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A discourse model to analyse verbal interaction in Tunisian EFL lesson discourses

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Abstract

In this article, a discourse model was developed to analyse verbal interactions in 38 Tunisian EFL lessons. This model identifies four elements of exchange structure—INITIATION, RESPONSE, NEGOTIATION, and TERMINATION—and several communicative acts that differ from those proposed by Sinclair and Coulthard (1992). Data analysis underscores the prevalent patterns of verbal interaction within Tunisian EFL lessons and highlights the model's importance in understanding teachers' classroom practices. This research has pedagogical implications for EFL teachers and potential applications in teacher training programs. It offers in-service EFL teachers a descriptive tool to analyse, evaluate, and critically reflect on classroom practices.

Keywords: EFL/ESL; Discourse Analysis Model; Spoken Discourse Analysis; Verbal Interaction; Critical reflective practices

1. Introduction

This article examines the prevalent patterns of verbal interaction within Tunisian EFL secondary and basic classrooms. The central question guiding this article is: What are the prevalent patterns of verbal interaction in Tunisian EFL lesson discourses?

To answer the question, the researcher posited that teacher-pupil interaction helps develop pupils' interactive and communicative competence in the TL, (Savignon, 1983, 2000; Canale and Swain, 1980; Canale, 1983; Richards, 1983; Bachman 1990; and Mariani 1994).

Additionally, she argued that negotiated interaction in the classroom facilitates acquisition (Long, 1983, 1996; Ellis, 1990). This interaction contributes to learning through "comprehensible input" (Krashen, 1980, 1982, 1985) and through the learner's attempts to produce "comprehensible output" (Swain, 1985, 1993, 1995). Furthermore, analysing classroom interaction contributes to our understanding of teachers' instructional practices.

The researcher's assertions align with the broader field of language education and applied linguistics, where the analysis of classroom interaction is considered crucial for understanding various aspects of language teaching and learning. By examining how teachers and students interact in the classroom, researchers can gain insights into the effectiveness of different instructional strategies, the dynamics of classroom communication, and the factors that impact language learning outcomes.

In Second Language Acquisition (SLA), many scholars recognise that classroom interaction plays an important role in helping learners acquire a new language. Ellis (1990), for instance, outlines the theoretical underpinnings supporting the connection between classroom interaction and language learning, drawing from the reception-based and production-based theories. Among the reception-based theories delineated by Ellis (1990) are the frequency hypothesis

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(Ellis, 1990), the input hypothesis (Krashen, 1982, 1985), and the interaction hypothesis (Long, 1983). Reception-based theories posit that interaction plays a contributory role in the process of second language acquisition. The production-based theories, anchored in Swain's (1985) output hypothesis, contend that the crucial factor for Second Language Acquisition (SLA) leading to native-like proficiency is the learners' generation of "comprehensible output."

Long's Interaction Hypothesis (1983) and Swain's Output Hypothesis (1985) emphasise the importance of interaction in language acquisition, suggesting that meaningful interaction promotes language development. Additionally, scholars like Seedhouse (2004) and Walsh (2011) highlight the role of classroom discourse in shaping learners' opportunities to engage in authentic language use and develop communicative competence. Walsh explores various aspects of classroom discourse, including teacher-student interactions, student-student interactions, and the use of language for learning purposes. He also discusses the influence of different teaching approaches and methodologies on classroom discourse and language development. Overall, Walsh's work provides valuable insights into how classroom discourse can be effectively utilised to enhance language learning.

Analysing classroom interaction can, also, shed light on the challenges learners face in acquiring a second or foreign language. Factors such as teacher/learner talk time, student participation patterns, and the use of the target language versus the native language in instruction can impact the development of communicative competence (Gass & Mackey, 2007).

For Kramsch, (1986: 367) verbal interaction entails negotiation of intended meaning. That is, the interaction involves the adjustment of one's speech to the effect one intends to have on the listener. It entails anticipating the listener's response and possible misunderstanding, clarifying one's own and the other's intentions and arriving at the closest possible match between intended, perceived, and anticipated meanings (Kramsch, 1986: 367).

Interaction is seen by Malamah-Thomas (1987) as a two-way process. In classroom interaction, the teacher acts upon a class and student responses will subsequently modify the teacher's next action. Malamah-Thomas (1987: 7) comments: "It is a constant pattern of mutual influence and adjustment." She argues that the success of a language lesson can be judged in terms of the learning that results from it and that "the internal process of learning will come about as a consequence of the external interaction which takes place between the two kinds of participant: the teacher on the one hand, and the learners on the other" (Malamah-Thomas, 1987: Vii).

Allwright (1984: 157) considers interaction in the classroom not only "as an aspect of 'modern' language teaching methods, but as the fundamental of classroom pedagogy, the fact that everything that happens in the classroom happens through a process of live person-to-person interaction."

In the field of communicative language teaching and learning, interaction is regarded as the "heart" of communication since, through interaction, learners exchange, for instance, ideas, feelings and thoughts. Ellis (1990: 96) argues that interaction refers to "the process of interpersonal communication; it involves the efforts of both the learner and the teacher. Input is supplied and made comprehensible through interaction." For Ellis (1985: 143), "classroom interaction was the major variable affecting SLA in formal settings."

As echoed in the literature (Allwright, 1984; Ellis, 1984b; Wong-Fillmore, 1985; Tsui, 1995), the amount and quality of observational patterns of student participation in classroom discourse is expected to correlate with learning outcomes.

Allwright (1984: 157) has set three arguments concerning foreign language interaction: (i) one aim of classroom interaction is to involve learners in what they do during a lesson; (ii) learning correlates with communication and classroom interaction in its various patterns in language lesson such as groups and pair works, whole class; (iii) the use of language by transferring it from classroom experience into non-classroom contexts. This argument does not, however, support classroom interaction "as a matter of principle but only as a matter of practical policy" (Allwright, 1984: 158).

Nunan (1989: 40) contends that it "was only when researchers began to record and analyse interactions that they came to appreciate the complexities underlying interpersonal communication." For him, if we want to enrich our understanding of classroom interaction "we need to spend time looking in classrooms" (Nunan, 1989: 40).

Similarly, Van Lier (1990: 231-232) maintains that a fundamental element in any classroom monitoring is the recording of interaction in that classroom, ideally on video. He also recommends that all trainee teachers record their lessons because he considers the recording and transcribing of classroom data as a "tool for self-monitoring and self-assessment for teachers, hence an instrument in programme improvement" (Van Lier, 1990: 232).

Several empirical studies based on language data gathered from the classroom have tried to identify different principles and varieties of classroom interaction and have produced different descriptive systems. For example, Abdesslem (1987, 1993) provided a detailed analysis of classroom interaction in eight English lessons in Tunisian secondary schools. Data collection took place in April 1983 and then in November 1983. The researcher's objective was to determine the overall pattern of an English lesson. According to Abdesslem, the analysis of Tunisian classroom discourses provides an assessment of the influence of the textbooks used in the classrooms. It reveals the need for reform in light of the recent and converging ideas in L2 acquisition studies and teaching methodology. Finally, it explains the difficulties Tunisian FL learners experience in spoken discourse, particularly conversation. (Abdesslem, 1987: 218)

Abdesslem's (1987, 1993) descriptive system¹ has inspired the present research and has been of great help as it raised serious problems that prevent Tunisian EFL learners from learning the TL.

