, as the most important language in the world, is studied in many countries and regions. With the increasing improvement of our country's economic level, we need to learn English to strengthen the communication and contact with the world. Therefore, learning English well is of great value and significance. Because we rarely use English in our daily lives and do not have a real language learning environment, the main place for learners to learn and be exposed to English is the classroom, which makes students very dependent on it. Teachers play an important role in their classroom, and their language can have a huge impact on students' learning and development. On the one hand, teacher talk helps to structure classroom instruction while also connecting teachers and students. On the other hand, it is an essential source of language input for students. As a result, teacher talk is critical in the process of teachers structuring classroom instruction and students

understanding language. (Nunan, 1991: 188) Of course, in English teaching, the use of teacher talk will have a positive or negative impact on learners. Effective teacher talk can arouse students' interest in learning English and enhance their confidence in using English. At the same time, by using English correctly, teachers can also help learners develop good language learning habits and language use skills.

Middle school English teacher talk has become a hot issue in recent years, earning growing popularity from professionals and academicians. However, due to the fact that previous research on teacher talk is based on college English classrooms, there is not enough practical guidance for senior high school English classrooms, and it cannot integrate teacher talk with the enhancement of second language acquisition. Through classroom observation and recording, this thesis will study the current situation and characteristics of English classroom discourse in domestic senior high schools, so as to

improve the quality of teacher talk and promote students' second language acquisition.

In recent years, many experts and scholars have conducted studies on teacher talk. However, most of them have focused on teacher talk in college English classrooms, while there are relatively few researches on teacher talk in senior high school English classrooms. As we all know, senior high school is an important stage to cultivate students' listening, speaking, reading and writing ability, and the quality of teacher talk will have an important impact on the effect of classroom teaching, so we should pay more attention to English teacher talk at this stage. This study examines and analyzes senior high school English classroom discourse utilizing a range of research methods such as classroom observation and recording, based on Krashen's input hypothesis and Long's interaction hypothesis theory. The author's goal is to uncover the existing state and characteristics of teacher talk in a senior high school English classroom, identify flaws, and make recommendations to improve teacher talk quality. Simultaneously, it is intended that more senior high school English teachers will pay attention to and reflect on their classroom discourse in order to improve the performance of English classroom education and, as a result, promote students' second language acquisition.

Since there is not a natural English learning environment in China, the classroom has become the only place for English learners to learn. Therefore, the quality of teacher talk has a direct and extremely important impact on students' second language acquisition. Thus, through the analysis of the characteristics and current situation of senior high school English classroom discourse, this study finds the shortcomings and tries to put forward constructive suggestions, which have important theoretical value for senior high school English teachers to use teacher talk correctly and efficiently. Meanwhile, most English classrooms are still teacher led. On the one hand, this does not meet the requirements of improving the relationship between teachers and students advocated by the new curriculum reform. On the other hand, too much emphasis on students' test results and ignoring their language application in the real situation is not conducive to the cultivation of students' communicative competence. In this regard, this study has important practical significance for improving teachers' teaching abilities.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### 1. Krashen's Input Hypothesis Theory

Krashen, an American linguist, believed that people can acquire language in two ways: language learning and language acquisition. "Learning" means that people consciously acquire language knowledge by learning linguistic phenomena and grammatical rules, while "acquisition" means that people unconsciously understand the meaning of discourse in the linguistic

context and learn to use the language. As a result, learners must be placed in an appropriate language context to receive language input if they want to acquire language information and abilities subconsciously.

Krashen's second language acquisition theory is based on the comprehensible input hypothesis. The comprehensible input hypothesis, for starters, tries to explain how humans learn languages. Language acquisition occurs only once persons have fully comprehended the language information or have received understandable language input. As a result, learners should focus on the meaning of language information rather than the format in which it is presented. At the same time, Krashen believed that the difficulty of comprehensible input should be appropriate, so he put forward the "i + 1" theory. "i" indicates the learner's current language level, whereas "1" represents the discrepancy between the learner's current linguistic level and the desired language level. Then "i+ 1" is a comprehensible input that is somewhat above the learner's present level and that the learner can understand and master. It can be seen that the theory requires that teachers' classroom discourse should be slightly higher than learners' current language level, and learners can gradually understand it through repeated practice, and finally achieve the ideal effect of language acquisition.

