

International Multidisciplinary
Research Journal

Golden Research
Thoughts

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RNI MAHMUL/2011/38595

ISSN No.2231-5063

Golden Research Thoughts Journal is a multidisciplinary research journal, published monthly in English, Hindi & Marathi Language. All research papers submitted to the journal will be double - blind peer reviewed referred by members of the editorial board. Readers will include investigator in universities, research institutes government and industry with research interest in the general subjects.

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ABSTRACT

In this study interaction analysis is made using Nunan's Modified FIACS (adapted from Flanders) to identify the behaviours of teachers and learners in the ESL classrooms. This leads to the finding that reasonably more number of questions, both display and referential asked by teachers in the classroom, create a climate conducive for learning ESL.

KEYWORDS : *ESL Classroom ,Interaction Analysis, classroom community , Classroom dynamics.*

INTRODUCTION :

1. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Classroom dynamics involves the interaction between students and teachers in a classroom community. Good classroom dynamics consists in the engagement of everybody in the classroom. Effective questioning by the teacher directs pupils into understanding lesson content, arouses their curiosity, stimulates their imagination, and motivates them to seek out new knowledge. So there is a felt need to make a deep study of what happens in the classroom every now and then. Interaction Analysis Category Systems is a fairly easy way of capturing the behaviours of both teacher and the learner. It is difficult to know everything that happens in a live classroom. May be that a video recording of a classroom will be the image of the same classroom which again may not serve the purpose of the various elements involved in a classroom.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

- ✦ To know the factors that contribute to the improvement of the classroom climate so that it could be conducive for the learner to learn effectively.
- ✦ To get feedback for the teachers as to how to improve their desirable behaviours in the classroom.

3. OBSERVATION SYSTEMS IN VOGUE

Flanders` (1966) Interaction Analysis Categories System (FIACS) has been widely used for classroom observation of all subjects and this system forms the basis for many systems developed



later on. This includes ten categories of behavior, mostly verbal. Of the ten, seven are concerned with teacher behaviour and only two with the student behaviour. Most of the behaviours of the teachers are described in terms of influencing the students directly or indirectly.

While FIACS is meant for all the subjects taught in the classroom there are a few systems of observation for English Language Teaching. Some of them are Moskowitz's Foreign Language Interaction (FLINT) and David Nunan's Modified FIACS. Out of these the researcher here has selected Nunan's Modified FIACS as the tool for their classroom observation, which is appropriate for language classroom.

David Nunan's Modified FIACS (1989). (Refer to Appendix.I)

Nunan (1989) was interested to go deep into the working of the language classroom. He has explored the functioning of various elements of a classroom such as teacher, learner, content of the lesson, materials etc. What is important to Nunan here is the happenings in the English as a Second Language classroom. Nunan wants to modify FIACS so as to suit to the ESL classroom. Nunan has retained the general categories such as 'Teacher praises', 'Teacher criticizes' etc, he has included relevant moves of the teacher 'Teacher asks display question', 'Teacher asks referential question', 'Teacher explains a functional point', 'Teacher explains a grammatical point' etc. As for learners, he has included 'Learner talk to another learner' which is a very essential category for practising communication in English.

4. SAMPLING,

The sample consisted of 36 students (16 girls and 20 boys) from Class X at Mathagondapalli Model School, Mathagondapalli, Hosur.in Tamilnadu.

5. TIME DURATION

Three classes per week, totally 12 classes in 4 weeks in one month period, meeting them between 2.10 and 3.00 pm.

6. SYLLABUS COVERED

CBSE-Class X English text titled 'Literature Reader'

The following topics were taught in 12 periods for a period of one month (12 classes)

Topics:

- i.The Frog and the Nightingale (poem) by Vikram Seth (first 50 lines)
- ii. Not marble, nor the gilded monuments by Shakespeare
- iii. Patol Babu, A film Star (fiction) by Satyajit Ray
- iv. The Letter by Dhumketu

7. METHODOLOGY

In this research the David Nunan's Modified FIACS has been used for observing and coding the behaviours of both teacher and the learners. The researcher and his partner observed each other's classroom teaching and coding was done according to the Nunan's Modified FIACS. Coding was done for every three seconds.