This article is, also, anchored in what Allwright and Bailey (1991) and Nunan (1996) call descriptive classroom-centred research. It examines issues arising from exploring the typical patterns of verbal interaction between teachers and learners in Tunisian EFL lesson discourses. For this purpose, a discourse model for analysing verbal interaction has been developed. It is an adapted version of Sinclair & Coulthard's (1975, 1992) model of classroom interaction analysis and an adaptation of conventions adopted by other discourse and conversation analysts such as Burton (1981), Francis and Hunston (1992), Willis (1992) Nunn (1996). The model proposes four elements of exchange structure namely, INITIATION, RESPONSE, NEGOTIATION, and TERMINATION and several communicative acts some of which differ from those proposed by Sinclair & Coulthard (1975, 1992) and which provide an appropriate descriptive tool to analyse classroom spoken discourse in the Tunisian context.

The researcher contends that a reflective analysis of the teacher-learner interaction patterns, can not only enhance teachers' instructional practices but also foster the development of a supportive learning environment that promotes the enhancement of learners' communicative competence in the TL.

2. Methodological Framework

To conduct this research, the author obtained permission from the Ministry of Education to observe and record several EFL lessons. Additionally, she reached out to the headmasters of selected secondary and basic schools to secure access. The headmasters facilitated introductions to the EFL teachers within their schools. Over 5 months, the researcher observed 38 lessons, each lasting 55 minutes. A spoken data corpus was meticulously recorded in both audio and video formats. The data collection spanned four Tunisian secondary and basic schools. The 38 lessons were strategically chosen, and six English lessons were transcribed for in-depth analysis.

The idea behind having audio and video recordings as the main instruments in the data collection procedure was that there would be a choice of focus. It could be the teacher and/or a pupil, and/or a particular group of pupils. For example, in this study, the video-recording helped detect how much teacher talking time was occurring compared with pupil talking time.

Additionally, the recording could be replayed and examined several times; the researcher could capture details that could not easily be observed by other means. Video-recording also helped register aspects of non-verbal communication between teachers and pupils such as gestures, facial expressions, and head and eye movements.

The purpose of using videotapes was to get reasonably naturally occurring classroom extracts (Tannen, 1984: 33). Zuengler et al. (2001) maintain that video recording is a valuable tool for the researcher using qualitative methods. Hopkins (2002: 115) asserts "the videotape recorder is increasingly being used by teachers as a means of gathering general information about their teaching. It allows the teacher to observe many facets of his or her teaching quickly, and provides heuristic and accurate information for diagnosis."

As far as "genuine" language is concerned, the researcher was aware of many of the distorting effects, and asked the teachers, for instance, not to set a special lesson. In addition, attempts were made to visit the observed classrooms at least twice so that the pupils as well as the teacher would get used to the presence of an outside visitor and would become more familiar with the presence of microphones and video-recorders in their classroom.

In every observed lesson, the researcher sat at the back of the class and placed two external microphones in different corners to improve sound quality and to make transcription easier (The researcher found the microphone attached to the video camera inappropriate).

Attempts have been made to observe what was going on, and to collect the necessary information that the researcher deemed necessary for the transcription and analysis of the classroom data.

The videotaped data were transcribed and analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The quantitative method addressed the frequencies and percentages of the aspects of verbal interaction in Tunisian EFL secondary and basic school classrooms, such as the structures of teacher and pupil-eliciting exchanges, and the occurrences of the four elements (I-R-N-T): Initiation-Response-Negotiation-Termination in Tunisian foreign language lesson discourses (FLLD). Anchored in the quantitative data, a qualitative analysis of the transcripts was made to describe teacher and pupil talk in an attempt to identify the distinguishing features of interaction in Tunisian foreign language lesson discourses and to depict the impact of several variables on the prominent patterns of verbal interaction in Tunisian EFL classrooms.

Hence, the methods used in this classroom-centered research can be generally categorised into experimental research (quantitative research) and non-experimental (qualitative) research. Concerning the transcription of the data, the whole lessons were transcribed. The rationale behind this was to ensure that every utterance was analysed and examined in relation to other utterances in the interaction process (Schwartz, 1980: 138). The transcription took a very long time – more than a year. The next stage in the process was the researcher's attempts to refine and validate the coding of the research transcripts at the University of Birmingham.

3. Discourse Analysis: The Contribution of the Ethnomethodologists

For Hymes (1980: 89), ethnography of communication studies involves participation and observation. Schiffrin (1994: 13), however, emphasises the significance of participants' perspectives and argues that the ethnography of communication "may use interlocutors as informants in the analysis of their talk" (Schiffrin, 1994: 13).

Van Lier (1990: 16) advocates the use of an ethnographic approach when conducting classroom research. He maintains that: "classroom research is thus a sensitive enterprise: it must always be on guard against high-risk inferences and against the temptation to extrapolate from chance occurrences" (Van Lier, 1990: 16).

Sanday (1982: 253) proposes a strong argument for the use of ethnography in classroom research. She points out that "videotaped interaction can change behaviour in a way that a manual for proper conduct cannot. We must keep this in mind as we continue to explore the ethnographic paradigm" (Sanday, 1982: 253).

However, for Van Lier (1990: 40), the traditional approach of the ethnographer "doing descriptive field work" is different from the approach used by educationalists when doing classroom research. He argues that the participation of an outside observer in an EFL lesson could distort the typical patterns of interaction. He claims that "if the classroom ethnographer is regarded as an evaluator or inspector, the entire enterprise becomes impossible" (Van Lier, 1990: 39).

In an attempt to provide a "description of naturally occurring language" (Richards et al., 1985: 97), the researcher in the present study has used the ethnographic approach when observing EFL lesson discourse in Tunisian classrooms. The researcher took all the necessary precautions so that her presence would not distort the typical patterns of interaction and her presence would not be viewed as "exotic" (Van Lier, 1990: 41). This point will be discussed in chapter three. Besides, the researcher has tried to explain to the teachers that the purpose of the research was not to evaluate their lessons (see chapter three). Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1982: 256) asks those who wish to use an ethnographic approach when doing classroom research not to use ethnography as a spying instrument.

As far as personal subjectivity and impartiality are concerned, the researcher has addressed the issue seriously in the choice of the research tools. Attempts are made to collect data using different research tools such as classroom observations, field notes, linguistic analysis of lesson scripts, and questionnaires.

In sum, ethnomethodologists have contributed a lot to the study of the structure of conversation. The researcher believes that the findings of their studies on turn-taking, topic, and topic change are relevant to the present research as they may provide a useful benchmark for the study of verbal interaction in EFL classroom discourse.

For this study, the researcher deliberately selected non-native English-speaking teachers who shared similar backgrounds, possessed diverse teaching experiences, adhered to the identical English Language Teaching (ELT) program in their respective schools, utilised the same ELT textbooks as mandated by the Ministry of Education, and were anticipated to employ a uniform teaching approach for English instruction. The learners, comprising both male

and female students, were enrolled in English as a compulsory subject within the school curriculum. Furthermore, they hailed from distinct academic disciplines (Arts, Sciences, and Maths) and exhibited varying proficiency levels in English.