According to Krashen, the ideal comprehensible language input should have the following four characteristics: (1) The input must be comprehensible. Only by absorbing comprehensible language input can learners improve their output. (2) The input is interesting and closely related. In this way, learners will naturally acquire the language. (3) The input does not need to take grammar as the outline, and it is not necessary to arrange teaching according to the process of grammar. (4) The input is plentiful because a large amount of input can provide learners with more opportunities to acquire language. (Wu Yichen, 2013: 9)

Thus, on the basis of adequate language input, language acquisition becomes possible. At the same time, the amount of language input that learners obtain will also have a profound impact on language acquisition. In China, the main place where students obtain comprehensible language input is in the English classroom. Therefore, teachers should pay appropriate attention to their own discourse in daily teaching. At the same time, teachers should try their best to improve the quality of classroom discourse and the comprehensibility of language input, so as to create good conditions for students to acquire a second language.

### 2. Long's Interaction Hypothesis Theory

Long, based on Krashen's comprehensible input hypothesis, proposed the interaction hypothesis theory in 1983. Both Long and Krashen emphasized the importance of understandable input in the acquisition of

a second language, but the difference was that Krashen believed that learners' understanding of input was self-generated, while Long paid more attention to the conditions of comprehensible input.

Long (1985, 377-393) pointed out that the decisive factor of learners' language acquisition largely depends on the degree and opportunity of participation in interaction, because language learners can quickly acquire language in the process of interactive communication. He divided communication into two types: one is "two-way communication" and the other is "one-way communication". Two-way communication is more favourable to language acquisition than one-way communication. Because in the process of two-way communication, when they encounter communication difficulties, both sides can adjust their discourse through meaning negotiation and interactive adjustment. On the one hand, it helps to improve the comprehensibility of language input, on the other hand, it can also guide students to carry out effective language output, so as to facilitate students' second language acquisition. (Lu Ting, 2018: 23)

In a word, Krashen's comprehensible input hypothesis and Long's interaction hypothesis provide a solid theoretical basis for the study of teachers' classroom discourse, and also reveal the impact of teacher talk on students' second language acquisition from different perspectives. For most English learners, the classroom is an important place for teachers and students to interact and communicate. At the same time, teacher-student interaction is also the key link to effective classroom teaching. Teachers should strive to provide students with a large amount of comprehensive language input, and provide as many opportunities for students to exchange knowledge and voice their opinions as possible in order to more successfully boost students' learning of a second language.

### 3. Overview of Teacher Talk

#### 1) Definition of Teacher Talk

For second language learners, the classroom is the most important place to learn the target language, and English teachers' classroom discourse is an important source for students to obtain comprehensible language input. According to the Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics, teacher talk is the language used by teachers in teaching situations. Teachers often simplify their language when communicating with learners, so they will form a language with foreign language characteristics. (Richards, 2002) According to Ellis (1994), foreign language classroom teachers have effectively changed their language in the classroom in terms of form and function in order to facilitate interaction between teachers and students and students' second language learning. Teacher classroom discourse refers to these languages that have been adapted by teachers. Cook (2002) also defined teacher talk. He believed that English teachers' classroom discourse had

a guiding role in organizing and controlling classroom teaching. At the same time, teachers' classroom discourse was the content of language that teachers wanted to teach. Deng Yanzhen (2003) believed that teacher talk is the language used by teachers to represent their identity in their related teaching fields.

As scholars at home and abroad continue to study English teachers' classroom discourse, they have different definitions towards it. But there is one thing in common. They all agree that teacher talk is the language used by teachers in the classroom. Teachers' classroom discourse is not only a means of communication between teachers and students in foreign language classes, but it is also a significant source of linguistic input for students. Simultaneously, the quantity and quality of teacher talk are critical for completing educational objectives and boosting students' second language acquisition. On this premise, the author defines English teachers' classroom discourse as the discourse generated by English teachers throughout the planning and implementation of English classroom instruction.

#### 2) Categories of Teacher Talk

As we all know, different kinds of English classes have different teacher talk. English teachers' classroom discourse can be divided into four types: classroom English, teaching English, teacher-student interaction and teachers' feedback language.

