

**THE EFFECTS OF INTERACTIONAL STRATEGY  
TRAINING ON TEACHER-STUDENT INTERACTION  
IN AN EFL CLASSROOM**

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Suranaree University of Technology has approved this thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of Master's Degree.

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นางสาวชนพร คำวรรณ : ผลของการฝึกการใช้กลยุทธ์การมีปฏิสัมพันธ์ที่มีต่อปฏิสัมพันธ์ระหว่างครูและนักเรียนในห้องเรียนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศ (THE EFFECTS OF INTERACTIONAL STRATEGY TRAINING ON TEACHER-STUDENT INTERACTION IN AN EFL CLASSROOM) อาจารย์ที่ปรึกษา : อาจารย์ ดร. สิรินทร ศรีโพธิ์, 105 หน้า.

วิจัยฉบับนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาผลของการฝึกกลยุทธ์ในการปฏิสัมพันธ์ช่วยเพิ่มการมีปฏิสัมพันธ์ให้ครูและนักเรียนในห้องเรียน และ ผลด้านอื่น ๆ ของการใช้กลยุทธ์ปฏิสัมพันธ์ที่มีต่อความเข้าใจของนักเรียน ความมั่นใจในการใช้กลยุทธ์ปฏิสัมพันธ์และบรรยากาศในการเรียนการสอนกลุ่มประชากร ได้แก่ นักเรียนชั้นมัธยมศึกษาปีที่ 5 จำนวน 17 คน และ ครูชาวต่างประเทศ จำนวน 1 คน ใช้ระยะเวลาในการศึกษาทั้งสิ้นรวม 9 สัปดาห์ โดย 6 สัปดาห์สำหรับสังเกตการณ์ และอีก 3 สัปดาห์ สำหรับการฝึกกลยุทธ์การมีปฏิสัมพันธ์ เครื่องมือในการเก็บข้อมูลคือ การสังเกตการณ์และการสัมภาษณ์ ผลการศึกษาจะนำเสนอทั้งด้านปริมาณและด้านคุณภาพ จากการศึกษาด้านพบว่า การมีปฏิสัมพันธ์ระหว่างครูและนักเรียนเพิ่มขึ้น นักเรียนมีความเข้าใจในบทเรียนมากขึ้น มีความมั่นใจในการสื่อสารกับครูและบรรยากาศในห้องเรียนไม่เครียด นอกจากนี้ยังมีการอภิปรายเกี่ยวกับการใช้กลยุทธ์ในการปฏิสัมพันธ์ ปัจจัยอื่นที่มีผลกระทบต่อการใช้กลยุทธ์การมีปฏิสัมพันธ์ของนักเรียน ได้แก่ การให้ข้อมูลย้อนกลับที่ดีของครู และ ความสามารถของนักเรียน รวมถึงความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างการมีปฏิสัมพันธ์และความเข้าใจในบทเรียน

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## INTERACTIONAL STRATEGY TRAINING

This study investigated whether the interactional strategy training can promote teacher-student interaction in an EFL classroom and to explore the effects of interactional strategies training on students' comprehension, confidence and learning atmosphere. The participants were 17 students who studied in Grade 11 and a native English teacher. Classroom observations and semi-structured interview were used for data collection. Totally, the study lasted nine weeks: six weeks for classroom observation and three weeks for the training. The results were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The findings showed that the number of the interaction turns between the teacher and students increased. It was also found the students' changes in their comprehension, confidence and classroom atmosphere. The students had more confidence to interact with the teacher; they could comprehend the lessons better than before and the classroom atmosphere was more relaxing. The most frequent interactional strategies used by the students, two factors affecting the successful use of interactional strategies, i.e., teacher's responses, students' proficiency and the relationship between interaction and comprehension are discussed in details.

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Statement of the problem

In Thailand, students study English as a foreign language (EFL). The common problem of EFL classrooms is that an EFL teacher usually is faced with a non- interactive classroom where students are frequently unresponsive and avoid interacting with their teacher. Most of the students keep quiet and do not respond to the teacher's questions. This problem is very important because interaction within the classroom can bring about many advantages for language learning such as comprehension checks, language practice and so on (Ellis, 1993).

A preliminary study was conducted in order to investigate why students did not interact with their teacher. The study was composed of 3 steps of data collection: 1) observation, 2) questionnaires, and 3) interview. For observations, three English classes at a high school in Nakornratchsima province were observed. It was found that the students seemed not to have eye contacts with their teacher and they were quiet and often told their classmates "They did not understand what their teachers said" or asked "what did the teacher say?" in Thai. The examples showed that the students did not understand their teacher's explanation or instruction especially when it was in English. It was noticeable that these problems were found more frequently in the native speakers' classes than in Thai teachers' classes. That was because Thai teachers tended to use Thai (L1) for their explanation or instructions when the

students had problems understanding the lessons while some English native speakers did not.

Then, the questionnaires were distributed so as to explore why the students did not directly interact verbally with their teachers especially when their teachers asked questions. 90 % of the students answered that they did not understand the instructions and 85 % replied that they had limited vocabulary.

After that, the students were interviewed why they did not ask their teachers when they did not understand. About 91 % of the students mentioned that they did not know how to ask their teachers to clarify the unknown points. When they did not understand anything, the only way that students used to ask for clarification was saying “Again, please.” When the teacher heard the request, he repeated what he said slowly because he thought that he spoke too fast. In fact, the students needed their teacher to simplify the instruction or define some vocabulary, not just to repeat it. But they did not know how to ask specifically. As a result, the students kept quiet rather than actively involved with the teaching.

In sum, this situation showed that students lacked the tools to interact or communicate with their teacher. They knew only “Again, please” which it was not specific enough for the teacher to provide needed help. This is the reason why this study is designed in order to find a solution to this problem.

Many research studies discuss the advantages of interactional strategies that can help students to initiate an interaction with their native teachers and ultimately clarify unclear points to enhance their understanding of the lessons. Therefore, the effects of the use of interactional strategies on teacher-student interactions and students’ learning will be studied. The results of this study may bring about useful suggestions for dealing with an unresponsive class.

## **1.2 Rationale of the study**

The study is framed by two theoretical backgrounds: classroom interaction and language learning strategies. First, Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) cited in Ellis (1994) defined classroom interaction generally as “the language interaction inside a classroom” (p. 568). Classroom interaction is very important for language learning and teaching because it leads to language acquisition and learning (Wu, 1998). Long (1985) and Vygotsky (1978) believe that one can build on one's knowledge through interaction and co-operation with one's peers or more capable persons. Hatch (1978) supports that classroom interaction contributes to the development of learning by providing target language practice opportunities. Moreover, Allwright (1984) suggests the importance of classroom interaction that it provides authentic communication opportunities in the classroom. However, interaction does not happen automatically, especially when the communication is in a foreign language. As a result, both teacher and students need appropriate tools to make interaction occur in language classrooms. In this study, interactional strategies were selected as tools for students to initiate interaction and communication with their teachers. Definitions and classifications of interactional strategies are explained in Chapter 2.

The second area that concerns this study is language learning strategies. Language learning strategies are generally defined as behaviors, techniques, steps or actions that learners do to aid their understanding of the target language (Wenden and Rubin, 1987). Learning strategies also include the often-conscious steps or behaviors used by language learners to enhance the acquisition, storage, retention, recall, and use of new information (Rigney, 1978; Oxford, 1990). Language learning strategies can be classified into three types. They are social strategies, communication

strategies, and learning strategies. Social strategies refer to the strategies that learners participate in which they have opportunities to show and practice their knowledge. Communication strategies refer to the strategies that emphasize the process of participating in a conversation and understanding what the speaker means. Learning strategies refer to the strategies that learners can contribute directly to the development of the language system constructed and interactional strategies are classified under this group of strategies.

Interactional strategies are the strategies whereby the interlocutors carry out trouble-shooting exchanges cooperatively; therefore, mutual understanding is a product of a successful execution by both parties (Dornyei and Scott 1995a). According to Dornyei and Scott, the interactional strategies consist of five verbal strategies. They are appeals for help, repetition requests, clarification requests, comprehension checks, and interpretive summary. The students are expected to use these strategies for initiating the interaction with their teacher in order to ultimately enhance their comprehension of the lesson and teacher's instruction.

This study focused only on four strategies. The interpretative summary strategy was excluded because it is too advanced for beginners. Ellis (1993) states that an interpretation requires learners to comprehend the message before he/she can interpret it. However, the participants in this study were beginners and were not able to understand basic input from their teacher. So, it would be too ambitious to train them to use the interpretative summary within a limited time. It is hoped that the selected interactional strategies would be helpful tools for students to bridge the gap of communication in the classroom.

### 1.3 Purpose of the study

This study aims to investigate whether the interactional strategy training can promote teacher-student interaction in an EFL classroom and to explore the effects of interactional strategy training on students' comprehension, confidence and learning atmosphere.

### 1.4 Research Questions

1. Do the four interactional strategies, i.e. appeals for help, repetition requests, clarification requests, and comprehension checks help increase teacher-student interaction in an EFL classroom?
2. What are the effects of interactional strategy training on students' comprehension, confidence, and classroom atmosphere?

### 1.5 Research Hypothesis

After training the interactional strategies, students should be able to use interactional strategies during the class time to interact with their teacher for further comprehension, confirmation and clarification depending upon individual needs.

### 1.6 Definitions of key terms

**Interactional strategies** refer to the four strategies that students use with their teachers during the class time.

1. **Appeals for help** are the requests that a student asks for aid from the teacher by asking an explicit question such as "How do you say...?" and "Could you tell me what is ... called?".

2. **Repetition requests** are the ways that a student uses when not hearing or understanding something properly such as “Pardon?” and “Again, please?”.

3. **Clarification requests** are the requests that a student asks for more explanation of an unfamiliar meaning structure such as “What do you mean by...?” and “Could you explain me, what is...?”.

4. **Comprehension checks** are the requests that a student asks questions to check if he/she understands the message correctly such as “Am I correct?”

**Teacher-student interaction** refers to the communication between students and their teacher in the classroom.

**Native speaker** refers to a native English speaker who teaches English to Thai students and does not speak Thai.

**Comprehension** refers to the students understanding of teacher’s instructional questions in verbal and non-verbal.

**Confidence** refers to the feeling and behaviors of students who can initiate communication to a native English teacher. The examples of behaviors include answering teacher’s questions with shorter wait-times, and no help from their peers.

**Classroom atmosphere** refers to the teaching and learning atmosphere, including class participation, and behavior that happens during the instruction.