To analyse verbal interaction in Tunisian Foreign Language Lesson Discourses (FLLD), the researcher endeavoured to devise a research model inspired by a refined version of Sinclair and Coulthard's (1975, 1992) discourse analysis model and incorporated insights from other discourse analysts like Willis (1992), Francis and Hunston (1992), Nunn (1996), and Consolo (1996). Upon scrutinising the data, it became evident that adjustments were necessary in the coding system proposed by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975, 1992) concerning the ranks of exchanges and moves. Furthermore, amendments and additions were needed to the list of communicative acts. The ensuing subsections expound on the adopted modifications.

This research article will consider the discourse exchange as the maximum unit of analysis and the speech act as the minimum unit because these, combined with the movement of moves, provide a means to map out the interaction pattern in Tunisian FL lesson discourses. The findings are presented in this article according to two major analytical approaches: quantitative and qualitative. The quantitative findings are used to identify all the discourse exchanges, moves, and speech acts in the research data. The qualitative findings are used to describe and analyse the typical patterns of verbal interaction in Tunisian FLLD.

4. The system of analysis adapted for Tunisian EFL lesson discourses

4.1. The System of Analysis: The Sinclair and Coulthard Model of Discourse Analysis

In the present research, the categories used for analysing verbal interaction in Tunisian EFL secondary and basic school classrooms emanate from the developed version of Sinclair and Coulthard's (1975, 1992) model of classroom interaction analysis and conventions adopted by other discourse and conversation analysts such as Burton (1981), Francis and Hunston (1992), Nunn (1996), and Consolo (1996). These adaptations are found to be useful for the analysis of the research data obtained from Tunisian foreign language lesson discourses (FLLD).

4.2. Why the Sinclair and Coulthard Model?

Sinclair and Coulthard (1975: 112) point out that their model could be used as a base model, to be modified in subsequent research to greater generality. In a more recent publication, Sinclair (1992: 83) confirms this by stating that "the original work was mostly valuable as a known position, fairly clearly stated, which acted as a stimulus for further development." However, Sinclair (1992: 83) considers this development as varied and extensive, but "no attempt was made to melt it into a coherent whole."

Hence, what makes the Sinclair and Coulthard model suitable for the analysis of the data gathered from language classrooms is its openness to modification and development, which Nunn (1996: 88) regards as an advantage.

This openness to modification is conspicuous in the work of several discourse and conversation analysts who developed and used the Sinclair-Coulthard model beyond the teaching exchanges it was originally derived from. For instance, Burton (1981) offers a set of modifications to the Sinclair-Coulthard model, which helps in the analysis of any naturally occurring talk. He points out that "data should be analysed according to a model sufficiently general and powerful to handle all types of talk" (Burton, 1981: 63).

Francis and Hunston (1992) and Tsui (1994) have also provided descriptive models for general conversation in which they have shown how the Sinclair and Coulthard model can be applied to non-teaching discourses. Francis and Hunston (1992: 123), for example, developed a system of analysis for an undergraduate course in Discourse Analysis, which they taught at the National University of Singapore. From a pedagogical point of view, they aimed to present a system, which could cope with a wide variety of discourse situations; such as casual conversations between friends and family members, child-adult talk, commercial transactions, and professional interviews. However, from a theoretical point of view, they aimed to "interpret, integrate and systematise the various adaptations and refinements of the original Sinclair and Coulthard model (1975) which have emerged from Birmingham over the past ten years" (Francis and Hunston, 1992: 123).

In addition to its openness to modification, the Sinclair-Coulthard model (1992) is considered as a guiding scheme (see Nunan 1993: 96-97) relevant to the purpose of this research, which is the study of verbal interaction in Tunisian foreign language lesson discourses (FLLD). However, when using the categories of the Sinclair-Coulthard model, the researcher was careful to:

- the drawback to the model emphasised by Burton (1981: 61). For him, it is difficult to apply the system to data collected in contexts that are non-formal, non-authoritarian, and non-collaborative. Sinclair and Coulthard (1975: 6) do acknowledge this: The system ... is now able to cope with most teacher/pupil interaction inside the classroom. What it cannot handle, and was not designed to handle is pupil/pupil interaction in project work, discussion groups, or the playground.
- “the dangers of forcing the data to fit the model” (Willis, 1983: 73). That is, instead of advocating and imposing a specific model to analyse the present research data, Sinclair and Coulthard’s tenet of first yielding a transcription of recorded classroom data, description and, then, considering modification is retained as a key principle for this research model.

4.3. The Sinclair and Coulthard Model

The Sinclair and Coulthard model was developed in 1975 and slightly revised in 1992. Sinclair and Coulthard (1992: 34) contend that *Towards an Analysis of Discourse* (1992) is a slightly modified version of Chapter 3 of Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) *Towards an Analysis of Discourse*, pp. 14-60. In both versions (1975, 1992), Sinclair and Coulthard have adopted a rank-scale model of classroom discourse, in which units at one rank or level are made up of units from the rank immediately below: A lesson is the highest unit and is made up of a series of transactions each of which consists of a series of exchanges, which in turn consist of moves made up of one or more acts (the lowest rank in the scale).

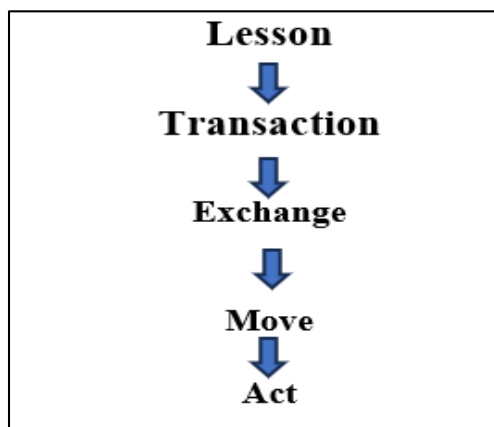


Figure 1 Sinclair and Coulthard’s (1992: 5) Rank-Scale Model of Classroom Discourse

In their study, Sinclair and Coulthard have identified a three-part sequence typical of classroom interaction called by Edwards and Westgate (1994: 124) “essential” teaching exchange. This sequence is known as Teacher Initiation, Learner Response and Teacher Feedback. Each type of exchange, move and act is defined according to its functional properties and its placement within the structure of discourse. For instance, “An elicitation as an act the function of which is to request a linguistic response or non-verbal surrogate such as nod. Realised by a question.” (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975: 28). Tsui (1994: 13) contends that the head act “carries the discourse function of the whole move.” That is to say, in an “elicit” exchange an “elicitation” is the main act in the eliciting move, which realises the element of the structure called an initiation” (Nunn, 1996: 449).

Working within the general framework of Sinclair and Coulthard, researchers, such as McTear (1975), Mehan et al. (1976), Chaudron (1977), and Ellis (1984) investigated classroom discourse in the L2 language classroom and found other types of exchanges.

McTear (1975) undertakes a short-term research project using the Sinclair and Coulthard model of discourse to the EFL classroom. He discerns two types of ‘sequence’ or structure:

- IR (F/I)n F (R) (where the follow-up move acts also as an elicitation)
- IR1 /I (F/I R/I1)n F (R)2 F (R)

The second structure is a highly complex sequence, arrived at when the teacher asks one pupil to ask another a question, which yet another pupil answers, with the teacher following up at each step. Willis (1981: 34) considers that both structures are typical of the foreign language lesson, and are in some respects similar to Sinclair and Coulthard’s bound exchanges.