7.1 Procedure for observation and coding

The two teacher- researchers piloted observation practices by observing two classes each. This has helped them to familiarize themselves with the letters of various behaviours of the teacher and the learners.

The observer sits in a corner of the classroom so that his/ her presence is not felt much in the class. Normally the teacher would begin the class with some instruction. In the coding sheet of the observer, he/ she would start either with 's' (silence) or 'i' (teacher gives instruction) and then go on coding the events by letters after every 3 seconds. For counting 3 seconds, 3 dots would be put in between two consecutive events.. During pair / group work, the observer's attention would often be with the teacher. In group / pair work the normal coding would be 'l' (learner talks to another learner). In the meantime the teacher talk with groups would also be coded judiciously. The coding would run as given below:

d...d...d...d...s...s...s...s...a...a...a...a...a...a...p...p...p...p...r...r...r...r...r...r...r...r
 ...s...s...a...a...a...a...a...a...a...a...c...c...c...c...c...c...f...f...f...f...f...f...i...i...i...i...i...i...i...i
 .v..

The coding pattern of a full class is given in Appendix II

7.2. Conducting test

At the end of each session of the classroom teaching, a short test based on the content of the lesson of the day, was given to all the learners, evaluated and marks entered in the list . (refer to table no. 1)

8. CONCEPTS DEVELOPED

Using the data collected, the following concepts are quantified:

8.1 L/T Ratio

The ratio of the number of tallies of Learner talk to that of Teacher talk (L/T) is one of the factors that play a vital role in deciding whether the classroom is conducive or otherwise for learning.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Learner Talk (L)} &= q + a + l + s \\ \text{Teacher Talk (T)} &= d + r + g + v + f + t + i + p + c \end{aligned}$$

8.2 Q/S Ratio

The ratio of the number of tallies for questions to that of statements made by the teacher Q/S. (Here imperatives used by the teacher are included in statements). This is another factor that decides whether the classroom is conducive for learners or otherwise for learning.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Questions (Q)} &= d + r. \\ \text{Statements (S)} &= g + v + f + t + i \end{aligned}$$

8.3 Warmth of Understanding (WU)

Warmth of Understanding is a factor that involves feelings and attitudes of particularly the learners.

$$WU = r + p + c$$

r = referential questions, p= teacher praises & c = healthy criticisms

9. Collection and Interpretation of Data

9.1.: Tabulation

Table 1. Lesson wise distribution of concepts and marks

S. no	Lesson / Poem	Class Taught by Class Observed by	L / T (q + a + l + s) $\frac{d + r + g + t + i + p + c}{p + c}$	Q / S d + r $\frac{g + v + f + t + i}{t + i}$	WU (r + p + c)	Student s Marks (Mean)
1	The frog and the Nightingale (First 50 lines) (Poem)	JS KS	0.90	1.80	99	7.38
2	The frog and the Nightingale (First 50 lines)) (Poem)	JS KS	0.8	1.08	120	8.5
3	The frog and the Nightingale (First 50 lines)) (Poem)	JS KS	0.43	1.91	222	6.3
4	Not Marble, Nor the gilded monuments) (Poem)	KS JS	0.54	0.78	124	5.3
5	Patol Babu (page no. 55 - 57) (lesson)	JS KS	0.51	0.21	57	5.5
6	Patol Babu (page no. 58 - 60) (lesson)	JS KS	0.44	0.84	121	8.4
7	Patol Babu (page no. 61 - 63) (lesson)	JS KS	0.68	0.65	104	7.5
8	Patol Babu (page no. 64 - 66) (lesson)	JS KS	0.37	0.45	69	5.7
9	The Letter (lines from 23 - 24) (lesson)	JS KS	0.63	0.83	94	7.0
10	The Letter (lines from 24 - 29) (lesson)	JS KS	0.63	1.27	79	8.9
11	The Letter (pages from 30 - 52) (lesson)	JS KS	0.61	0.47	66	5.7
12	The Letter (pages from 53 - 72) (lesson)	JS KS	0.45	0.43	91	5.3