## **1.7 Summary**

This chapter presents the problems relating to classroom interaction in foreign language classes in which there was not much interaction between the teacher and students. Interactional strategies were selected to train students for improving this unresponsive situation. This study aimed to train four interactional strategies: appeals for help, repetition requests, clarification requests, and comprehension checks. The research questions were proposed to explore the increasing of the interaction between the students and the native teacher and to explore the effects of the interactional strategy training on students' comprehension, confidence, and learning atmosphere.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter discusses the literature around two main issues. The first issue concerns the role of classroom interaction in EFL teaching and learning. The second issue is about language learning strategies.

#### **2.1 Classroom interaction**

Classroom interactions between foreign language learners and their teachers have been one of the most discussed topics in both classroom research and second language acquisition research (Wu, 1998). There are three main types of classroom interaction: teacher-student, student-student, and student-text. Recent studies on classroom interaction have paid more attention to learner talk, examining not only the language produced by learners in response to the teacher, but also their communication strategies and learner interaction (Tsui cited in Carter & Nunan (2001)).

##### **2.1.1 Definitions of classroom interaction**

There are many scholars with different perspectives on classroom interaction. According to Richards, Platt, and Platt (1992), classroom interaction refers to the patterns of verbal and non-verbal communication and the types of social relationships which occur within classrooms. In short, classroom interaction can be a classroom process in which teachers and students negotiate during the class time for specific

purposes. This study focuses on teacher-student classroom interaction because it is one of the common problems of EFL students who tend not to have interaction within their classroom.

### **2.1.2 The importance of classroom interaction in EFL language instruction**

Classroom interaction is an important feature in EFL language instruction for several reasons. Firstly, it provides specific ways for learners to acquire specific language usages. Secondly, it provides authentic communication opportunities in the classroom (Allwright, 1984). Thirdly, an interaction results in collaborative exchanges of thoughts or negotiation of meaning which is essential for language development (Brown, 2000; Yules and Tarone, 1991 cited Phillipson, Kellerman, Selinker, Sharwood Smith, and Swain).

An interaction refers to communication between individuals, particularly when they are negotiating meaning in order to facilitate communication (Ellis, 1999). Hatch (1978) suggests that classroom interaction contributes to language development because it provides target language practice opportunities. However, interaction is important not only because it provides non-native speakers with an opportunity to receive input, made comprehensible through negotiation, but also because this interaction provides non-native speakers with opportunities to modify their speech for another learner so that the output is more comprehensible (Long 1983a; Varonis and Gass 1985). On this point, Pica, Holliday, Lewis, and Morgenthaler (1989) identify different ways in which negotiated interaction with an interlocutor helps the learner to understand unfamiliar L2 input. They believe that it is also through negotiation that learners gain opportunities to produce new words as well. If students

have opportunities to practice the target language through such an interaction, they will be able to negotiate meaning in that language to make input more comprehensible (Long, 1983a). These ways to modify speech to achieve comprehensible input and output will lead to greater levels of language acquisition.

Secondly, an interaction provides an authentic communication in classroom setting. In real-life communication, the language is generally used to express ideas (Lightbown & Spada, 1999). From the perspective of pedagogy, Allwright (1984) observes that interaction is “the fundamental fact of classroom pedagogy because everything that happens in the classroom happens through a process of live person-to-person interaction” It means that EFL students can practice their speaking skills naturally in the classroom setting by interacting with their peers or their teacher.

Thirdly, an interaction is a collaborative exchange of thoughts or negotiation of meaning (Brown, 2001). The importance of interaction between human beings as they use language in various contexts to negotiate meaning, is that an idea is taken out of one person’s head and into the head of another person. Yule and Tarone (1991) discuss the roles of participants within interaction. Pica *et al.* (1989) state that negotiation of meaning can help accomplish a great deal for second language acquisition by enabling learners modify their own output, and by providing opportunities for them to access second language (L2) form and meaning.

In short, classroom interaction can help monitor students by interacting with their teacher and communicating their immediate problems through interaction with their teachers or their peers. Interaction in the class time is important because students can take these opportunities to develop their language ability. Moreover, students

have opportunities to speak as the real life situation in classroom setting and they can exchange their ideas and negotiate their meaning of speech.

## **2.2 Theoretical Background**

There are three key theoretical frameworks that inform this study: Interactional Hypothesis, Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and Language Learning Strategies.

### **2.2.1 Interactional Hypothesis**

Long (1983a) defines Interaction Hypothesis as the various modifications that a native speaker and other interlocutors create in order to render their input comprehensible to learners. For example, native speakers often slow down their speech to second language learners, or speak more deliberately to simplify their input. Modifications also include comprehension checks, clarification/repair requests or paraphrase (Brown, 2001). Long (1983a) posits that comprehensible input is the result of modified interaction, and that the negotiation of meaning through interaction is crucial to language development. It increases learner's comprehension of input and provides important information about form-function relationships. He maintains that speakers make changes in their language as they interact or negotiate meaning with each other for improving their comprehension. His theory implies that learners cannot simply listen to input, but that they must be active conversational participants who interact and negotiate the type of input they receive in order to acquire language.

Gass and Varonis (1994) point out that a number of studies have supported the link between interaction and acquisition because an interaction leads to comprehensible input and output modification modify (Swan & Lapkin, 1998).

Moreover, Vygotsky (1978) also believes that knowledge occurs through the interaction process, which he sees as primarily a social process. In all cases, variations of the Interactional Hypothesis assert that the process of interaction helps speakers make input and output comprehensible.

### **2.2.2 Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)**

Vygotsky (1978) defines the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) as "the distance between a child's actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers"(p.86). In other words, a student can perform a task under external guidance (in this case, teacher and parents) or with peer collaboration that could not be achieved alone. The Zone of Proximal Development can bridge the gap between what is known and what can be known through social relations. Vygotsky claims that learning will occur if appropriate assistance is provided within this zone. He also believes that one can build on one's knowledge through interaction and co-operation with one's peers.

In this sense, a teacher in an EFL learning situation can be regarded as a collaborator or a coach, who provides appropriate scaffolding to lead students to increase their learning capacity. Scaffolding is a method of structuring an instructional task in a way that helps learners gradually advance through the process. Pressley and McCormick (1995) and Hausfather (1996) have developed Vygotsky's concept and proposed ways that scaffolding and reciprocal teaching can be effective strategies to access the Zone of Proximal Development. Scaffolding requires the teacher to provide students the opportunity to extend their current skills and

knowledge. So, the word scaffolding is needed for this study because it will help students to success through their learning process.

In this study, interactional strategies are regarded as tools to enable students to initiate the interaction with their teacher. The interaction is keys; it is hoped that the students would be able to negotiate the meaning of what is being taught and communicate their ideas or problems with their teacher, and the teacher will adjust to their needs and provide help accordingly. The details about communication and interactional strategies will be presented under language learning strategies in the section.

## **2.3 Language learning strategies**

### **2.3.1 Definitions of language learning strategies**

The term “language learning strategy” has been defined by many researchers. Wenden and Rubin (1987) define learning strategies as "any sets of operations, steps, plans, routines used by the learner to facilitate the obtaining, storage, retrieval, and use of information"(p. 19). According to Richards, Platt and Platt (1992), learning strategies are "intentional behavior and thoughts used by learners during learning so as to better help them understand, learn, or remember new information"(p. 209)

In general, language learning strategies are commonly described as behaviors, techniques, steps or actions that learners do to aid their understanding of the target language. Language learning strategies also include the often-conscious steps or behaviors used by language learners to enhance the acquisition, storage, retention, recall, and use of new information (Rigney, 1978; Oxford, 1990). Many students use learning strategies to develop their linguistic and sociolinguistic competence (Faerch and Kasper, 1983).

### **2.3.2 The importance of language learning strategies**

The importance of being aware of language learning strategies in the EFL classroom is that they are tools that can be deliberately selected to help students during the process of language learning. Oxford (1990) mentions that language learning strategies are tools for active, self-directed movement, which is essential for developing communicative competence. Lessard-Clouston (1997) posits that language learning strategies can contribute to the development of the communicative competence of the students. Fedderholdt (1997) cited in Hismanoglu (2000) states that the language learner's ability to select from a wide variety of language learning strategies appropriately can improve his language skills in a better way. In short, knowledge of language learning strategies is important because this awareness can help develop linguistic, sociolinguistics and communicative competence which are the main focuses for learning a foreign language and essential for communication in L2.

### **2.3.3 The classification of learning strategies**

Language learning strategies have been classified by many scholars, e.g., Wenden and Rubin (1987), O'Malley, Chamot, Stewner-Manzanares, Kupper, and Russo (1985), Oxford (1990), Stern (1992), and so on. In general, these classifications seem to overlap considerably. For example, Wenden and Rubin (1987) classifies language learning strategies in three categories: social strategies, communication strategies, and language learning strategies. Firstly, social strategies are the activities learners engage in which afford them opportunities to be exposed to and practice their knowledge. Although these strategies provide exposure to the target language, they contribute indirectly to learning since they do not lead directly to the obtaining, storing, retrieving, and using of language. (Wenden and Rubin, 1987).

Secondly, communication strategies are the strategies that emphasize the process of participating in a conversation and understanding what the speaker means. They are the ways that L2 learners use to cope with difficulties while speaking.

Thirdly, language learning strategies are specifically concerned with linguistic acquisition. There are two main types: cognitive learning strategies and metacognitive learning strategies. First, cognitive learning strategies are any mental processes which learners utilize of in language learning such as repetition, resourcing, translation, grouping, deduction, recombination, imagery, auditory representation, key word, contextualization, elaboration, transfer, and inferencing. Second, metacognitive learning strategies are strategies that involve thinking about the mental processes used in the learning process, monitoring learning while it is taking place, and evaluating learning after it had occurred (Richards, et al., 1992). Interactional strategies, which are the main focus of this study, are classified as cognitive strategies. Forms of interactional strategies are elaborated in the following section.

#### **2.3.4 Interactional strategies**

Interactional strategies refer to the strategies whereby the teacher and students carry out trouble-shooting exchanges cooperatively, and therefore mutual understanding is successfully executed for both parties (Dornyei and Scott, 1995a). In fact, there are many interactional strategies in the inventory such as guessing, expressing non-understanding, interpretive summary and so on. However, some are appropriate for Thai learners, some are not. It depends on the cultural context; Thai students are often quiet and seemingly unresponsive to the teacher's questions. The challenge is to develop a strategy that can overcome this pattern of reticence.

The four strategies include

Strategies	Functions	Examples of language
<b>1. Appeals for help</b>	The learner asks for aid by asking an explicit question concerning a specific gap in one's understanding.	- How do you say...? - What do you call... in English? - Could you tell me what is ... called? -What does the word mean?
<b>3. Repetition requests</b>	The learner uses them when not hearing or understanding something properly.	- Pardon? - Could you say that again, please? - Again, please?
<b>3. Clarification requests</b>	The learner requests the explanation of an unclear point.	- What do you mean by...? - Could you explain to me, what is...?
<b>4. Comprehension checks</b>	The learner asks questions to check if she/he correctly understands their message.	- Am I correct?