McTear (1977) asserts that in L2 classroom settings, the initiation-response-feedback exchange is often modified by adding a student's response after the teacher's feedback. For Ellis (1985a), this type of discourse IRF (R) does not prepare L2 learners for communication in real-life situations. Mehan et al. (1976) also conduct their research in an ESL classroom. They are interested in the social organisation of interaction. They explore the idea of 'topic-related sequences' which they identify by such means as closed sets of verbal markers (similar to Sinclair and Coulthard's 'frame' and 'focus', para-linguistic and kinesics signals like the pace of teacher talk, postural shifts and so on). Mehan et al. (1976) are equally interested in interactional analysis. That is, they try to investigate how social events like turn-taking are structured by the participants. They distinguish between different types of elicitation. A "product" elicitation, for instance, is one where the respondent must provide a factual response; a "choice" elicitation offers the respondent a choice of "yes" or "no" or "A" or "B" or "C" etc.

IRF, however, is not the only kind of interaction that takes place in the classroom. Ellis (1984) studies classroom discourse in elementary ESL classrooms and demonstrates a variety of interactions that occurred in the classroom; for instance, interactions that did not require verbal response from the learner. For him, such interactions have even more shortcomings than the IRF, particularly in foreign language classrooms where the classroom is the only venue for practising foreign language.

Willis (1981, 1992) develops a method of analysing and describing the language used in foreign language lessons basing her research on adaptations and extensions of the Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) model. For Willis (1992), the model reveals the structure and common patterns of classroom interaction but is unable to "handle the two-level structure of the mainstream language classroom" (1992: 162-163), which she calls "outer" and 'inner' structures.

Consolo (1996) uses Sinclair and Coulthard's model to investigate teacher-student interaction in EFL classes in Brazil in an attempt to find out whether there are significant differences between lessons taught by NS and NNS teachers. In his study, Consolo (1996: 163) finds the need for modifications in the coding system proposed by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) at the ranks of exchanges, moves and acts.

At the exchange level, Consolo (1996: 170) expands the concept of bound exchanges to explain cases of exchange that, although containing an initiating move and head act, are topically bound to a previous exchange because speakers seek either clarification, confirmation or expansion of what has been previously said. Therefore, such exchanges are only functionally (and semantically) analysable if interpreted as a sequence of previous exchanges.

At the rank of moves, Consolo (1996) uses the modifications proposed in Coulthard and Montgomery (1981: 112), Coulthard and Brazil (1992: 71) and Francis and Hunston (1992: 124). For him, the IRF categories proposed by the original Sinclair and Coulthard model do not cope with cases of moves that have properties of both a response to a preceding element (either an eliciting or informing move) and an eliciting move for the next move in the exchange structure. Consolo (1996: 163) argues that "for analysing such moves, those cases have been labelled Response/Initiation (R/I) moves, to capture both functions realised by the same utterance." In addition to the incorporation of the R/I element of structure to the original Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) exchange structure, Consolo (1996: 163-164) abandons the one-to-one correspondence between move and element of structure.

At the rank of acts, Consolo (1996: 171-193) adds several acts to the initial list proposed by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975, 1992) such as apology, correction, thank, parting remark, encouragement, etc. which the researcher borrowed and used in the coding and analysis of the present research data. The results of the analysis of the data recorded in Brazilian classrooms revealed "no significant differences in most of the discourse categories at the ranks of acts and moves, as far as teachers who speak English as their L1 or as an FL are concerned" (Consolo, 1996: 302), and showed that, besides the discourse structure of lessons, the factors of topic of the lessons and the teachers' experience in classroom management had an impact on teacher-student interaction and student participation in CD (Consolo, 1996: 302).

In his study of classroom interaction in Qatari Boy's Secondary School English lessons, Nunn (1996) develops a system of analysis using the original Sinclair and Coulthard model. Nunn (1996) elaborates on the basic IRF model and introduces the notions of "negotiation" (N) and "terminate" (T) as essential parts of the basic structure of exchanges. For him, the term "negotiation" (N) has been selected for a new element that has the interactive function of maintaining the negotiation of the exchange open.... A negotiation may, for example, seek an expansion of a response, encourage a speaker to continue, or request clarification or repetition. In structural terms, it delays the closure of the exchange (Nunn 1996: 122) whereas, the term "terminate" (T) "would then, by definition, terminate the exchange" (Nunn, 1996: 127). Nunn (1996: 123) proposes the following revised formulation of the exchange structure: I-R- (N-R)n-(T).

According to Nunn (1996: 82), the version of the model “is not presented as definitive, but as a contribution to an ongoing process of development involving researchers in different disciplines who adapt and develop the same basic model from their perspective and for their purposes.”

In the present research, the categories used for analysing verbal interaction in Tunisian EFL secondary and basic school classrooms emanate from the developed version of Sinclair and Coulthard’s (1975, 1992) model of classroom interaction analysis and conventions adopted by other discourse and conversation analysts such as Burton (1981), Francis and Hunston (1992), Nunn (1996), and Consolo (1996). These adaptations are found to be useful for the analysis of the research data obtained from Tunisian foreign language lesson discourses (FLLD).

5. Terminologies and Categories Used for Analysing Verbal Interaction in Tunisian EFL Lesson Discourses

While coding lesson transcripts, the researcher’s major focus was on exchanges, moves and acts which are discussed below.

5.1. The “Final Model” of Analysis

The model of analysis suggested here is not conveyed as a definite model, but as a version that was used for the analysis of this particular study. From the total of thirty-eight lessons, the researcher selected six lessons taught at different schools and different course levels. The lessons (referred to as Research Data) were analysed for exchanges and moves, following the Sinclair and Coulthard model (1975, 1992). The language inside the limits of moves was likewise broken down into acts, using Sinclair and Coulthard’s list of categories of acts in classroom discourse.

A comprehensive examination of the research data disclosed the need for modification in the coding system at the ranks of exchanges and moves, in addition to the need for rectification and additional modifications in the list of acts. The following subsections deal with the modifications adopted.

5.2. Developments at the Rank of Exchanges & Moves

Following Nunn’s framework (1996:122-146), in this research, the term “**Negotiation**” denoted as “**N**” is adopted as an element of exchange structure serving the function of keeping the negotiation of the exchange open. It specifically refers to follow-up/bound initiation (**F/I^b**) (Sinclair and Coulthard (1992: 30-31) treat the teacher’s utterance in the third move as a follow-up to the learner’s response. However, it could be interpreted as performing two functions at a time: as a follow-up and as bound initiation.) move. In simpler terms, negotiation is used in situations where the teacher assesses a response while simultaneously seeking an expansion, encouraging learners to continue, or requesting repetition or clarification. The utilisation of the “**N**” move instead of (**F/I^b**) move streamlines the analysis of numerous exchanges, eliminating the need for the double-facing coding symbols of the follow-up/bound initiation move suggested by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975, 1992). Furthermore, when this structural element concludes the exchange, it is referred to as “Termination” denoted as “**T**.”. In the example below, we can see how the (F/I^b) moves are referred to as one Negotiation move and the follow-up move is referred to as a Termination move.

Extract 1: Developments at the Rank of Exchanges & Moves Structure: I –R – (F/I ^b) – R–F I –R – (N – R) –T	
T: Look at the picture. What does she do?	Initiation
P: She she does get up	Response
T: She	Follow-up/Initiation (Negotiation)
P: She get up	Response
T: She get up? She gets up, she gets up	Follow-up (Termination)

Hence, here is the revised formulation of the exchange structure.