Classroom English is the discourse used by teachers in the process of organizing and managing the classroom, and it usually has some fixed sentence patterns. These sentence patterns are used in different stages of classroom activities and different environments, such as teachers' greetings, suggestions and requirements to students. Classroom language is one of the most basic types of teachers' classroom discourse, which is related to the effective operation of classroom teaching. The patterns of classroom language are generally different due to different user habits, classroom atmosphere and learners' level. One thing we need to pay attention to is that too fixed and repeated classroom language will make the classroom lack vitality and make students feel boring. On the contrary, the rational use of classroom discourse will promote the formation of a positive teaching atmosphere and encourage students to participate more in English classrooms.

Teaching English is the discourse used by teachers in explaining professional knowledge, such as explaining words and sentence structure. When using it, teachers should grasp the amount of teaching language. Too little explanation makes it difficult for students to understand, while too much explanation may make students rely too much on teachers, which is not conducive to cultivating students' ability of independent thinking. English is not a simple language system. The knowledge that teachers impart to students in classroom is the most basic, but we must realize that this is not the

ultimate goal of teaching. In other words, learners should try to use English. In recent years, many experts and scholars are also aware of this problem. Therefore, teachers should pay attention to the comprehensive ability of reading, speaking and writing. Of course, this needs to be based on the rational use of teaching.

Teacher-student interaction is the language used in the discussion, questions and answers between teachers and students in the classroom. In teaching, classroom questioning is the most commonly used way for teachers to interact with students, because questioning is the most convenient and easiest way to practice. Classroom questions can be separated into two categories: display questions and referential questions. Display questions are those to which teachers already know the answers. Frequently, the answers to these questions are predetermined. They can assist teachers in assessing students' knowledge mastery in order to achieve the teaching impact of reviewing previous knowledge while learning new information. Referential questions are questions that teachers do not know the answer. These questions are open and have no standard answers. Referential questions can stimulate students' creative thinking and interest in learning, and then promote students to increase language output and promote second language acquisition. Of course, all these questions play a vital role in students' mastery of English knowledge.

Teachers' feedback language refers to the language used by teachers to evaluate students' classroom participation. Positive and negative feedback are the two forms of feedback available. Of course, different feedback has different effects on students' psychological conditions. Positive feedback is to give affirmation to students' responses and performance, which can not only enable students to obtain a sense of achievement, but also encourage them to participate more in the classroom. And there are many kinds of negative feedback, including direct error correction, asking other students to answer, giving some clues for students to correct themselves. Compared with direct error correction, the other two ways are less likely to make students feel ashamed to answer questions, and they also protect students' confidence in learning English. Therefore, teachers should use appropriate feedback language to promote and encourage students' learning.

#### 4. Related Research at Home and Abroad

##### 1) Related Research Abroad

Since teacher classroom discourse plays an important role in foreign language classroom teaching, western linguists began to make a systematic and in-depth study of teachers classroom discourse as early as the 1950s. In the 1970s, foreign scholars began to explore teachers' classroom discourse from different perspectives. Flanders (1961: 173) put forward the teacher language behavior analysis method in the book

*Teacher Behavior Analysis*, which means that teachers need to adopt different teaching methods to complete teaching tasks according to students' words and deeds and reactions in the classroom. It can be seen that teachers' teaching methods determine students' words and deeds in class to a certain extent. (Hu Yuan, 2014: 4) Sinclair & Coulthard (1975) proposed an interactive model of classroom discourse based on previous studies, namely IRF model: teacher initiation, student response and teacher feedback. This research result has a great impact on improving the interactivity of teachers' classroom discourse in the later stage.