**1. Appeals for help** means that the learner is asking for aid, by asking an explicit question concerning a specific within the course of an interaction. (Dornyei and Scott, 1995a).The learner may venture a possible guess and then ask for verification of the correctness of the attempt. Faucette (2001) states that appeals for

assistance are particularly worthwhile; they use the opportunity to learn new words and have the opportunity to use target language in a social setting.

**2. Repetition requests** are used when the learner is not hearing or understanding something properly (Dornyei and Scott, 1995a). Pica (1988) supports that explicit requests and repetition signals are particularly efficient means of prompting non-native speakers to adjust their utterances toward level of their partners.

**3. Clarification requests** mean that the learner requests the explanation of unfamiliar meaning structures (Dornyei and Scott, 1995a). Lloyd (1991) cited in Kasper & Kellerman. (1997) states that clarification requests can help learners develop their ability as independent communicators.

**4. Comprehension checks** mean that the learner asks questions to check if understanding is correct. Long (1983a) states that comprehension check strategies provide learners with opportunities to resolve their comprehension difficulties and therefore make negotiation of meaning possible.

## **2.4 Previous research studies**

A great deal of communication strategies research has been done on how to keep conversation going. This study, however, is focused on those interactional strategies that students will use to initiate an interaction with their teachers, not peers, so as to comprehend the teacher's instruction or lessons.

### **2.4.1 Communication strategy training research**

Gabrielatos (1992) conducted the project in which he wrote lesson plans for teaching students. The subjects were secondary school students, 14-16 years of age who studied in a private EFL school that used a learner-centred approach to develop

learning activities/tasks. The results of the study were that the students sounded more confident and willing to interact with their teacher and peers, their arguments were clearer and instances of silence or use of L1 were reduced after the training in interactional strategies very few. They become less shy to use English (L2) with both their teacher and peers. He clarified that the students had developed to use the target language which had no negative impact on their oral performance.

#### **2.4.2 Classroom interaction research of L2**

Ellis, Tanaka, and Yamazaki (1994) investigated the effects of modified interaction on comprehension and vocabulary acquisition. The subjects were 127 high-school students of English in Japan. The treatment took the form of a listening task which students were asked to listen to a set of directions. The major results were (1) interactionally modified input resulted in better comprehension than pre-modified input, (2) interactionally modified input led to more new words being acquired than pre-modified input, and (3) the active participators did not learn more new words. They concluded that comprehensible input seemed to occur with the interactionally modified rather than pre-modified input.

This study confirms the hypothesis that the interaction during class time plays vital role in making input more comprehensible. After the students can interact with their teacher, those interactions may lead to increasingly comprehensible input, and thus greater levels of understanding.

Snell (1999) conducted research with a group of twenty-three sophomores majoring in English at a small private Tokyo women's college. The class was taught by an American teacher with several years teaching in Japanese universities. He taught four basics English skills. His problem was that the students were unresponsive

and avoided interaction with the teacher. So, his action research project attempted to explore this problem and sought to create a more interactive teacher-student class interchange in a class of Japanese English learners. He taught interactional strategies to students in that class. The results were not as successful as he hoped. For instance, the students needed to be prompted with eye contact and a repeated question from the teacher to answer questions, and when they did not understand something, they still did not interrupt the teacher with a question. However, the students did interact with the teacher non-verbally by nodding and showing some facial expressions. Some students answered the teacher's questions and even asked questions before the class. The researcher concluded that the unresponsiveness of the class was caused by cultural factors. Moreover, he found an unanticipated side effect; when the teacher was seen as being more concerned with the interaction, the response of the students was a welcome surprise and contributed to the improvement. There seems to have been some success in instructing, reminding and then expecting the students to become more interactive with the teacher.

Both Thai and Japanese learners are not different in terms of classroom culture. Hence, in order to prevent cultural differences problem in this study, the researcher provides articles namely "Improving your Teaching through Effective Questioning Techniques" and "Improving Teacher-Student Interaction in the EFL Classroom: An Action Research Report" (See Appendix J, page 91) for the native English teacher because he/she may not understand the situation of an EFL classroom.

### **2.4.3 Language learning strategies training**

Lessard-Clouston (1997) conducted research with L2 teachers. He talked about language learning strategies and using language learning strategies in the

classroom for developing communicative competence. He briefly described 3 steps to implement language learning strategy training in second or foreign language classrooms. The first step was to study the teaching context. The second was to focus on some practical issues related to using language learning strategies in the classroom and the last step was to encourage learners to reflect their strategies used. He concluded that explicitly teaching language learning strategies not only encouraged learners to become better in their language learning but also helped teachers reflect on and improved their teaching.

Their research suggested 3 steps for training language learning strategies in the classroom. The researcher has adopted the idea of training steps to use in this study to ensure the success of instructional strategy training.

## **2.5 Summary**

This chapter presents a review of literature on classroom interaction and its importance in EFL teaching. Three related theoretical background were reviewed. They were Interaction Hypothesis for promoting comprehensible input, the Zone of Proximal Development for properly scaffolding the interaction gap in the classroom, and language learning strategies under which interactional strategies were considered as a subgroup. Lastly, the previous research studied involving with communication strategy training, classroom interaction and language learning strategies training were also discussed.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This chapter presents the procedure of the study which includes the research design, participants of the study, research instruments, and data collection procedure. The last part deals with how to analyze and interpret the data.

#### **3.1 Research design**

This study is a classroom-based research project which was conducted in order to reflect upon and solve the students' problem of unresponsiveness in a classroom. It aims to find a practical solution to alleviate teacher-student interactional problems caused by this reticence. The students were trained in a set of interactional strategies which can be regarded as tools for initiating interaction in the classroom. It was hoped that these interactional strategies would be helpful for students to bridge the gap of communication in the classroom and become more capable of interacting with their native speaker teacher.

#### **3.2 Participants of the study**

The participants of the study were a class of high school students who studied English with a native English teacher who could not speak Thai. There were 17 students in a class. Half of these participants were randomly selected for interview after training.

### **3.3 Instruments**

#### **3.3.1 Classroom observation**

The classroom observation method involved the researcher observing, recording and later analyzing events in the classroom. It was used as the main instrument for data collection. After training, the use of strategies and the number of teacher-student interaction in the classroom were observed and noted. Together with the observation, the following additional tools were needed.

**a. Video-taping** was used for recording the classroom atmosphere and instruction. The researcher viewed the video-taped for counting the strategies used observing the context of the strategies used and classroom atmosphere, thus verifying the notes.

**b. Observational notes** were written by the researcher during class. The events related to interesting aspects through the conversation were documented in detail and verified with video transcripts. (See Appendix A, page 73)

**c. Observation check sheet** consisted of students' seat diagram. The researcher used it for illustrating turn-taking of the teacher-student interaction during class time. (See Appendix B, page 74)

#### **3.3.2 Semi-structured interview**

Semi-structured interviews were used to gather data about the effects of interactional strategy training on teacher-students interaction. A set of open-ended questions were prepared for finding out students' and teacher's opinions about the use of interactional strategies with their native teacher. The interview helped the researcher get in-depth perspectives from the participants. (See Appendix C, page 75)

**Table 3.3 Summary of research instruments and data analysis**

Research Questions	Instruments	Data analysis
1. Do the four interactional strategies, i.e., appeals for help, repetition requests, clarification requests, and comprehension checks help increase teacher-student interaction in an EFL classroom?	1. Classroom observation - Observational check sheets - Observational notes 2. Semi-structured interview	- Count the number of the turns taken by both parties and compare between before and after interactional strategy training. - Description of classroom interaction, atmosphere and relevant aspects.
2. What are the effects of interactional strategy training on students' comprehension, confidence, and classroom atmosphere?	1. Classroom observation - Observational notes 2. Semi-structured interview	Classify the answers into group: Positive/ Neutral/ Negative, use percentage to compare the data between before and after interactional strategy training. - Review the descriptions, find the themes and discuss the results.

### 3.4 Timeframe

For the procedure of the study, the researcher followed the steps below:

<b>Duration/Week</b>	<b>Data collection procedure</b>	<b>Instruments</b>
Before training Week 1	Classroom observation 1	Classroom observation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Video taping</li> <li>• Observation note</li> <li>• Observation check sheet</li> <li>• Semi-structured interview</li> </ul>
Week 2	Classroom observation 2	Classroom observation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Video taping</li> <li>• Observation note</li> <li>• Observation check sheet</li> </ul>
Week 3	Classroom observation 3	Classroom observation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Video taping</li> <li>• Observation note</li> <li>• Observation check sheet</li> </ul>
Training week Week 4	Strategy training:  Appeals for help and  Repetition requests	Task A  (See Appendix D and E, PP 77 and 78 )
Week 5	Strategy Training:  Clarification requests and  Comprehension checks	Task B  (See Appendix F and G, PP 80 and 84 )

<b>Duration/Week</b>	<b>Data collection procedure</b>	<b>Instruments</b>
Week 6	Training assessment	Task C  (See Appendix H, PP 85)
Duration/Week	Data collection procedure	Instruments
After training  Week 7	Classroom observation 4	Classroom observation  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Video taping</li> <li>• Observation note</li> <li>• Observation check sheet</li> </ul>
Week 8	Classroom observation 5  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lesson 1(Body parts- common health problems)</li> </ul> (see Appendix I, page 88)	Classroom observation  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Video taping</li> <li>• Observation note</li> <li>• Observation check sheet</li> </ul>
Week 9	Classroom observation 6  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lesson 2 (Fashion)</li> </ul> (see Appendix I, page 90 )	Classroom observation  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Video taping</li> <li>• Observation note</li> <li>• Observation check sheet</li> </ul>
Week 10	Interview the participants	Semi-structured interview
Week 11	Transcribe the video onto  paper	
Week 12	Analyze data	

In order to compare the results before and after the interactional strategy training, the data concerning classroom atmosphere and interactional patterns during

class time were collected during the first to third weeks. The training in interactional strategies took place during the fourth and the fifth weeks. In the sixth week, the students' abilities of using interactional strategies were assessed. Then, the class was observed and video taped again from the seventh, the eighth and the ninth weeks to study the nature of any effects in terms of the interaction between the teacher and students, the strategies used and classroom atmosphere. In week ten, students and the teacher were interviewed about the effect of interactional strategies on their learning and teaching. In the last two weeks, the data from video tape and audio tape were transcribed and analyzed.