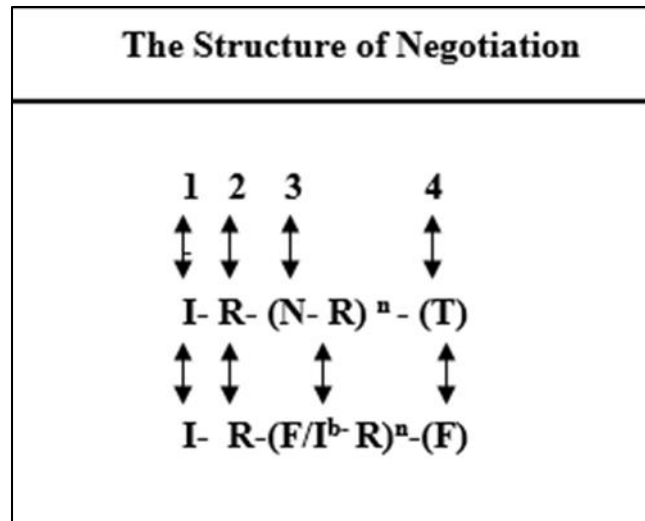


Figure 2 Revised Formulation of Exchange Structure

The first element is the “Initiation” move, followed by a “Response” move. The response can be followed by any number of negotiation and response moves. The exchange ends with the termination move.

In this study, the theoretical structure (N- R) is referred to as one “element” of structure, though it can be repeated several times within an exchange (N- R)ⁿ. Parentheses imply that this element is optional. The superscripted ⁿ outside the brackets denotes the recursive nature of this element.

In the following example (Example 2), the third element (N-R) occurs twice:

Extract 2:									
Structure: I-R-[F/I ^b -R]-[F/I ^b -R]-F Or I-R- (N-R)- (N-R)-F									
<p>T: Now (...) if you want to sum up the article, the article criticises two things what are they? Criticises</p> <p>P: Advertisement</p> <p>T: Advertisements</p> <p>P: Which are aimed</p> <p>T: Umm.</p> <p>P: The ad adv. the advisements (wrong pronunciation)</p> <p>T: The advertisements are aimed at children.</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="padding: 2px;">Moves</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Initiation</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Response</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Follow-up/Initiation (N)</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Response</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Follow-up/ Initiation (N)</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Response</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">Follow-up (T)</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Moves	Initiation	Response	Follow-up/Initiation (N)	Response	Follow-up/ Initiation (N)	Response	Follow-up (T)
Moves									
Initiation									
Response									
Follow-up/Initiation (N)									
Response									
Follow-up/ Initiation (N)									
Response									
Follow-up (T)									

The discourse in this sample contains seven elements of structure I- R - F/I^b -R -F/I^b R -F.

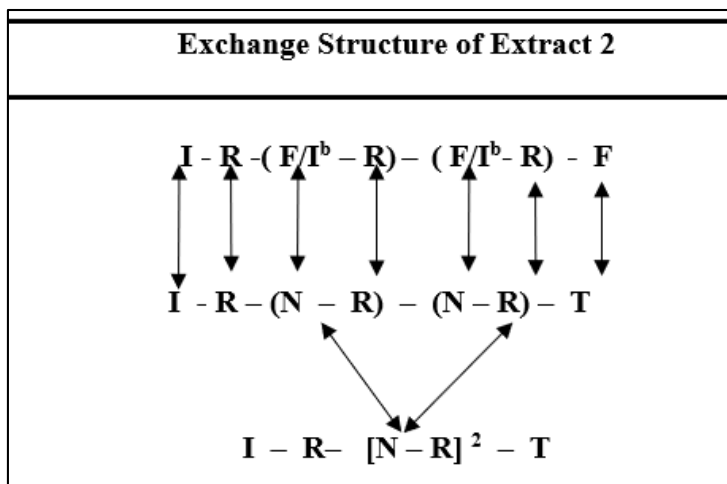


Figure 3 Exchange Structure of Extract 2

Using the “new” formulation of exchange structure, this sample can be analysed as one exchange with the structure: $I - R - (N - R) - (N - R) - T$ or $I - R - [N - R]^2 - T$. This sample contains a recursive element “N-R”, designed as $[N - R]^2$ being $(N - R) - (N - R)$. The brackets () used for optional elements have been replaced with square brackets for an actual realization (see Nunn, 1996: 123-124). In this sample of discourse, the superscripted ⁿ has a value of 2.

Hence, the exchange is characterised by its flexibility as it can be expanded with the recursive $(N - R)^n$ “element” or contracted to a minimal one-element (I) structure. The fourth “element (Termination (T)) is also an optional element”. It is used when the teacher decides to provide a “follow-up” to the learner’s response and moves on to another topic. Henceforth, at the rank of move, Negotiation (N) is used to refer to follow-up and bound Initiation (F/I^b) and Termination (T) is used to refer to follow-up moves that terminate the exchange.

5.3. Developments at the Rank of Acts

According to Hoey (1993: 117), acts are “if not unlimited, indefinite in number”. However, to be accurate in the present research, attempts have been made to supply a definite list of acts. As a result of data analysis, twenty-four acts and sub-acts have been added to the list proposed by Sinclair & Coulthard (1975, 1992). As a result of data analysis, twenty-four acts and sub-acts have been added to Sinclair & Coulthard’s list which are found useful for the analysis and interpretation of the Tunisian data. Table 1 below provides a label, references to the literature from which the categories are borrowed, and a brief definition of the new set of acts, which are found useful and necessary for the analysis and interpretation of our research data.

Table 1 Summary Description of the Newly Discerned Acts in Tunisian Classroom Discourses

Classes of Acts	
Label	Realisation and Definition
<i>Negotiate</i> (Nunn, 1996: 119)	The Negotiate Acts are realised when the act Evaluate is treated as an Elicitation. The function of the Negotiate Act is to evaluate a learner’s response and at the same time to look for an expansion of a response, to encourage the learners to continue, or to ask for a repetition or clarification.
Code-switching (Consolo, 1996: 193)	The Code-Switching Acts are realised when the teacher or the learner shifts from one language to another in the middle of the discourse. In this study, the code-switching act is observed when the teacher uses Arabic or French to help scaffold the learner’s understanding, or to nominate or to inform. It is also realised when the learner uses L1 to take the initiative or to make a clarification request.
<i>Elaboration</i> (Abdesslem, 1987: 211)	The Elaboration Acts are realised when the teacher wants to communicate and impart the information that their learners need to respond correctly to his/her elicitation or when s/he wants to explain or clarify the preceding utterance