In the 1980s, the development of second language acquisition theory promoted the study of teachers' classroom discourse. Researchers more explicitly demonstrated the challenges that occur in the process of second language acquisition and thoroughly emphasized the relevance of classroom interaction by relying primarily on the tools and techniques utilized by educators and sociologists (Nunan, 1991: 141). Therefore, the role of teacher talk in the classroom had been paid more and more attention. During this period, researchers also analyzed the types of teachers' classroom discourse, which can be divided into classroom English, teaching English, teacher-student interaction and teachers' feedback language. At the same time, they also found that teachers' classroom discourse is interactive, that is, teachers could constantly adjust their language according to learners' language level in order to be better understood. From the perspective of linguistics, most studies revealed the characteristics of teachers' classroom discourse in pronunciation, vocabulary, discourse and so on. By the 1990s, people gradually deepened their understanding of teacher talk. Researchers began to explore the special relationship between classroom behaviors and language acquisition from the perspective of function, in order to have a deeper understanding of real classroom teaching and to clarify the important role of teachers' classroom discourse as an important input in students' second language acquisition. (Yu Yingying, 2017: 9) In the 21st century, Cook (2002) conducted relevant research on the definition of teachers' classroom discourse. He believed that teacher classroom discourse was a simplified language form after teachers adjust the form and function of the medium language of classroom teaching in order to increase teacher-student engagement and students' acquisition of a second language. In short, the study of foreign teachers' discourse has yielded fruitful results.

##### 2) Related Research at Home

For a long time, foreign language instruction in China has prioritized content and outcomes, with an emphasis on knowledge acquisition but little attention paid to the cultivation of learning processes and methodologies. Some domestic researchers did not begin to pay attention to the international achievements of classroom discourse until the late twentieth century.

Then there was some thesis focusing on foreign language teachers or foreign language classrooms and focusing on the review of western theories. The domestic research on teacher talk was mainly carried out under the traditional teacher centered classroom model, in which the amount of teacher talks accounts for the vast majority.

Zhao Xiaohong (1998: 18-23) from Shanghai Jiaotong University made quantitative statistics on the amount of teacher talk in the classroom through the methods of classroom observation, transcripts, recordings and interviews. The results showed that in a 45-minute English reading class, teachers' speaking time takes up 65% ~ 90% of the whole classroom time, while students had few opportunities to express their opinions and participate in classroom interaction. Obviously, this was not suitable for the teaching goal of taking students as the center and cultivating students' language communication ability advocated by the new curriculum standard. In 1999, there was a turning point in the research of teachers' classroom discourse in China. In the shadows of the International Association of English Teachers' 33rd annual meeting (LATEFL), Wang Yinquan (1999: 48-49) pointed out that teachers' classroom discourse is both the purpose of learning and the medium of teaching. Therefore, whether teachers' discourse was properly used would have a positive or negative impact on learners' output and communicative competence. So far, the research topic of teacher classroom discourse had been officially introduced into the domestic research field.

Under the "student-centered teaching model," Zhou Xing and Zhou Yun (2002: 59-68) examined and evaluated teacher talk in college English classrooms. The findings revealed that, as compared to the teacher-centered teaching model, the student-centered teaching model can give learners with more opportunities to utilize the target language for communication and meaning negotiation, resulting in a more conducive learning environment. In addition, Hu Xuewen (2003: 39-43) pointed out in the characteristics and functions of teachers' classroom discourse that under the current trend of "student-centered", teachers still played a leading role. In order to study the relationship between teachers' questioning and students' participation in classroom interaction, Hu Qingqiu (2004: 22-27) discussed and analyzed teachers' questioning skills, forms and contents.

Although the domestic research on teachers' classroom discourse has achieved a lot of research results, there are more studies on college English classroom discourse, while there are fewer studies on primary and secondary school English teachers' classroom discourse. At the same time, the research on teachers' classroom discourse in China is still in its infancy, and many problems related to teacher talk and language acquisition remain to be solved. Therefore, domestic scholars and front-line teachers should conduct

more systematic research on how to improve the teaching quality of English teachers in China.

## Research Design

### 1. Research Questions

In view of the above, the author reviews the previous research on teachers' classroom discourse at home and abroad. Based on this, this research selects Krashen's comprehensible input hypothesis and Long's interaction hypothesis in second language acquisition theory as the research perspective to analyze the classroom discourse of senior high school English teachers in both qualitative and quantitative terms, so as to reveal the characteristics of senior high school English teachers' classroom discourse and its impact on learners' language acquisition. Specifically, the following questions are the subject of this research: (1) What is the proportion of speaking time between teachers and students in senior high school English classroom? (2) What traits do senior high school English teachers have when it comes to classroom questioning? (3) What kind of feedback do teachers usually use in senior high school English classroom?