The design of this study was intentionally restricted to the one factor, the training in interactional strategies. The researcher controlled the quality of the designed lessons by asking experts in ELT to validate the design of the lesson plan. For the native teacher, the researcher provided two articles about how to give feedback to students' responses and how to pose questions which were thoughts and interaction provoking. With these controls, the researcher hoped that the strategy training was clearly focused.

### **3.5 Data analysis**

Data from three different sources were analyzed in the following manner:

- **Data from observational notes** The researcher coded and categorized the data from these notes in three aspects: a) comprehension to see if the students could comprehend more the teacher's instruction; b) students' confidence in using interactional strategies with their teacher; and c) classroom atmosphere to see if the students' participation in class was more interactive.

- **Data from observational check sheet** The researcher used the data for ensuring the number of the turns of interaction, turns between the teacher and students. Turn-taking was the main unit of analysis for counting the interaction. Crookes (1990) defined the turn as one or more streams of speech bounded by speech of another, usually an interlocutor. The researcher studied numbers of interactional turns among participants. There are many kinds of turns such as the turn of instruction or the turn of interaction. This study focused on the interactional turns. For the number of the turns, percentage was used to compare the number of the turns before and after interactional strategy training. The following conversation illustrates how the turns of interaction were counted.

**Example 1**

**T:** Who are you going out with tonight? .....(1)

**S:** My mother. ....(1)

**T:** Very good. ....(1)

(The interaction turn was on one topic and three interactional turns.)

**Example 2**

**T:** What did you do last night? .....(1)

**S:** .....(He smiles) *what?* .....(1)

**T:** What did you do last night? .....(1)

**S:** Listen to the radio. ....(1)

**T:** When did you listen to the radio? .....(1)

**S:** 9 o'clock. ....(1)

(The interaction turn was on one topic, five interactional turns, and one interactional strategy.)

- **Data from semi-structured interview** The students' opinions were classified into 3 groups: positive, neutral, and negative. Percentage was used to find the majority of opinions and comparison.

### **3.6 Summary**

This chapter presents the procedures of the study. This study is classroom-based research. The students were observed in the first three weeks. Then, they were trained interactional strategies for three weeks. After that they were observed for the second time for three weeks. In the last week, they were interviewed. Classroom observation and semi-structured interview were the instruments for collecting the data. Number of the interactional turns and percentage were used to analyze the data.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **RESULTS OF THE STUDY**

This chapter presents the results of the study by using the two research questions as framework.

#### **4.1 Results**

##### **4.1.1 Research question 1: Do the four interactional strategies, i.e. appeals for help, repetition requests, clarification requests, and comprehension checks help increase teacher-student interaction in an EFL classroom?**

Data from the observational notes, observational check sheet and semi-structured interview were used to answer Research Question 1. Quantitatively, the number of interaction turns before and after the interactional strategy training is compared and presented. Table 4.1.1 shows the data before the training.

**Table 4.1.1 Before interactional strategy training**

<b>Weeks</b>	<b>Topic (s)</b>	<b>Interaction turn(s)</b>	<b>Interactional strategies</b>	<b>Class time (minutes)</b>	<b>Proportion Turns/ min</b>
1	1	20	0	33	0.61
2	1	0	0	16	0
3	2	8	0	14	0.57
Total/average	4	28	0	63	0.39

In the first week, twenty interactional turns were found. The teacher started the lesson with the questions “Did you ever go to\_\_\_?” Students answered the questions by using short answers (Yes or No).

**For example**

*T: Did you ever go to Bangkok? (Ask student # 1)*

*S1: No*

*T: Did you ever go to Bangkok? (Ask student # 3)*

*S3: Yes*

*T: Did you ever go to Bangkok? (Ask student # 7)*

*S7: No*

The form of the interaction was only a question and answer type. The proportion of turns is 0.61 per minute or about one turn per two minutes. In the second week, there were six students in the classroom because the rest of the students went to military camp. The teacher spent time drawing pictures of vocabulary words on the blackboard and asked the students to repeat the words. Then, the teacher assessed students' comprehension by pointing to the picture and asked, “What's this?” There was no reply. There were no interaction turns because the students did not pay attention to the instruction. Some drew the pictures in their notebooks and talked to their friends on an unrelated topic. In the third week, two topics were raised. The first was about the teacher's accident. The students saw the teacher's arm in a sling and had a piece of cloth hanging around his neck. The students asked a question like “hotel?” to ask their teacher, meaning that “the teacher went to a hospital?”. The teacher corrected the question saying “a hospital, not a hotel”. Eight interactional turns were found when discussing this topic. The second topic was about a poem which was the lesson of that day. The teacher spent time writing the poem on the blackboard and told the students to copy it into their notebooks. There were no interactional turns because the teacher

acted and told them to open up a dictionary to find the meaning of those words. The average of interactional turns is about one turn per three minutes.

**Table 4.1.2 After interactional strategy training**

Weeks	Topic (s)	Interaction turn(s)	Interactional strategies	Class time (minutes)	Proportion Turns/ Min
4	1	43	6	37	1.16
5	1	11	3	26	0.42
6	1	20	3	32	0.63
Total/average	3	74	12	95	0.74

In the fourth week, forty-three interactional turns were found. The lesson was about how to answer questions about their hometown. The questions included “What city are you from?”, “What village are you from?”, “What town are you from?”, “What province are you from?”, “What country are you from?”. The students answered by using their personal data. Some students raised their hands to answer. Most of the answers were not only ‘Yes/No’. The students could make a complete sentence because the teacher wrote necessary forms of many possible answers on the blackboard. Repetition requests were used when students wanted the teacher to repeat the question.

**For example**

*T: What country are you from?*

*S4: Pardon?*

*T: What country are you from?*

*S4: I'm from Thailand.*

*T: What village are you from? (Student # 3)*

*S3: Again, please.*

*T: What village are you from?*

*S3: I am from Phoklang.*

Since there were five different words: village, city, town, province and country, the students just wanted to be sure about different words used in each question.

In the fifth week, eleven interactional turns were found. The lesson was about sickness and symptoms. The students were asked to play a game and draw a picture. The pictures and actions were used to present a set of vocabulary. Several students used repetition requests and clarification requests to solve a communication problem. For example, S4 did not understand the meaning of the word “monster”. He asked his teacher “What is a monster? I don’t understand”.

**For example**

*T: We will draw a picture of a monster*  
*S4: What? (It was a kind of repetition requests.)*  
*T: Monster*  
*S4: What is a monster? I don’t understand*  
*T: It is not human. It is a kind of ghost.*

In the sixth week, twenty interactional turns were found. The lesson was about fashion. The teacher asked the students some questions about their favorite fashion styles and gave some expressions to them such as “If you go to a birthday party, how would you like to dress up?”

**For example**

Repetition request between teacher and students.

*T: Who wears a blouse?*  
*S1: What? (It was a kind of repetition requests that student asked the teacher.)*  
*T: Who wears a blouse?*  
*S: --- (Female students were quiet but they raised their hands)*

Repetition requests between students and students.

*S18: What do you like to wear?*  
*S17: What? (It was a kind of repetition requests that student asked their peers.)*  
*S18: What do you like to wear?*  
*S17: I like to wear socks, slippers and glasses.*  
*S7: What do you like to wear?*  
*S8: Again, please.*

*S7: What do you like to wear?*  
*S8: I like to wear blouse and skirt.*

**Table 4.1.3 Comparison of the interactional turns before and after the training**

<b>Period</b>	<b>Interactional turns</b>	<b>Class time (minutes)</b>	<b>Proportion (Turns/minutes)</b>
Before the training	28	63	0.39
After the training	74	95	0.74

From the comparison of the number of teacher-student interaction turns before and after the training, it can be concluded that the number of the interactions clearly increased after the students were trained to use some interactional strategies. In other words, they had more interaction with the teacher, their answers provided more information, and were no longer short than ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ answers. When the question involved their personal details, some of the students volunteered to answer the teacher’s questions. When most of them had a problem about the communication, they used some of the interactional strategies to help them to solve the problem. For example, when the students heard some unclear words from the teacher, they asked the teacher to repeat them by using ‘What?’ or ‘Pardon?’ or ‘Again, please’. Most students used repetition requests to solve improperly heard words or to ensure the correctness of the heard words. In addition, S4 asked his teacher to clarify the word’s meaning by using clarification requests.

Students not only used interactional strategies with the teacher but they also used them with their partners when doing a pair- work activity. They talked to their friends about the meaning of the words. However, there were some students who still did not pay attention to the lesson or some that preferred to get direct help from peers

rather than using the interactional strategies. For example, there was a particularly quiet student. When he had to reply, he turned to another student without saying anything and his peer shook his head as well. Then, one student translated the question into Thai for him, but he still did not reply. These extracts show that some of the student's behaviors have changed after the training, but not all.

*“When students had the problems about communication, they used some interactional strategies to solve the problem instead of being quiet”*

(Observational note, Week 4)

*“Students also use interactional strategies with their partners when they heard unclear words from their partner”*

(Observational note, Week 6)

*“Students talked to their peers to clarify the words' meaning”*

(Observational note, Week 6)

During his interview, the teacher stated that he had been very pleased with the students' behaviors. After the training, they developed their skills in listening and speaking, so it was easier for him to communicate with them. However, there were a few of the students who seemed to have very limited words. They did not understand the meaning of any words.

*“After training, most of the students' ability was developed. I had been very pleased with the overall behavior. They had more of an attention span than before and functioned more as a co-operative group. There was a group of the students (about five or six) who had problems about the vocabulary meanings.”*

(Teacher's interview)

It can be concluded that the students' interactions before and after training were different. The students had more interactions with their teacher. They answered the questions, listened to the instructions and used repetition requests to solve their

communication problem. Moreover, they also interacted with their peers when doing their activities and asked for help. They asked their friends to clarify the word's meanings or the teacher's instruction of some activities.

In this section, repetition requests were the focus because most of students used these strategies in other situations.

**Table 4.1.4 Comparison of strategies used by the students after the training**

<b>Interactional strategies</b>	<b>Frequency used</b>	<b>Situation used</b>
Appeals for help	-	
Repetition requests requests -What (7) - Again, please (3) - Pardon (1)	11	- The students were unclear of the teacher's pronunciation.
Clarification requests - I don't understand	1	- The students did not understand the meaning of the word "monster".
Comprehension checks	-	

The repetition requests were used by the students with both the teacher and their peers. Repetition requests such as "Pardon?", "What?" and "Again, please" were used more than others. From the semi-structured interview, they stated that repetition request was very short and easy to use. Eleven out of seventeen students reported that the rest of interactional strategies were not used because they were too long and hard to remember. S 4 used 'I don't understand' when he did not understand the meaning of the word.

**Examples** of repetition request:

In the situation that the students wanted the teacher to repeat something.