KS = Kalpana Srivastava (researcher`s colleague) JS = Jeevasangeetha (researcher)

9.2.: Correlation

With a view to finding out the relationship among the various factors a few statistical concepts have been involved. Correlation is the degree to which two sets of scores vary together (covary) and

this enables us to compare how two sets of scores order themselves. This degree of relation can be estimated by calculating a correlation co-efficient (denoted by 'r'). This is perfectly direct if it is +1 and a negative value as low as -1 if the relationship between the two sets of scores is exactly the opposite order.

Correlation co-efficient is calculated using the formula:

$$r = \frac{n(\sum xy) - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{[n\sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2][n\sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2]}}$$

where, n = Number of values or elements

x = First score

y = Second score

xy = Sum of the product of first and Second Scores

Sx = Sum of First Scores

Sy = Sum of Second Scores

Sx² = Sum of square First Scores

Sy² = Sum of square Second Scores

$$r = \frac{12 \times 76.353 - (10.72)(81.48)}{\sqrt{[12 \times 76.353 - (10.72)^2][12 \times 81.48 - (81.48)^2]}}$$

$$r = \frac{44.9544}{89.36491}$$

$$r = 0.47$$

9.3.: Bar diagram of L/T

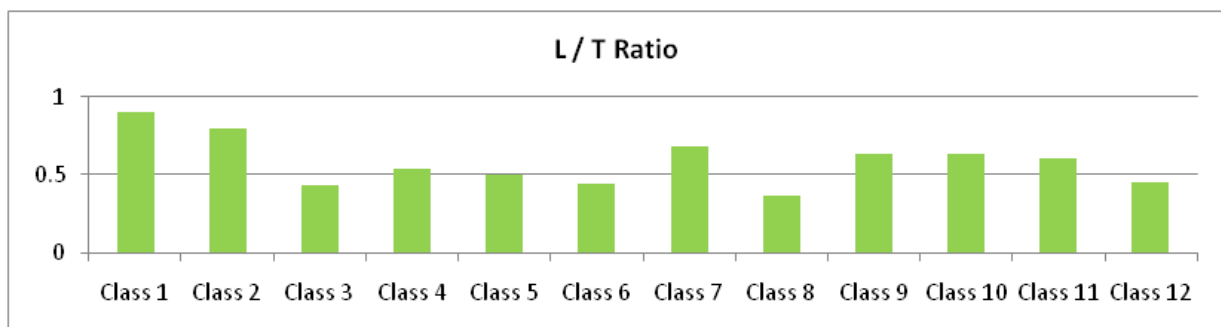


Fig. 1. L/T Ratio

9.3.1.: Interpretation of Bar diagram of L/T

• In Class nos 1, 2 & 7, L/T ratio being high, it can be noted that these classes allow more participation of

the learners.

- In Class nos 3, 6 & 8, L/ T ratio being low, it can be inferred that these classes are dominated by the teachers.