### 2. Research Subject

This study was carried out in the Zhengji senior high school in Jiangsu Province. This study takes a senior English teacher and the students in her class as the research object, and selects three different types of classes taught by the teacher as the research content. This teacher has advanced teaching ideas and rich teaching experience. At the same time, the first year of senior high school is an important stage for students to obtain language input and output. Therefore, choosing them is typical and representative.

### 3. Research Methods

In classroom teaching research, the most common research methods are experimental research, action research and naturalistic observation. Considering that this study is only to observe and describe the current situation and characteristics of senior high school English teachers' classroom discourse, and has no intention of exploring any cause, the method of naturalistic observation is adopted. Specifically, this study observes and records the classroom discourse of the teacher and transcribes it into written words to systematically analyze the classroom discourse of English teachers according to these materials.

### 4. Research Process

Aiming at the research problems, the author uses the combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis to investigate and study. The author collected the classroom recordings of a senior English teacher in the Zhengji senior high school in Jiangsu Province. There are three classes, each of which is 45 minutes long. First of all, the author observes the teaching class of the three classes, takes notes of the classroom observation records, and records the modal particles or repetitive

words that appear in the class. Secondly, the author transcribes the recordings of the three classes. During the data analysis, the author conducts a thorough examination of the data obtained from classroom observation and records to ensure the reliability of the research results.

## Data Analysis

### 1. The Quantity of Teacher Talk

This part mainly discusses the amount of teachers' classroom discourse and its impact on learners' second language acquisition. Based on classroom recording and observation, the author makes statistics on the amount of teachers' discourse from two aspects: time and discourse proportion. A class lasts 45 minutes. The time and percentage of the teacher's and students' talk time in the three classes are shown in table 4.1 below.

**Table 4.1: The proportion of teacher talk and student talk time in classroom**

| Items  | Time of teacher speaking |       | Time of student speaking |       | other activities |       |
|--------|--------------------------|-------|--------------------------|-------|------------------|-------|
|        | T                        | %     | T                        | %     | T                | %     |
| Class1 | 23 min                   | 51.1% | 14min                    | 31.1% | 8 min            | 17.8% |
| Class2 | 28 min                   | 62.2% | 9 min                    | 20%   | 8 min            | 17.8% |
| Class3 | 15 min                   | 33.3% | 10 min                   | 22.2% | 20 min           | 44.4% |

It should be noted that the teacher talk in this list includes teachers' analysis of materials, organization of classroom activities and interaction with students. Students' discourse includes answering questions, participating in discussions and completing tasks. In addition, other activities refer to activities that do not require teachers and students to speak, such as doing exercises, reviewing by themselves.

Some scholars have found that in the traditional teacher-centered English classroom teaching, the amount of teachers' classroom discourse can usually account for 65% or even 90% of the whole class time. In this way, students will have less opportunities to participate in class activities, which is not conducive to the cultivation of learners' language output ability. However, the proportion of teachers' discourse in these three classrooms is substantially lower than in standard teacher-centered English classroom teaching, as seen in the table. This indicates that the classroom is shifting from a teacher-centered to a student-centered environment, as well as the responsibilities of teachers and students in the classroom.

At the same time, we can also see that there are some differences in the amount of teacher talk in the three classes. Because the specific types of courses are different, teachers' participation in the classroom is also different. Classroom 1 is a reading class. Students will be interested in new content. Teachers should guide them to participate in classroom activities more. Therefore, the amount of teachers' classroom discourse will be relatively reduced, accounting for only 51.1%. Class 2 is a grammar class, which is mainly explained by teachers, and the participation of students is lower. Therefore, teachers' classroom discourse will take up more time,

accounting for 62.2%. The class 3 is a writing class, in which teachers give students some time to practice. Therefore, the amount of classroom discourse of teachers is relatively small, and less than 40%.

As some researchers have mentioned, when the classroom is dominated by teachers, the opportunities for students to output will be reduced. Therefore, the teacher should not let the students receive knowledge passively, but try to communicate and interact with them more. On this foundation, we can help students improve their output ability in the target language, which will help them learn a second language.

### 2. Teachers' Questioning Behavior

Teachers' questioning is an important part of teachers' classroom discourse. On the one hand, it can help teachers check students' mastery of knowledge. On the other hand, it can improve teacher-student engagement and encourage students to think critically. In terms of teachers' questioning, the author will explore the types of questions. Specifically, teacher talk in the classroom can be divided into two types: display questions and referential questions.