<i>Repeat</i> (Chaudron, 1988: 54) (Consolo, 1996: 189) (Urano, 1998: 267)	The Repeat Acts are realised when the teacher repeats his/her utterance in an unaltered structure. The function of the repeated act is to draw the learners' attention to an idea or language point under discussion or make an utterance more audible and more comprehensible to the learners.
<i>Comprehension Check</i> (Long, 1983a: 136)	Comprehension Check Acts are defined as "checks" by Sinclair and Coulthard (1992: 19) realised by questions such as "Do you understand?" or other negotiation devices such as "Okay?", "yes?" etc. to which learners answer "yes" or simply nod in response. Unlike Sinclair's and Coulthard's (1992) "check", the Comprehension Check acts "function as post-heads, as markers of the end of a teacher I or R or F" (Willis, 1981: 80) The function of the comprehension Check Act is to help teachers determine that the students are following his/her directives, whether they understood a teaching point previously dealt with, to ensure the smooth running of a lesson, and to give the students "a chance to ask before the next turn is allotted" (Willis, 1981: 80).
<i>Rephrase</i> (Francis and Hunston, 1992: 133)	The Rephrase Acts are realised when the teachers alter and reformulate the wording of their questions and statements. The function of the Rephrase Act is to explain, clarify and simplify a question or a statement.
<i>Reject</i>	The Reject Acts are realised by statements, or by 'no' item, or by a verbatim repetition of the learners' response move, or simply by a repetition of the learners' response move with a questioning intonation. The Reject Act is used when the teacher does not accept the learners' answer to an elicitation. The function of a Reject act is to evaluate a learner's response move.
<i>Self-correction</i>	The Self-Correction Acts function as an adjustment and self-repair of morphological or grammatical mistakes that teachers make.
<i>Apology</i> (Burton, 1981: 78) (Consolo, 1996: 192)	The Apology Acts are used when the teacher realises that s/he has poorly or incorrectly produced an utterance.
<i>Thank</i> (Consolo, 1996: 193)	The Thank Acts are realised by items such as 'thanks' and 'thank you'. The teacher uses the Thank acts to show that s/he is pleased that the learner has produced a good answer or the one s/he expected. It is also used as a salutary move when the teacher ends the lesson by thanking the learners.
<i>Encourage</i> (Consolo, 1996: 193)	The Encourage Acts are realised by the use of different aspects of verbal interaction such as "don't be shy", and non-verbal interaction such as gestures and smiles. The function of the Encourage act is to encourage learners to talk and to help learners participate in class discussions.
<i>Praise</i>	Praise Acts are realised by items such as 'good' and 'very good'. The teachers use the Praise acts to provide positive feedback to learners' response moves.
<i>Control</i>	Control Acts are realised by expressions such as "Come on", "Don't talk together", "That's enough", "Have you finished?", and "Be quiet". The function of the Control Act is to solve classroom discipline problems, to maintain order, and to exercise control over the learners to ensure the smooth running of a lesson.
<i>Parting</i> (Consolo, 1996: 193) (Francis and Hunston, 1992: 132)	Parting acts <i>are</i> leave-taking acts. They are realised by expressions such as "see you next", or "thank you very much". The Parting acts serve an organisational function within classroom discourse. Teachers use the Parting Acts to mark the completion of the lesson.
<i>Pause</i> (Consolo, 1996: 181) Coulthard (1985: 123) Brown and Yule (1983: 162-163)	The Pause Acts are used as an alternative to the "silent stress" act proposed by Sinclair and Coulthard (1992: 21). The discourse function of a pause is to determine boundaries between markers and the next act. Three types of pause act are identified: -Long pause within an utterance (over 4 seconds) coded in the transcripts as (...); -Medium pauses within an utterance (2-4 seconds) coded in the transcripts as (..);

	-Short pauses within an utterance (1-2 seconds) coded in the transcripts as (.)
<i>Comply</i> (Francis and Hunston, 1992: 132)	Comply Acts are realised by an action. They are used to provide a non-verbal response to the teacher's directive. The Comply act corresponds to Francis's and Hunston's (1992: 133) "behave" act.
<i>Refrain</i>	Refrain Acts are realised by a repetition of the previous teacher's utterance. That is when the learner repeats a linguistic model provided by the teacher. Generally, the learners use the Refrain Acts to show that they can produce the form the teachers want.
<i>Clarification request</i> (Long, 1983a: 137)	The Clarification request Acts are realised by clarification markers such as "what is meant by", "sorry", and "do you mean" Clarification requests denote that the preceding utterance has not been clearly heard or fully understood (see Long, 1983).
<i>React</i> (Burton, 1981: 77) (Consolo, 1996: 190) (Francis and Hunston, 1992: 132)	The React Acts are realised by a non-linguistic action; for example, by laughter or silence. It has to be noted that in case there is no verbal response to a teacher's elicitation, the learners' silence or laughter, or sometimes noise are considered at the level of move as a response and at the level of act as a React act.
<i>Acting</i> (Francis and Hunston, 1992: 124)	The Acting Acts refer to a double-labelled learner response/initiation (R/I) move. The R/I realises the head or post-head of an informing move and itself is an elicitation requiring a reply. That is an answer to an elicitation. The acting acts are observed when the learners perform a role-play activity in pairs.
<i>Correction</i> (Consolo, 1996: 191)	The Correction Acts are used in this study as a subcategory to evaluate. They are used by teachers to allow learners to discern that a mistake has been made. The correction act is used to "tell learners that they have made errors and then tell them what to say instead" (Allwright and Bailey, 1991: 90).
<i>Instruct</i>	The Instruct Acts are used in this study as a subcategory to evaluate. They are used when the teacher teaches the grammatical rules and accurate forms used incorrectly by the learners.
<i>Confirm</i> (Nunn, 1996: 127) (Francis and Hunston, 1992: 132) (Long, 1983a: 136)	The Confirm Acts are realised by verbatim repetition of the learners' utterances. They are used as a subcategory to evaluate. The function of the Confirm Act is to support and indicate that the learner's response is acceptable.
<i>Terminate</i> (Nunn, 1996: 127) (Francis and Hunston, 1992: 132)	The Terminate Acts signal the end of an exchange. Using a "proclaiming tone and high key signal" (Nunn, 1996: 129), the teacher proclaims the end of an exchange.

A thorough analysis of the data revealed that a single speech act could be further subcategorised. For instance, the teacher Evaluate act in the six lesson transcripts revealed six subcategories, which I developed to describe teacher follow-up moves. These subcategories are:

- **The Correct Acts** are used by teachers to allow learners to discern that a mistake or error has been made.
- **The Instruct Acts** are used when the teacher teaches the grammatical rules.
- **The Confirm Acts** are used to support and indicate that the learner's response is satisfactory. It is realised by verbatim repetition of the learners' utterances.
- **The Accept Acts** are used to indicate that the teacher has heard or seen and that the informative, reply or react acts were appropriate.
- **The Reject Acts** are used when the teacher does not accept the learner's answer to an elicitation. It is realised by statements, by 'no' item, by a verbatim repetition of the learner's response move, or simply by a repetition of the learner's response move with a questioning intonation.
- **The Terminate Acts** signals the end of an exchange.