1. *T: You can give it to your sister. Who wears a blouse?*  
*SI: What?*  
*T: Who wears a blouse?*

2. *T: I am from Vancouver. What city are you from?  
(Ask student # 3)  
S3: Again, please.  
T: What city are you from?*
3. *T: No country, who know? What province are you from?  
S4: Pardon.  
T: What is your province? (Ask student # 4)*
4. *T: What city and town are you from? (Ask student # 7)  
S7: What?  
T: What city and town are you from?*
5. *T: What province are you from? (Ask student # 10)  
S10:--- (Quiet). What?  
T: What province are you from?*
6. *S18: What do you like to wear?  
S17: What?  
S18: What do you like to wear?*
7. *S7: What do you like to wear?  
S8: Again, please.  
S7: What do you like to wear?*

**Table 4.1.5 The reasons students used or did not use particular interactional strategies**

<b>Interactional strategies</b>	<b>Reasons for using these strategies</b>	<b>Reasons for not using these strategies</b>
Appeals for helps		- They could ask their peers in Thai and the teacher was a native speaker so they might not understand the teacher's answer in English.
Repetition requests	They were short and easy to remember.	
Clarification requests	Only S4 used it when he did not know the meaning of "monster". He felt like he really wanted to understand this word in order to play game.	- They were too long. - Students could not remember the requests and use them automatically in a speaking task.
Comprehension checks		- Students were not advanced enough to make sentences to check their comprehension.

The information above shows that each strategy requires a thinking process and a subsequent discussion process. This group of the students can be considered as beginners, so they chose some of the easy strategies to help their learning. Thus, repetition requests were the most common, described as being the easiest to remember.

#### **4.1.2 Research question 2: What are the effects of interactional strategy training on student's comprehension, confidence, and classroom atmosphere?**

The data which were gathered from classroom observations, the student's interview and the teacher's interview are presented in both qualitative and quantitative forms to answer Research Question 2. To illustrate the situation clearly, some parts of the data were extracted and italicized.

The following section contains the descriptions of students' and teacher's interaction and the changes of students' comprehension, confidence, and classroom atmosphere before and after training.

##### **Changes in students' comprehension**

With regard to the students' understanding of the instructions, students hardly understood the lesson or the instruction before training. When the teacher explained the vocabulary or the lesson and asked "Do you understand?" or "Do you have any problems about my lesson?" they were quiet. It made the teacher think that they understood the instruction. In fact, the students did not understand the instruction. They reported that the more explanation, the more difficult it was to understand.

After the training, some students, who gave positive opinions, reported that they had more interaction with their teacher and more understanding about the unclear

points because they used some interactional strategies to solve their communication problems.

*“After we had been trained about interactional strategies, we tried to use them with the teacher when we were not clear of some words. It worked. The teacher changed it to the easier words. Then, we could understand his explanation.”*

*(Student #17)*

Moreover, they could answer teacher’s questions in longer sentences (Not only ‘Yes’ or ‘No’). However, for the students who had a problem with limited vocabulary, they still could not understand the instruction although they used interactional strategies to solve their learning problem. Five students gave the similar opinions.

Example of these reasons were:

*“I did not understand what the teacher said because I did not know the vocabulary although my teacher had already changed to the new word. I felt very worried and nervous to interact when I was asked to answer the questions. I was pretty anxious when it’s my turn to interact with the teacher.”*

*(Student # 3)*

*“These strategies did not help me because I could not understand what the teacher said because I did not know the vocabulary. My vocabulary was very limited. I forgot new words very quickly, it discouraged me and I lost my hope about studying English”*

*(Student # 9)*

The data of the students’ understanding of the instruction were presented below.

**Table 4.1.6 Comparison of students' comprehension before and after the training**

<b>Responses before the training</b>	<b>Before (Percentage)</b>	<b>After (Percentage)</b>	<b>Responses after the training</b>
<b>Positive</b> - Completely understood (1)	5.88	47.05	<b>Positive</b> - Completely understood (8)
<b>Neutral</b> - Occasionally understood (3)	17.65	23.53	<b>Neutral</b> - Occasionally understood (4)
<b>Negative</b> - Rarely understood (13)	76.47	29.41	<b>Negative</b> - Rarely understood (5)

From the table, the data reveal that after the training, 47.05 percent of the students could understand the teacher's instruction completely because they could ask the teacher to clarify unclear points. There were still 29.41 percent unable to understand the teacher's instruction, but this was down from the negative way.

The data from the observational notes confirmed the students' interview as follows:

#### **Before the training**

There were seventeen students in the classroom. The seating arrangement was fixed. The students had to sit on that same seat for all semester long. The teacher started his lesson and the students listened to him presenting vocabulary in front of the classroom. Then, the teacher checked their understanding about the words' meanings. Some students were talking about something else, not about the lesson. Two students were talking to each other all the time. The students, in the first row, were not actively participating in answering the questions. When the students were asked questions,

some were quiet and made no eyes contact with their teacher. Some students only smiled to the teacher. Some shook their heads to show that they could not answer the question. As a result, the teacher passed the question to other students, who were also quiet. Several students tried to answer the questions but their answers were only ‘Yes’ or ‘No’. Extracts below were frequently noted during observation.

*“Some students did not respond to the teacher’s question. They avoided having eye contact with the teacher. When the teacher came closed to one of them, he smiled and shook his head.”*

(Observational note, week 1)

*“S9 and S10 were talking to each other about something else all the time without paying attention to the instruction.”*

(Observational note, week 1)

*“Students responded to the teacher’s questions in a short form. They said only “Yes” or “No” rather than giving more information.”*

(Observational note, week 1)

Another source of data is from the teacher’s interview. It can be concluded that most of the problems concerned with the communication ability of the students. Since they were either quiet or talking all the time, they did not interact with the teacher. So he did not know whether they understood the lesson.

### **After the training**

After the training, the students used interactional strategies as tools to enable them to clarify unclear points. Extracts below were frequently noted during observation.

*“The students tried to use interactional strategies to simplify their unknown points.”*

(Observational note, week 4)

*“The students had more interaction to the teacher. After the conversation, the teacher checked their comprehension by asking ‘Do you understand?’ They said ‘Yes’ loudly and some students nodded their head when comprehended the lesson.”*

(Observational note, week 5)

On the other hands, there were five or six students whose comprehension or understanding did not increase because they did not know enough vocabulary.

*“S3 tried to use interactional to help him to comprehend the lesson but he still could not answer the teacher’s questions”*

(Observational note, week 6)

It was apparent that interactional strategies could help some students who had sufficient vocabulary but they could not help students whose limited vocabulary was too low.

### **Student’s confidence**

Before the training, there were only a couple of students who interacted with the native teacher. The rest were quiet. According to their previous responses, the students who did not know the word’s meaning felt bored with studying. They said that they did not understand the meanings of questions, so they did not know how to answer the questions as basically stopped paying attention.

After the training, most of the students reported that they had more confidence to interact with the teacher. They could ask the teacher something that they could not understand or was unclear. There were several students who responded during the interview with similar opinions.

*“I had more confidence to interact with my teacher. Although I knew I used incorrect words, my teacher was kind and corrected those words for me.”*

(Student # 2)

*“I could ask the teacher the thing that I could not understand.”*

(Student #12)

*“I had more confidence to interact with the teacher. Sometimes I was not sure whether my questions were right or wrong. The teacher tried to understand my questions and responded to it”*

(Student #17)

The summary of students’ responses about language learning is presented in Table

4.1.7

**Table 4.1.7 Comparison of students’ reported levels of confidence before and after the training**

<b>Responses before the training</b>	<b>Before (Percentage)</b>	<b>After (Percentage)</b>	<b>Responses after the training</b>
<b>Positive</b> - Actively participating in the lesson (1)	5.89	58.83	<b>Positive</b> - More comprehension(5) - More confidence(5)
<b>Neutral</b> -	0	5.88	<b>Neutral</b> - No participation in the lesson (1)
<b>Negative</b> - Anxious(11) - Bored(5)	94.11	35.29	<b>Negative</b> - Anxious (6)

From the table, the data revealed that after the training, the reported positive opinion about students’ language learning increased to 58.83 %. Students said they had more confidence and understood the lessons. Half of the students had changed their response from being negative to positive. There were only 35.29 % of the students who still had negative opinions about the lesson and the teacher’s instruction because of their anxiety about interacting with the teacher.

The data from the observational notes confirmed the students’ interview as following:

### **Before training**

Observational notes revealed that the students usually kept quiet in class. They seemed to be afraid to answer the teacher's question. They did not participate in classroom activities. Some students were too nervous or anxious to interact with the teacher. Some seemed to be bored with the teacher's instruction.

### **After training**

It was found that the students reported feeling confident, as though they had tools for asking the questions to the teacher. They had more understanding of the vocabulary and the lesson, and had more confidence to interact with the teacher because he was very patient to listen to students' questions. The students appreciated that he corrected the wrong words for students, and they enjoyed the games, drawing pictures following to instructions during the class time.

*"The students were happy, they were laughing to each other."*  
(Observational note, week 5)

From the teacher's interview about students' language learning, he said that students seemed to participate in his lesson. He was very satisfied that the students could improve their communication skills. He mentioned:

*"Some students had been listening and speaking effectively and I, their teacher, had been very pleased with the overall behavior. Their ability in communicating was developed. It seemed to be easier for me to communicate with the students and the students seemed more focused on learning my lesson. They had more attention than before and functioned more as a co-operative group."*

*(Teacher's interview)*

But there were some students who were still anxious to answer the teacher's questions. They reported that when the teacher asked questions, they did not

understand them. It made them feel pressured and uncomfortable. They believed that their speaking skill was very poor, so they were always nervous to answer.

*“The knowledge both Thai and English had gone away from my head. I could not remember anything.”*

(Student # 9)

*“I could not understand what the teacher said because I had poor English ability.”*

(Student # 10)

It can be concluded that after the training, the students who already had sufficient vocabulary had more confidence to interact with the native teacher, but below a certain level, no change was observed.

## **Classroom atmosphere**

### **Students**

Regarding the classroom atmosphere, before the training, most of the students felt uncomfortable to study with the foreign teacher. They could not understand the teacher's questions. One of the students said they were afraid of speaking with the foreign teacher and only one student who did not give any idea about learning with the native teacher.