9.4.: Bar diagram of Q/S

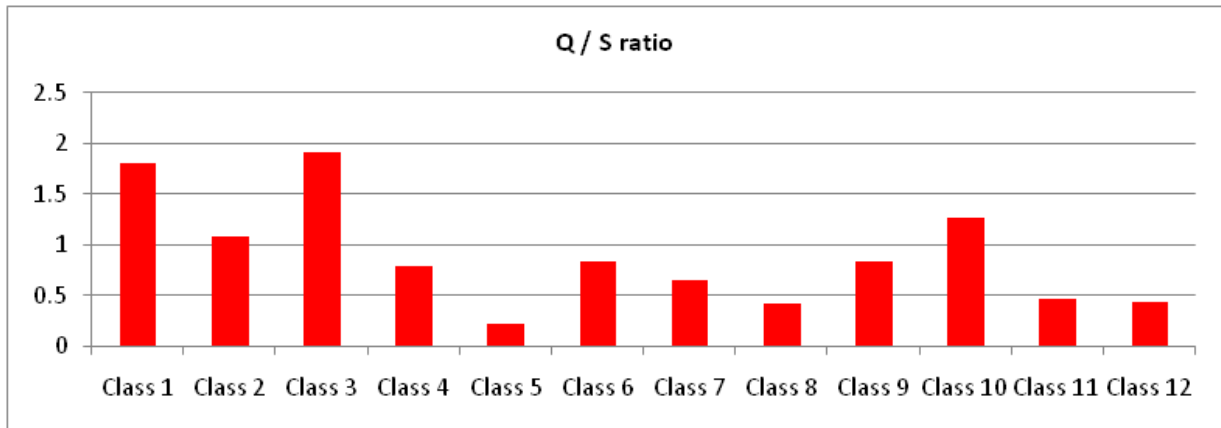


Fig. 2. Q/S Ratio

9.4.1.: Interpretation of bar diagram

- In classes 1, 3 & 10, the Q/ S ratio being high, it can be noted that, because of more questioning learners attention with the teacher will be more.
- In classes 5, 8 & 12, the Q/ S ratio is fairly low, it can be inferred as a feedback for the teacher, that the teacher should ask more questions.

9.5.: Bar diagram of WU

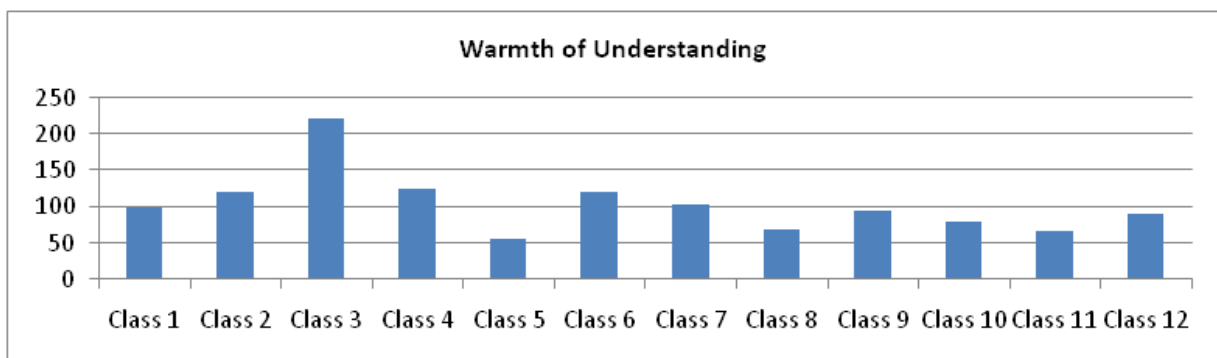


Fig. 3. Warmth of Understanding

9.5.1.: Interpretation of bar diagram of WU

- In class 3, 4 & 6, RB is more, which means that there is a better rapport between teacher and the students and so there would be a better classroom climate for learning.
- In classes 5, 8 & 11, RB is less, which means that learning might not have been effective because of poor classroom climate that is due to poor rapport between teacher and student.