The six subcategories of the evaluate act led me to devise a new form for Sinclair & Coulthard's (1992: 8) follow-up move which originally looked like this:

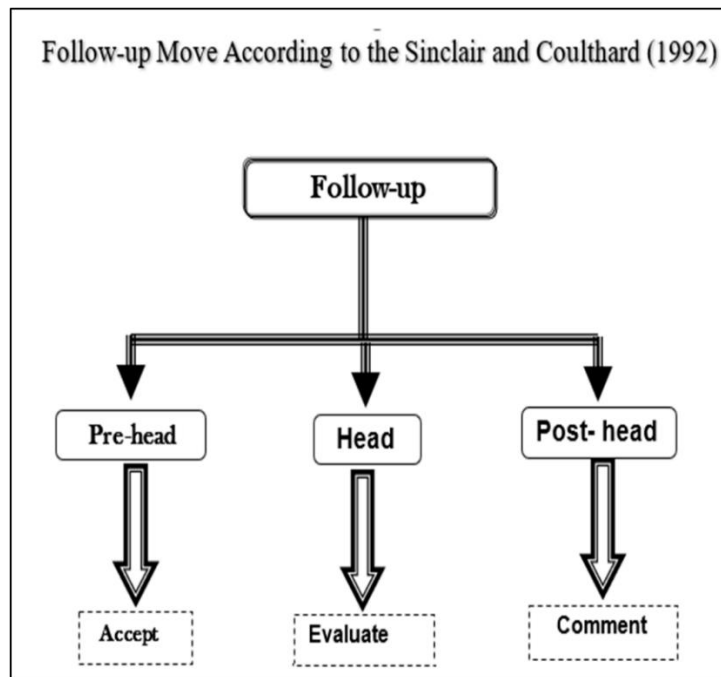


Figure 4 Follow-up Move According to Sinclair and Coulthard’s (1992: 8) Model of Discourse Analysis.

However, when applied to the Tunisian data, the follow-up move looks like this:

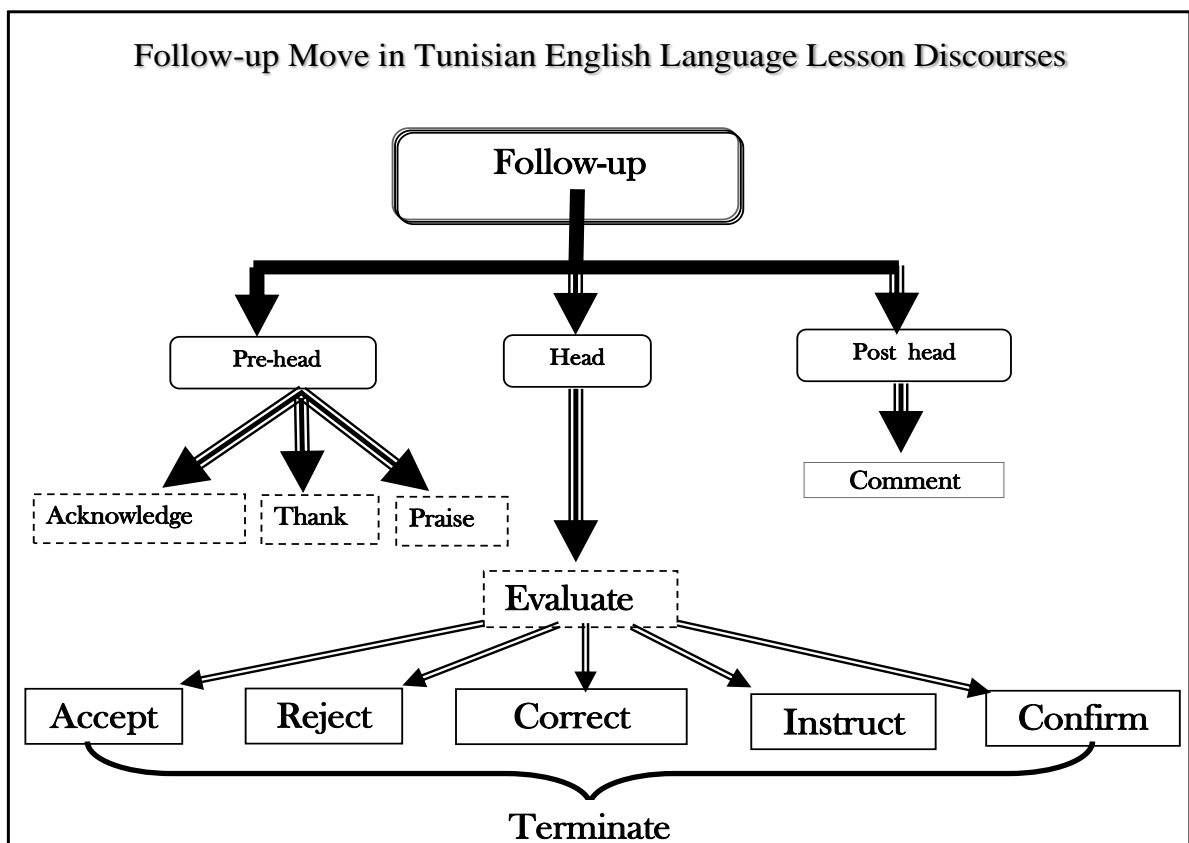


Figure 5 The Follow-up Move in the Data Collected from Tunisian English Language Lesson Discourses

The new follow-up move structure, not only reveals that the Evaluate act could be further subcategorized but also shows that all these acts in the follow-up move could be used to terminate an exchange. The figure highlights the multi-

functionality of these acts in the follow-up move. One criticism that has been pointed out of Sinclair & Coulthard's model is that it considers that each speech act has only one function. However, the present study reveals that several acts concurrently fulfil more than one function. It is equally important to note that one sub-act could be further subcategorised. For instance, the correct act could be further subcategorised to describe two types of correction: (i) Correction of the form of the learner's response; and (ii) Correction of the content of the learner's response.

According to Cullen (2000), these two types of correction emerge from two broad pedagogical roles of the "follow-up" move: the evaluative and the discursal roles of the follow-up move. The evaluative role focuses on evaluating "the form of the learner's response: and the discursal role focuses on the content of the learner's response.

6. Discussion

Various patterns of teacher and learner-initiated exchanges were identified in the present research data. However, the most common pattern of classroom discourse at all grade levels was the Initiation-Response-Termination pattern. Frequencies of the I-R-T pattern range from 24.60 % to 49.60% in whole lessons, with an average of 33.54% of all patterns. These figures demonstrate that typical teaching exchanges in Tunisian FL classrooms (based on the I-R-T moves) correspond to the I-R-F teaching exchanges described by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975, 1992). The preponderance of this pattern substantiates the belief that Tunisian EFL teachers are in total control of the structure of classroom talk.

The I-R pattern is another regular discourse structure observed in the data. This pattern not only deviates from Sinclair and Coulthard's IRF pattern, but it gives rise to an important issue in second language acquisition (SLA). The absence of the follow-up move in this pattern raises a highly controversial issue concerning the significance of the role played by the follow-up move and the teacher's feedback in FL classrooms. Van Lier (1996: 151), for instance, dismisses feedback. He argues that the teachers' feedback move closes the exchange and prevents the investigation of intriguing avenues of thought. Chaudron (1988), however, considers feedback as essential for both teachers and students.

However, I strongly believe that the absence of the third move in this pattern is one of the de-motivating and demoralizing factors that prevent Tunisian EFL learners from participating in classroom verbal interaction. Undeniably, learners' motivation is generally driven by the follow-up move, especially when it provides positive feedback that is used to encourage the learners to participate in classroom interaction, raise their self-esteem and lower inhibition and anxiety.

Therefore, since so many Tunisian EFL teachers use the I-R-T and I-R formats for interaction, the researcher is convinced that the I-R-T pattern is by far the more encouraging of the two for the learners. However, one can argue here that the I-R-T or I-R patterns of classroom interaction are not the most effective teaching patterns that help develop learners' communicative competence in the TL because they do not stimulate the learners to communicate and provide them with the freedom to take the initiative to interact, initiate a turn and participate actively in classroom discourse without strict teacher control.