After the training of interactional strategies, some of the students felt more comfortable to interact with the teacher. They said that they had more confidence to interact with the teacher that made them feel less frustrated to interact and brave enough to converse with the native teacher. On the other hand, some students were still uncomfortable because they could not understand what the teacher said. They did not know the meaning of vocabulary though the teacher had explained the meaning of words several times. The data were presented in Table 4.1.8

**Table 4.1.8 Comparison of the classroom atmosphere before and after the training**

<b>Responses before the training</b>	<b>Before (Percentage)</b>	<b>After (Percentage)</b>	<b>Responses after the training</b>
<b>Positive</b> - Less frustrated (0)	0	41.18	<b>Positive</b> - Less frustrated (7)
<b>Neutral</b> - No idea (1)	5.88	29.41	<b>Neutral</b> - No idea (5)
<b>Negative</b> - Fearful (6) - Uncomfortable (10)	94.12	29.41	<b>Negative</b> - Uncomfortable (5)

In sum, 41.18 % of the students felt less frustrated in class. The number of students who had negative opinions about the classroom atmosphere decreased. About half of student changed their feeling from negative (fearful and uncomfortable) to be more positive with the English class. However, 29.41 % of the students still felt uncomfortable with the classroom atmosphere, although they had the same training. They stated that they could not understand what the teacher said because they did not have enough vocabulary, and did not make effort.

The data from the observational notes also supported the students' interview as follows:

#### **Before the training**

From the observational notes, the classroom was very silent. The students in the first row seemed to pay more attention to the teacher than others who sat in the other rows. However, when the questions were posed, most of the students were quiet.

The students did not answer the teacher's questions. These extracts were often found in the observational notes.

*"The atmosphere was uncomfortable. The students were quiet when questions were posed. The teacher was irritated. His sound was louder and the students seemed to fear him"*

(Observational note, week 1)

From the teacher's interview, the students did not pay attention to his lesson. It seemed very difficult to teach the lesson to students. He felt uncomfortable in teaching. He felt like he could not manage the classroom.

*"They did not listen to me. They seemed not to understand my words"*

(Teacher's interview)

### **After the training**

From the observational notes, the classroom atmosphere was different. The students tried to talk about their personal hometown. They attempted more to answer the teacher's questions and asked when they did not know any words. It might be partly because they were having fun with the game of drawing the picture. The strategies were used once in a while when they really needed the answer to complete the task. They smiled and were happy to guess the teacher's acting.

*"The classroom atmosphere was kind of more relaxed. More students answered the teacher's questions and they wanted to share their personal data or join to the game."*

(Observational note, week 5)

## **Teacher**

From the teacher's interview about the classroom atmosphere, he revealed that after the training, the students had more confidence to answer his questions. They were better in answering his questions and tried to have more interaction with him. When he heard some interactional strategies from the students, he knew that they did not comprehend the lesson being taught. He tried to use new words, after his body language, or act out until they understood.

However, he stated that interactional strategy training was very effective in a Thai classroom and he preferred using them together with some simple alternative methods such as flash card and pictures since students showed that they needed other aids. Teaching aids were helpful and necessary to enhance teaching effectiveness. Moreover, he stated that using interactional strategies for teaching English as a foreign language is extremely useful for a teacher but teaching the strategies to students may not present progress because students are always seeking short-cuts and easy answers.

The data from the observational notes confirmed the students' interview as following:

### **Before training**

Observational notes reveal that the first three weeks, the native English teacher just came to the class and presented vocabulary. Then, he asked the students to repeat the vocabulary. After that he checked their understanding of the meanings of each word. He stood in front of the class and asked questions to the students, who just sat quietly. They did not respond to the questions. When the students did not answer the questions, the teacher gave the same questions to the other students. They were still quiet. The teacher seemed to be irritated. He spoke louder. Finally, there were some

students answering his questions, but their answers were only 'Yes' or 'No'. The extracts below illustrate his teaching in the classroom.

*“Teacher presented vocabulary to students. Then, he asked them to repeat those words. Every student just sat still and was quiet. After presenting new vocabulary, the teacher checked students’ understanding of the meaning of each word”*

(Observational note, week 1)

*“It was very teacher- fronted class. It seemed the teacher did all the instruction alone”*

(Observational note, week 1)

*“The teacher was quite irritated and bored when students were quiet. They did not respond to his questions. Some students looked as if they wanted to say something but they didn’t.”*

(Observational note, week 1)

The responses from students’ interview verified the observation that students really did not want to interact with the teacher, fearing that they might not understand what the teacher said. On the other hand, the teacher did not know how to cope with the silence because he did not know what the problem was. Nobody answered his questions so the atmosphere in the classroom was rather quiet and uncomfortable. The teacher seemed to be irritated very easily which can be noticed from his raised voice.

The data from the teacher’s interview also confirmed that he felt uncomfortable because nobody wanted to interact with him and they seemed to be

afraid of him. They seemed to understand the lesson but actually did not. They just kept quiet when they did not know what to do.

*“At first, they were so shy to interact with me. They seemed to understand my questions. When I asked the questions to them, they were quiet.”*

(Teacher’s interview)

### **After the training**

From the observational notes, it was found that the structure of instruction has not changed much. The teacher still presented vocabulary first. Then, he asked the students to repeat those words, and checked the students’ knowledge of meanings of each word. He realized that teaching aids could be helpful so he used pictures, provided some examples and actions to introduce new words. As a result, the students could understand some words faster. They sometimes used interactional strategies such as “What?” or “Pardon?” when they got stuck with some points to show that they had some problem with those points. They wanted him to clarify those words. He smiled to the students because they tried to reply to his questions. Sometimes they raised their hands to volunteer to answer the questions. The students answered his questions with longer sentences as illustrated below.

*“Teacher asked the class some the questions, some students raised their hand to show that they wanted to answer that question.”*

(Observational note, week 4)

*“The teacher assessed them about the vocabulary by showing the pictures. Some students raised their hands to answer.”*

(Observational note, week 5)

From the teacher’s interview, after the training, he said that he was very satisfied with the students’ attempts to interact with him. The students paid more attention to the lesson. Only about 5-6 students seemed to have very limited words. They still could not understand the meaning of any words.

It can be concluded that the teacher’s feelings about teaching before and after the training has changed in a positive way though his instructional patterns remained the same. He tried to answer the students’ questions and he was patient to encourage students to have more interaction once it started. He tried to understand students’ problems or guessed their problems from the interactional strategies they used. The interactional strategies allowed him to know why they were quiet and enabled him to address the problems correctly.

According to the result of the study, it can be summarized that interactional strategies were useful for the students’ language learning. They reported that these strategies could help them start interacting with the teacher. Most students changed their learning behaviors, by trying to interact with their teacher. As a result, the teacher could manage the classroom more effectively, and a growing number of the students had more confidence to interact with their teacher and classroom atmosphere was more relaxing. It can be said that students’ use of interactional strategies led the teacher to know better about their problems, so that he could provide help

appropriately. The classroom was not as quiet as before and a majority of students could comprehend the lesson and answer the questions.

## **4.2 Summary**

This chapter presents the results of the study of the two research questions. It was found that interactional strategy training and its use changed students' behaviors from keeping quiet to be more interactive. The teacher-student interaction in the English class increased. The students had more confidence to interact with the native teacher. The atmosphere in the classroom seemed to be more facilitating and relaxing. The students and the teacher stated that these strategies were useful both for students' language learning and teacher's instruction.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This chapter presents the summary of the study's results, discussion of the results, the pedagogical implications of the study and recommendations for further research studies.

#### **5.1 Summary of the results of the study**

Research Question 1 was to investigate the effects of interactional strategy training on teacher-student interaction. The results of the quantitative analysis show that the number of interaction turns between the teacher and students increased. Prior to interactional strategy training, the students kept quiet when the teacher asked questions. Several students responded to the teacher's questions with simple 'Yes' and 'No' answer. The average number of interaction turns was about one turn per three minutes. After the training, the students used interactional strategies that were taught to them as tools for initiating their interaction. Their responses to the teacher's questions were longer and more meaningful. Further, the average number of interaction turns was about two turns per three minutes.

With regards to the frequency of the various strategies, the students used repetition requests most often because it was easy to remember than the others. Qualitatively behaviors appeared to change from being quiet to be more interactive with their teacher and the interactions with the teacher lasted longer.

Research Question 2 further explored the effects of interactional strategy training on students' comprehension, confidence and learning atmosphere. It was found that the students could comprehend the lesson better. They could ask their teacher when they could not understand something. Moreover, more students could respond to the teacher's questions.

For the students' confidence, it was found in the interviews with students that most of the students said that they felt more confident to interact with their teacher for two reasons. First, they stated that interactional strategies were useful tools for enhancing the ability to communicate with their teacher. Second, they claimed to have more confidence to use English in class. This, they said, was evident in the fact that they volunteered to answer the teacher's questions because they had more understanding and the teacher was very patient to listen to students' questions. Respondents felt good that they could respond to the teacher's questions with longer answers than 'Yes' or 'No'. The teacher also mentioned that his students seemed more confident to interact with him and volunteered to participate in classroom activities. Moreover, he felt that his students had developed greater communication skills as a result of the study.

For the teaching and learning atmosphere, the teacher thought that interactional strategies were useful and helpful for his instruction and class management. These strategies allowed him to discover when his instructional problems might occur. For example, when they used an interactional strategy, it meant that they might need more explanation. Verbal explanation alone might not be enough to ensure that the students understood the lessons completely.

## **5.2 Discussion**

This section is a discussion of three salient points found in this study. They include: 1) the interactional strategies most frequently used by the students; 2) the factors affecting the successful use of interactional strategies; and 3) the relationship between interaction and comprehension.

### **5.2.1. The most frequent interactional strategies used by the students**

In this study, the students were trained to use four interactional strategies: appeals for help, repetition requests, clarification requests, and comprehension checks. Each type of interactional strategies serves different purposes. Following are the discussion of the reasons the students used or did not use each of the four interactional strategies as reported in interviews.

#### **Repetition requests**

Repetition requests were used most frequently by the students. From the interview, the students reported that these strategies were short and easy to remember. They used these strategies when they could not hear something properly from the teacher as well as when they wanted the teacher to repeat or give further explanation.

The students had five choices for repetitions requests:

- 1) Pardon?
- 2) Could you say it again, please?
- 3) Again, please
- 4) What?
- 5) Excuse me?

From the observational notes, it was found that the students used three words from the list namely Pardon?, Again, please, and What?. The question “What?” was

used more frequently than others. From the students' interview, they reported that they could use it automatically because it was so short and easy for them to remember.

**For example**

*T: What is your province? (Ask # 4)*

*S4: What?*

*T: What is your province?*

*S4: Khon Kean*

The function of repetition requests was used when the students could not hear something properly. However, repetition requests were used in for other purposes, too as shown in the example below.