Display questions refers to the questions that the teacher has known the answer in advance, and this kind of question often has a definite answer. Referential questions are questions that require students to collect information by themselves without definite answers. Therefore, in order to improve more communication between teachers and students in the classroom, teachers should use fewer display questions and more referential questions. In this study, the author recorded the two different types of teachers' questions. The results are shown in table 4.2.

**Table 4.2: The proportion of referential and display questions**

| Items  | The amount of the questions |      | Display questions |       | Referential questions |       |
|--------|-----------------------------|------|-------------------|-------|-----------------------|-------|
|        | n                           | %    | n                 | %     | n                     | %     |
| Class1 | 40                          | 100% | 28                | 70%   | 12                    | 30%   |
| Class2 | 35                          | 100% | 25                | 71.4% | 10                    | 28.6% |
| Class3 | 22                          | 100% | 14                | 64%   | 8                     | 36%   |

According to the table, although the amount of teachers' questions varies in different classes, they all have one thing in common, that is, there are more display questions. Specifically, teachers prefer questions with clear answers in class rather than questions that need to be explored. Referential questions, on the other hand, can create genuine conversation and connection between teachers and students, thereby stimulating students' interest in learning and enhancing their thinking. Therefore, in English classroom, teachers should reasonably control the amount of these two types of questions.

### 3. Teachers' Feedback

Teacher feedback refers to the evaluation given by teachers to the performance of students' classroom participation. It is not only an important source of students' language input, but it also can mobilize students' interest in learning, and plays an important role in students' second language acquisition. Generally speaking, feedback can be divided into positive feedback and negative feedback. Different forms of feedback will have different effects on students. According to the observation and records, the author makes statistics on the feedback discourse of teachers in the classroom. The results are shown in table 4.3.

**Table 4.3: The proportion of different types of feedback**

| Items   | Total feedback | Positive feedback |       | Negative feedback |       |
|---------|----------------|-------------------|-------|-------------------|-------|
|         | n              | n                 | %     | n                 | %     |
| Class 1 | 34             | 29                | 85.3% | 5                 | 14.7% |
| Class 2 | 30             | 22                | 73.3% | 8                 | 26.7% |
| Class 3 | 20             | 18                | 90%   | 2                 | 10%   |

It can be seen from the above table that teachers often use positive feedback when giving students evaluation, such as praise and repeated answers. Many studies also show that positive feedback can not only let learners know that their answer is right, but also improve

their attention. Although positive feedback helps to improve students' self-confidence, when they make wrong answers, teachers should still give some negative feedback. From table 4.4, we can know some specific forms of negative feedback and the proportions.

**Table 4.4: The proportion of negative feedback**

| Items   | Total feedback | Direct to correct | Ask others to answer | Guide to amend |
|---------|----------------|-------------------|----------------------|----------------|
|         | n              | n                 | n                    | n              |
| Class 1 | 5              | 1                 | 1                    | 3              |
| Class 2 | 8              | 1                 | 3                    | 4              |
| Class 3 | 2              | 0                 | 1                    | 1              |

According to the information in the table, we can see that in most cases, teachers will not directly correct students' mistakes. On the one hand, teachers will invite other students to answer questions. More often, teachers will make students aware of their problems by repeating their wrong answers, or guide students to correct themselves by changing the way they ask questions. This can actually assist students learn a second language by protecting their enthusiasm for studying as well as promoting formal language output. In short, teachers should reasonably use positive feedback or negative feedback according to different situations, so as to enhance the motivation of students' English learning.

## CONCLUSION

As we all know, teachers' classroom discourse has an important impact on students' second language

acquisition. This study investigates the use of teacher talk in the English classroom in the Zhengji senior high school, and then examines the current state of the usage of teacher talk in senior high school English classrooms. Specifically, the author obtains relevant data through classroom recording and observation records. On the basis of previous theoretical research, the author analyzes and studies the amount of teachers' classroom discourse, the types of teachers' questions and the ways of teachers' feedback. The specific research findings are as follows.