The I-R-N-T pattern is another noteworthy structure identified in the Tunisian data. It is used when the teacher provides simultaneously a follow-up to the learners' response move and an initiation requiring a more satisfactory response. The multiple functions of the negotiation "N" move, which is adapted as a new element of the exchange structure (Nunn, 1996: 110), significantly impact the amount and quality of teacher and learner classroom talk. Throughout the data corpus, the element N is often used by the Tunisian EFL teachers either to negotiate meaning or to help the learners produce the correct forms in the target language. On the one hand, its presence grants Tunisian EFL learners the possibility to extend the occasions they have to participate in classroom talk. On the other hand, it provides Tunisian EFL teachers with the possibility to develop learners' initiatives and willingness to respond to teacher elicitations.

In addition to the I-R-N-T pattern, data analysis revealed the use of complex exchange structures (the [N-R] n Pattern) as well as the use of simple exchange Structures (the I Pattern). The preponderance of the I structure in the Tunisian data substantiates the following two assumptions:

- The discourse is structured almost entirely by Tunisian EFL teachers, who use this structure mainly to inform the learners and ultimately inundate their minds with information that the learners cannot digest and assimilate appropriately.
- In Tunisian classrooms, English is taught in a situation of "unequal encounter" (Abdesslem, 1987: 267), "a context of unequal-power discourse" (Boulima, 1999: 223) whereby the EFL teachers maintain strict control

over turn-taking and are preoccupied with the transfer of information from the front of the class. That is to say, classroom-spoken discourse in Tunisian EFL secondary and basic schools is predominantly transactional rather than interactional (see Brown and Yule, 1983a, 1983b). Teachers are essentially obsessed with the display of information rather than teaching or equipping the learners with the necessary strategies to prepare them to effectively communicate outside the classroom context.

Data analysis also shows that the response moves were given almost exclusively by the learners, but the teachers did most of the talking in class. If we look at the following extract from the transcripts. The teacher used 48 words compared with the students' using only 3 words (Everything – Believe- Anything):

Extract 3:		
Sample of Teacher Questions Requiring a One-Word Answer		
	Number of words per turn	
Turn 1 T: So, express differently. What is a natural credulity? It means he believes; he believes every	Turn 1: 15 words	
Turn 2 Ps: Everything	Turn 2: 1 <i>word</i>	
Turn 3 T: Everything. He believes everything	Turn 3: 4 words	
Turn 4 T: He is...what is the adjective we usually use for children?	Turn 4: 11 words	
Turn 5 Ps: Ø	Turn 5: 0 <i>words</i>	
Turn 6 T: Children. They are	Turn 6: 3 words	
Turn 7 Ps: Ø	Turn 7: 0 <i>words</i>	
Turn 8 T: Children. They are innocent, aren't they? They are innocent.	Turn 8: 9 words	
Turn 9 T: To beli	Turn 9: 2 words	
Turn 10 Ps: Believe	Turn 10: 1 word	
Turn 11 T: To believe anything	Turn 11: 3 words	
Turn 12 Ps: Anything	Turn 12: 1 word	
Turn 13 T: Anything	Turn 13: 1 word	
	Teacher Talk	Learner Talk
	48 words	3 words

In this transaction, the learners' utterances are not just shorter than the teacher's utterances; they are simply choral repetitions of the last words produced by the teacher. Thus, teaching learners to produce short turns does not yield students who are capable of performing adequately in the TL. Brown and Yule (1983: 21) remind us that "students who are only capable of producing short turns ... are very far indeed from the expressed aim of many courses which is to permit the students to "express themselves" in the foreign language." Sometimes in the data, the teachers even answer their questions. Let's look at the following extract:

Extract 4:
The Teacher Asks and Answers Her Question
T: What do you think about advertisements? What do you think ? about Advertisements on our TV? What do you think ?
P: Mrs
T: Yes
P: Programmes of TV
T: Programmes of TV

T: Look I am not talking about any programme. I am talking about advertisements.
What do you see in advertisements especially?
Ps: Ø
T: Think of that
Ps: (Activity)
T: People always think of (the teacher puts her hand on her stomach)
P: Eating
T: They are thinking only of
(she puts again her hand on her stomach)
Ps: Eating
T: Food

In this episode, the teacher starts with a referential question (knowledge gap-filling question), which is quickly changed into a display question (knowledge-checking question). This means that the teacher's questions are highly artificial, requiring a predetermined response. The teacher seems to modify her questions so that the learners provide the expected response.

However, in this extract, the teacher herself provided an answer to her initial question. This shift from referential or open questions to display questions helps the teacher follow her agenda. Kabilan argues that "The teachers implement the pedagogy of answers: whereby teachers provide the answers and solutions to learners. Most frequently, this is done subconsciously. They never realise that they are "spoon-feeding" the learners most of the time."

The teacher seems to be aware that the learners cannot produce meaningful extended responses using syntactically complex answers. Therefore, by providing them additional clues, the teacher ensures that her learner(s) will provide the expected utterance in a one-word answer.

The students simply do not speak very much. Hence, one can argue that classroom spoken discourse in Tunisian EFL secondary and basic schools is predominantly transactional (form/message-oriented rather than interactional (person-oriented). Teachers essentially display information rather than teaching or equipping the learners with the necessary strategies to prepare them to communicate outside the classroom context. According to Mayer (1990: 51), this type of teaching is consistent with "the empty vessel" philosophy, which regards learners as empty vessels that need to be filled with knowledge.

Henceforward, from these findings, one can argue that Tunisian EFL classroom interactions do not help develop learners' communicative competence in the target language and consequently, do not facilitate language acquisition, echoing Abdesslem's (1987) research results conducted in Tunisia in the '80s.

7. Conclusions and Implications

This study investigates the analysis of classroom spoken discourse and looks in depth at an attempt to extend Sinclair and Coulthard's (1992) model to handle data from foreign language classrooms. The aim has been to apply critical perspectives and research tools that allow the researcher to look in detail at the ways different exchanges, moves, and acts occur within Tunisian EFL lesson discourses, with the hope of broadening Tunisian teachers' awareness and understanding of what happens in their classrooms. The researcher's starting point was that understanding classroom discourses constitutes the first important step to evaluating teachers' teaching practices and classroom behaviour.

The applied model proposed new exchanges, moves and several new communicative acts and sub-acts identified in teacher and learner classroom talk and demonstrated that a single act could be subcategorised into some communicative acts that can achieve multiple simultaneous functions.

However, this model still has rough edges. The proposed exchanges, moves, new communicative acts and sub-acts need to be further investigated in a larger Tunisian data corpus to determine the extent to which they can be reliably identified by other Tunisian researchers investigating negotiated interaction in TL classrooms. It is equally hoped that the proposed model provides new insights when applied in a study of an L2 or FL classroom discourse.

This research has significant implications for EFL teachers and offers valuable insights for teacher training programs. The suggested discourse model can be used by in-service EFL teachers as a descriptive tool to analyse and critically reflect on their classroom practices and assess their teaching methods. Additionally, its potential use in teacher training programs can help future EFL educators enhance their teaching skills and improve their students' learning outcomes.

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