**For example**

*T: You are from Southeast Asia. Do you know the word “international”?*

*S: (Quiet)*

*T: Do you know the word “international”? (Ask # 4)*

*S: Again, please. (From the observational notes, the students repeated the word “international” for four or five times. He said in Thai that he was familiar with this word.(กึ่งคุ้นเคย))*

*T: “International”. Ninja is an international movie. So “international” means it is between countries.*

*(Observational note, week 5)*

From the example, the student did not use “Again, please” in the function of repetition requests. He needed the teacher to explain the meaning of the vocabulary to him. Sawir (2003) and Faerch and Kasper (1983) reported that repetition can be employed as a way of requesting confirmation or clarification. The results of Wannaruk's study (2003) supported that EFL students used repetition requests and clarification requests automatically when they faced communication problems.

**Clarification requests**

The students had seven choices of clarification requests;

- 1) I don't understand\_\_.
- 2) I'm not sure what you mean by saying "\_\_\_\_\_".
- 3) I'm not following you.
- 4) It's not clear enough yet
- 5) Could you make that clearer, please?
- 6) Could you tell me more?
- 7) What do you mean by \_\_\_\_?

The finding indicated that only one student used this strategy to ask the teacher about the meaning of vocabulary. Though there were many choices for clarification requests, this student used "I don't understand". This sentence was used quite automatically for EFL students (Wannaruk, 2003) when they faced any unclear points. For example, when S4 asked his teacher "What's monster? I don't understand", his teacher tried to simplify his explanation to him. The rest of the students were asked why they did not use clarification requests. Most of the students reported that they actually wanted to clarify the meaning of the unclear words, but they could not remember how to make a request for clarification. Moreover, some of the students said they tried to think of the clarification request strategies but their brains went blank even though they had demonstrated that they could use these strategies during the training and in the training assessment before.

In comparison with the repetition requests, clarification requests were longer and therefore, harder to remember and use in a real situation.

### **Appeals for helps**

The students had two choices of appeals for help:

- 1) What do you call... in English?

2) How do you say\_\_?

According to the results of the study, it was found that the students did not use appeals for help with their teacher because they could ask for help directly from their peers. It was more convenient for them to solve the problem by asking their peers in Thai because the native teacher did not know students' L1. For example, S6 asked S4 what the word for “กระโปรง” was in English. In addition, they knew that their teacher could not help them translate from Thai into English. As the students' input involved the students' L1, appeals for help could be used with the native teacher who could not understand the students' L1.

### **Comprehension checks**

The students had three choices of comprehension checks:

- 1) Did you say...?
- 2) You said...?
- 3) You mean...?.

The study found that the students did not use comprehension checks. They said that these strategies were complex despite the fact that comprehension checks were as short as the repetition requests. According to the literature (Ellis, 1993) comprehension checks contain a number of sub-processes. A student would need to comprehend, summarize and paraphrase the teacher's message before checking their comprehension. As Ellis (1993) stated, students should comprehend the message before they can check it. However, because the students in the present study did not understand the meaning of words, neither could they summarize nor paraphrase the message.

According to their purposes or functions, different strategies were used in the different situations. Interactional strategies could help students become more involved with their lesson. Therefore, all of these strategies should be introduced to EFL students.

### **5.2.2. Factors affecting the successful use of interactional strategies**

The results of the study revealed two factors affecting the successful use of interactional strategies in the classroom: teacher's responses and student's language proficiency.

#### **Teacher's responses**

In an interactive classroom, the teacher's responses are very important. In this study, the students were trained to use four interactional strategies. They used these strategies when they had some problems or did not understand something. From the strategies the student used, it was found that the students tried to use interactional strategies but they were not successful in using all of them. There were two possible reasons explaining the students' unsuccessful use. First, the results of Sawir's study (2003) supported this idea that one strategy can be employed in the same way as the other strategies. The students might use interactional strategies for multiple purposes. For example, the student used "Again, please" to the teacher. It may not mean that the student wanted the teacher to repeat the sentences. He/She may use "Again, please" as a clarification request. He/She may want the teacher to clarify the unclear point. Therefore, the teacher should provide various kinds of responses by guessing from the students' facial expression, context, and situations. Proper response will extend the conversation between teacher and student and enhance student's comprehension of the lesson.

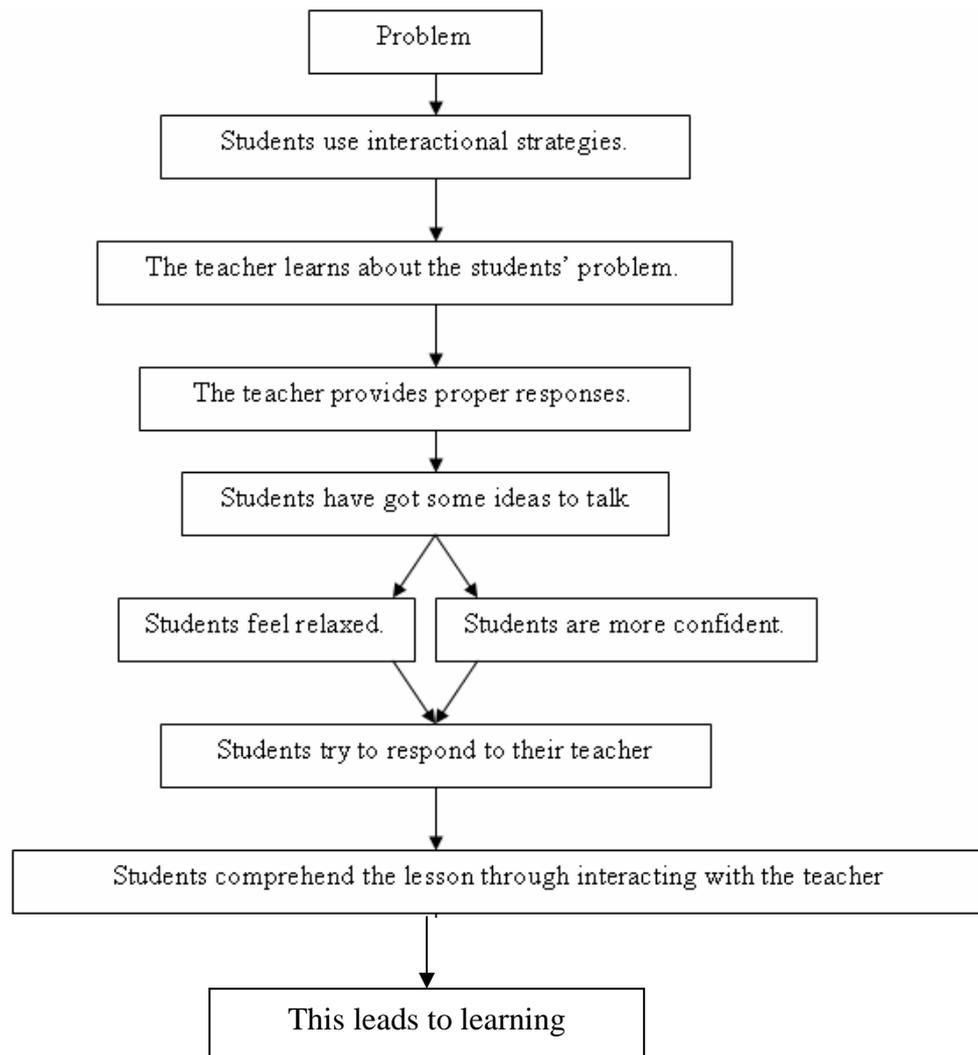
Second, the teacher responded only in English to the students because he is a native speaker. Even though the teacher simplified his explanation, the students did not seem to understand those meaning completely because they had limited vocabulary. This shows that verbal responses alone may not be adequate. From the teacher's opinion using other teaching aids will be more effective than relying only on verbal explanation.

### **Student's language proficiency**

Student's language proficiency could be another factor that obstructed them from using strategies with their teacher. The six students, who had limited vocabulary and lacked of grammatical competence thought that although they used interactional strategies with their teacher to clarify something, they still could not understand that explanation. They were afraid to interact with the teacher.

### **5.2.3. The relationship between interaction and comprehension**

This section presents the relationship between interaction and comprehension which resulted from the use of interactional strategies. The next page shows the figure which illustrates how interactional strategies can facilitate students' comprehension which is the result of this study.



**Figure1.** How interactional strategies facilitate interaction, comprehension, and finally learning

The students used interactional strategies with the teacher and as a result, the teacher discovers that something was wrong with the instruction. Then, the teacher tried to provide possible solutions to the problem by guessing from the interactional strategies they used. The students primarily understood the questions and were able to interact with their teacher. They felt relaxed or more confident to interact with their teacher. After they had chance to negotiate their input by interacting with the teacher, they could comprehend their lesson. Long (1981b) stated that negotiated interaction is

especially important for learners to make input comprehensible. Learners can modify their input through the interaction. Long (1983a) stated that modification involve the negotiation of meaning, and this negotiation includes interactional strategies.

This figure (Figure 1) is similar to Long's interaction hypothesis in the part of the modified input. He believes that interaction is the way to modify student's input. Moreover, he stated that modified input was crucial for language development (Long, 1983a).

In this study, before the training, the students could not understand the instruction nor did they know how to ask in order to modify their input. After the training, they could modify their input by using interactional strategies as tools to negotiate for their comprehension. It can be assumed that the interaction helped the students enhance their language learning because they could comprehend, interact and finally produce some language.

### **5.3 The Pedagogical Implications of the Study**

The pedagogical implications based on the results of this study are as follows:

1. According to the results of the study, after the training, the interaction turns increased and students reported that they felt relaxed in the classroom. Therefore, for teachers faced with unresponsive students, interactional strategies are useful ways to help the students start to interact with the teacher. Hence, all of interactional strategies should be introduced to the students to offer them a chance to be both speaker and listener in a real situation.

2. For the training, teachers should increase more time and activities for practice to ensure that the students can use strategies appropriately and automatically

in a real situation. In this study, the students were trained four interactional strategies within two and a half hours. However, some strategies are more complex than others. As a result, they used only the short and easy strategies. When training, the complexity of strategies should be considered together with the students' ability in order to benefit for their language learning. The students may need more time and activities to memorize the long sentences. Some strategies such as comprehension checks, the teacher should analyze the strategy carefully and plan to train subskills to the students. More time and activities for practice will help students acquire these strategies successfully.

3. According to the discussion of the study, teacher's responses are very important teachers should have effective techniques to respond to the students other than just verbally.

#### **5.4 The Recommendations for Further Study**

This section suggests the need for further research as follows:

1. From the interview, the students gave the reasons why they did not use interactional strategies, for example, a) it was hard to remember, b) they had limited vocabulary and c) they did not want to use it. There should be some other factors affecting student's use of interactional strategies, which are worth exploring in depth.

2. The study lasted six weeks to observe the students. In the last three weeks, the students began to use interactional strategies. Therefore, a longitudinal study is recommended to study the acquisition of interactional strategies. The strategy used may delay.