First of all, in terms of the amount of teachers' classroom discourse, teachers no longer have all the classroom discourse power. Through the research, it can be found that most teachers fully recognize the dominant position of students in the classroom, so they provide students with many opportunities to participate in school

activities and improve their capacity to produce language. At the same time, the amount of teacher talk is also affected by the type of curriculum. In reading and writing classes, teachers let students participate more in classroom activities. Therefore, the amount of teachers' classroom discourse will be relatively reduced. In grammar class, teachers have to explain more content, so students' participation is lower.

Secondly, in terms of the types of questioning, teachers tend to display questions with clear answers, while they use fewer referential questions to cultivate students' creative thinking. The reason is that, at present, English learning in senior high school is still for the purpose of examination, and display questions can examine students' mastery of textbooks. However, on the premise of completing the teaching task, teachers should also pay attention to improving students' enthusiasm to participate in the classroom and encouraging students to think more.

Finally, in terms of the types of feedback, teachers use a variety of feedback to encourage and guide students. According to the data, teachers often use positive feedback to stimulate students' interest in learning. At the same time, for students' mistakes, teachers often do not directly correct them, but ask other students to answer or guide students to correct themselves. This will not hurt students' self-confidence in English learning, but also let them have a deeper memory of their knowledge.

## REFERENCES

- Allwright, R. L. (1984). "The Importance of Interaction in Classroom Language Learning" [J]. *Applied linguistics*, 5(2), 156-171.
- Cook, V. (2002). *Second Language Learning and Language Teaching* [M]. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.
- Deng, Y. (2003). On the Characteristics and Variability of English Teachers' Language [J]. *Education Practice and Research*, (8), 29-31.
- Ellis, R. (1994). *The study of Second Language Acquisition* [M]. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Flanders, N. A. (1961). "Analyzing Teacher Behaviour" [M]. *Educational leadership*. NY: Aeeison-We-sley, 19(3), 173.
- Hu, Q. (2004). Analysis of the Survey on Teaching Questioning Models of College English Teachers [J]. *Foreign Language World*, (6), 22-27.
- Hu, X. (2003). Characteristics and Functions of Teacher Discourse [J]. *Shandong Foreign Language Teaching*, (3), 39-43.
- Hu, Y. (2014). *A Case Study on Classroom Discourse Analysis of High School English Teachers* [D]. Wuhan: Huazhong Normal University, 4.
- Long, M. H., & Sato, C. J. (1983). "Classroom Foreign Talk Discourse: Forms and Functions of Teachers Questions" [A]. *Classroom oriented research in second language acquisition*. Rowley, Mass: Newbury House, 268(85), 253-79.
- Long, M. H. (1985). "Input and second language acquisition theory". *Input In Second Language Acquisition*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House, 377-393.
- Lu, T. (2022). *A Study on the Discourse of High School English Teachers - Based on the Perspective of Second Language Acquisition* (Master's thesis). Xi'an: Shaanxi Normal University. 2018, 23.
- Nunan, D. (1991). *Language Teaching Methodology: A Textbook for Teachers* [M]. NJ: Prentice Hall, 188.
- Richards, J. C. (2002). *Longma Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics* [M]. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.
- Sinclair, J. M., & Coulthard. (1975). *Towards an Analysis of Discourse: The English Used by Teachers and Pupils* [M]. Oxford: OUP.
- Swain, M. (1985). "Communicative competence: Some roles of comprehensible input and comprehensible output in its development" [J]. *Input in second language acquisition*. Rowley, Mass: Newbury House, (15), 165-179.
- Wang, Y. (1999). The Influence of Teaching Methods and Non-Verbal Factors on English Teaching: A Report on the 33rd International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (IATEFL) Annual Conference [J]. *Foreign Language Teaching and Research: Bimonthly Journal of Foreign Languages*, (4), 48-49.
- Wu, Y. (2013). *Classroom Discourse Research on High School English Teachers* [D]. Jinan: Shandong Normal University, 9.
- Yu, Y. (2017). *A study on high school English teachers' classroom discourse based on second language acquisition theory* [D]. Huaibei: Huaibei Normal University, 9.
- Zhao, X. (1998). A Survey and Analysis of Discourse by College English Reading Course Instructors [J]. *Foreign Language World*, (2), 18-23.
- Zhou, X., & Zhou, Y. (2002). A survey and analysis of discourse by college English classroom teachers [J]. *Foreign Language Teaching and Research*, 34(1), 59-68.