9.6.: Bar diagram of Students Marks -Mean

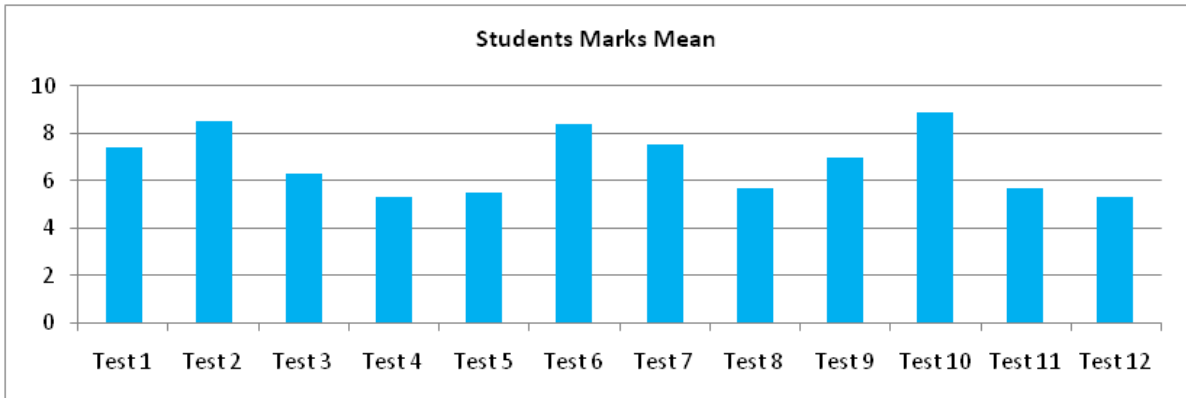


Fig. 4. Students Marks Mean

9.6.1. : Interpretation of bar diagram of Students Marks -Mean

- In classes 1, 2, 6, 7 & 10, students performance is high, may be because of the high L/ T ratio and Q/ S ratios.
- In classes 4, 5 & 12, learners performance is low, may be because of the low Q/S ratio and RB.

David Nunan`s Modified FIACS (adapted from Flanders)

Categories	Tallies	Total
Teacher asks a display question (ie a question to which she knows the answer).-d		
Teacher asks a referential question (ie a question to which she does not know the answer)-r.		
Teacher explains a grammatical point.-g		
Teacher explains meaning of a vocabulary item-v		
Teacher explains functional point-f.		
Teacher explains point relating to the content (theme / topic) of the lesson.-t		
Teacher gives instructions / directions-i.		
Teacher praises.-p		
Teacher criticizes-c		
Learner asks a question.q		
Learner answers question.a		
Learner talks to another learner-l		
Period of silence or confusion-s		

10. Findings

The various categories forming some permutation and combination give way to some useful concepts and their impact on classroom effectiveness. The ratio of learner talk to teacher talk in this research, has an impact on the students' achievement.

The correlation coefficient of L/T to students' marks is equal to 0.47.

The correlation coefficient of Q/S to students' marks is equal to 0.45.

The correlation coefficient of WU to students' marks is equal to 0.10.

10.1.: Pedagogic implications of the research

- ⤴ Teacher should allow students to talk more.
- ⤴ Teacher should ask more questions both display and referential, to build a good rapport with the students and thereby to create a conducive classroom for learning.

11. Critical evaluation of the research

11.1 Spin-offs

- The referential questions asked during the classes make the learners use their affective aspects of mind.
- The teacher gets the feedback that he/ she should mix up display questions in to the referential questions. In other words the teacher must avoid asking all the referential questions together.

11.2 Limitation

- Nunan's Modified FIACS doesn't take into account all the happenings in the classroom such as humour, teacher's body language, Teacher using learner's idea etc.
- When we consciously ask question, it is very time - consuming and teacher is not able to cover the syllabus in time.
- During group work activities, the observer could not observe and record behaviours of both the teacher and the different groups simultaneously.
- In coding categories such as v, g, f and t there are chances for overlapping.

11.3 Scope for further research

Classroom can be observed including more categories in the observation tool that have not been included in Nunan's Modified FIACS system. This will give a better perspective about the happenings in the classroom.

12. CONCLUSION

This study, being concerned with classroom atmosphere, has tried to explore such of those factors developed through classroom behaviours of teachers and learners, that contribute to improving the classroom atmosphere while learning ESL. In other words, teacher can plan his/her behaviour in such a way that the classroom climate is conducive for learning. The classroom observation system is thus a boon for promoting teacher development.

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