## **5.5 Summary**

This chapter presents the summary of the study. The most frequent interactional strategies used by the students, the factors affecting the use of interactional strategies, and the relationship between interaction and comprehension were discussed. The pedagogical implications and the recommendations for the further study were also suggested.

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## APPENDIX A

### Observational note

Classroom atmosphere (Before and after training)

Atmosphere	
confidence	
Interaction	
Comprehension	



## APPENDIX C

### **Semi-structured interviewing questions for students.**

#### **The set of the questions for Research Question 1:**

1. What did you do when you did not understand the teacher's questions or instruction?
2. Can interactional strategies help you interact with your native teacher?
3. How did you feel when you had to talk to him?
4. Why didn't you interact with your teacher?

#### **The set of questions for Research Question 2;**

1. Do you know these interactional strategies before?
2. How do you feel about the atmosphere in the classroom?
3. How do you feel about your language learning after the interactional strategies training?
4. Can interactional strategies help you understand your teacher's questions or instruction?
5. Can you comprehend the lesson better? Can you give some examples?

### **Interviewing questions for the teacher.**

The set of questions to interview the native teacher for the opinion concerning the use of interactional strategies after the interactional strategy training.

1. Do you think that students have more interaction with you?

2. Is it easier for your instruction? And in what way?
3. How do you feel about the effects of interactional strategies with your teaching?
4. Do you think it is useful to train interactional strategies to students?
5. What do you think about students' comprehension?
6. What do you think about classroom atmosphere?

1. คำถามเพื่อการสัมภาษณ์เพื่อตอบคำถามวิจัยข้อที่หนึ่งเรื่องกลวิธีในการมีปฏิสัมพันธ์จะมีผลทำให้มีการโต้ตอบระหว่างนักเรียนกับครูชาวต่างชาติมากขึ้นหรือไม่

1.1 เมื่อนักเรียนไม่เข้าใจคำถามหรือฟังคำถามของครูชาวต่างชาติ ไม่ชัดเจนนักเรียนปฏิบัติอย่างไร?

1.2 นักเรียนคิดว่า กลวิธีเกี่ยวกับการมีปฏิสัมพันธ์จะช่วยให้นักเรียนมีปฏิสัมพันธ์กับครู

ชาวต่างชาติมากขึ้นหรือไม่? ยกตัวอย่าง? ถ้าไม่ ทำไมถึงไม่คิดเช่นนั้น?

1.3 นักเรียนรู้สึกอย่างไรเมื่อคุณได้ปฏิสัมพันธ์กับครูชาวต่างชาติในวันนั้น?

1.4 ทำไมนักเรียนจึงไม่ค่อยปฏิสัมพันธ์กับครูชาวต่างชาติ? (สำหรับคนที่ไม่มีปฏิสัมพันธ์)

2. คำถามเพื่อการสัมภาษณ์เพื่อตอบคำถามวิจัยข้อที่สองเกี่ยวกับผลกระทบของกลวิธีเกี่ยวกับการมีปฏิสัมพันธ์ก่อนได้รับการฝึกฝนจากผู้วิจัย

2.1 นักเรียนรู้จักกลวิธีการมีปฏิสัมพันธ์เหล่านี้มาก่อนหรือไม่ ?

2.2 ก่อนได้รับการฝึกฝนจากผู้วิจัยเกี่ยวกับกลวิธีการมีปฏิสัมพันธ์เหล่านี้แล้วนักเรียนรู้สึกอย่างไรเกี่ยวกับการปฏิสัมพันธ์กับในห้องเรียน? (ระหว่างตนเองกับครู และเพื่อนกับครู)

2.3 ก่อนได้รับการฝึกฝนจากผู้วิจัยเกี่ยวกับกลวิธีการมีปฏิสัมพันธ์เหล่านี้แล้วนักเรียนรู้สึกอย่างไรเกี่ยวกับการเรียนรู้อังกฤษของครูในชั้นเรียนของตนเอง?

2.4 นักเรียนคิดว่ากลวิธีการมีปฏิสัมพันธ์เหล่านี้จะสามารถช่วยให้นักเรียนเข้าใจบทเรียนหรือตอบคำถามภาษาอังกฤษของครูต่างชาติดีขึ้นหรือไม่?

2.5 โดยปกติก่อนมีการฝึกฝนเกี่ยวกับกลวิธีการมีปฏิสัมพันธ์ นักเรียนมีความเข้าใจบทเรียนที่ครูสอนมากขึ้นหรือไม่?

3. คำถามเพื่อการสัมภาษณ์เพื่อตอบคำถามวิจัยข้อที่สองเกี่ยวกับผลกระทบของกลวิธีเกี่ยวกับการมีปฏิสัมพันธ์หลังได้รับการฝึกฝนจากผู้วิจัย

3.1 นักเรียนรู้จักกลวิธีการมีปฏิสัมพันธ์เหล่านี้มาก่อนหรือไม่ ?

- 3.2 หลังจากได้รับการฝึกฝนจากผู้วิจัยเกี่ยวกับกลวิธีการมีปฏิสัมพันธ์เหล่านี้แล้ว นักเรียนรู้สึกอย่างไรเกี่ยวกับการปฏิสัมพันธ์กับในห้องเรียน? (ระหว่างตนเองกับครู และเพื่อนกับครู)
- 3.3 หลังจากได้รับการฝึกฝนจากผู้วิจัยเกี่ยวกับกลวิธีการมีปฏิสัมพันธ์เหล่านี้แล้ว นักเรียนรู้สึกอย่างไรเกี่ยวกับการเรียนรู้ภาษาอังกฤษของครูในชั้นเรียนของตนเอง?
- 3.4 นักเรียนคิดว่ากลวิธีการมีปฏิสัมพันธ์เหล่านี้ช่วยให้นักเรียนเข้าใจบทเรียนหรือตอบคำถามภาษาอังกฤษของครูต่างชาติดีขึ้นหรือไม่?
- 3.5 นักเรียนคิดว่าเมื่อใช้กลวิธีการมีปฏิสัมพันธ์เหล่านี้ นักเรียนมีความเข้าใจบทเรียนที่ครูสอนมากขึ้นหรือไม่? ยกตัวอย่าง?

## APPENDIX D

### Strategy Training Plan

#### Strategy I: Appeals for help

**Appeals for help** mean that the student is asking for appeals from the teacher by using an explicit question concerning a gap in one's L2 knowledge.

The questions to ask for help are:

1. What do you call... in English?
2. How do you say\_\_ in English?

The steps of training are as follows:

1. Divide students into four groups.
2. Set the context for the task: the situation for this task is in a desert.
3. Give a situation card and instructions.

#### **Situation card**

Suppose you will have to take an adventure in a desert for a week and you can choose only ten things with you to survive. What will you want to take with you?

\*\* If you do not know the vocabulary, you can ask the trainer. You do not allow to use a dictionary.

#### **Assumption:**

It is certain that there are many English words that the students do not know for things they want to take to the desert with them such as flash light, canned food, etc. In addition, they are not allowed to use dictionary. As a result, they are forced to use “appeals for help” strategy to ask for English words from the trainer.

## APPENDIX E

### **Strategy II: Repetition requests**

**Repetition requests** are the ways that the student uses when not hearing or understanding something properly.

**The questions to repeat the sentence or word that they unheard or are not sure are:**

1. Pardon?
2. Could you say it again, please?
3. Again, please?
4. What?
5. Excuse me?

### **The steps of training are as follows: Dictation activity**

1. Give the instructions to the students.
2. Read one word at a time (The trainer will read it softly or unclearly) and ask the students to write the word in their paper. Then, give the students opportunities to request for repetition.

### **Assumption:**

As the trainer reads the words unclearly or fast, students will be required to use repetition requests when they cannot hear the words properly.

**Instruction:** Listen to the word the trainer reads and write the words in the given piece of paper. Words for dictation are

**Fruits:** I like to eat pomelo, cantaloupes, and rose apples.

**Vegetables:** I go to the market for buying cucumbers, potatoes, and asparagus.

**Occupations:** In my family, my father is a policeman; my mother is a clerk;  
my brother is a lawyer; I am an astronaut.

## APPENDIX F

### **Strategy III: Clarification requests**

Clarification requests mean that the learner requests the explanation of unfamiliar words or sentences.

The sentences and questions for asking for clarification:

1. I don't understand\_\_\_\_\_.
2. I'm not sure what you mean by saying "\_\_\_\_\_".
3. I'm not following you.
4. It's not clear enough yet.
5. Could you make that clearer, please?
6. Could you tell me more?
7. What do you mean by ...?

### **The steps of training are as follows:**

1. The trainer reads the text to the students twice and asks them to draw a picture of what the teacher said without asking for clarification.

2. The trainer gives them a new piece of paper to draw a picture again.

But for this time, the trainer allows them to ask for the meanings of unknown vocabulary by using clarification requests.

### **Assumption:**

The story will contain some difficult words that will be required the students to make clarification requests. Then, the trainer will give or explain the meaning to them.

### The story for training clarificatin request strategy

Peter has a beautiful **living room** in his **apartment**. In that room, there are two **doorways** to enter this room there is a **huge armchair** on the **corner between** these two doors. The **tremendous portrait** is above the armchair and it **hangs** on the wall. The **opposite** is a television to **televise** the football match between Sheffield Wednesday and Birmingham. A fat golden fish swims in a glass jar as an **aquarium** which is put on the TV set. The next is the **hearth** where is the **antique** clock is above. Its **pendulum** is **oscillating**. In front of the hearth is the **rectangle carpet**. The telephone is on the **tiny rectangle** desk, they are next to the right doorway of the **armchair**.

**Bold words are predicted unknown words and their meanings are given below.**

- \* Living room is a room where we usually watch TV or talk to others.
- \* Apartment is a room where we live in like a house.
- \* Doorway is a kind of an exit door.
- \* Armchair is a soft chair like a sofa
- \* Corner is the word in Thai call “มุม”.
- \* Between is something in the middle.
- \* Portrait is a painting picture of a person.
- \* Opposite is not the same side.
- \* Televise means broadcast, show.
- \* Golden is a kind of color.
- \* Jar or aquarium is something in which we put the fish in.

- \* Above means on top of it.
- \* Oscillating means moving back and forth.
- \* Carpet means a rug which we put at the front door to clean our feet before getting into the house.
- \* Tiny means small
- \* Sheffield Wednesday and Birmingham are the football teams in England.
- \* Huge, tremendous and vast mean big.
- \* Hearth is a fireplace.
- \* TV set is a television
- \* Pendulum is a swinging pendant beneath the clock (Lukktum, in Thai )
- \* Antique means old.
- \* Rectangle is

The following is the key picture for this activities.



**Source:**

<http://www.>

## APPENDIX G

### **Strategy IV: Comprehension checks**

Comprehension checks mean that the learners ask questions to check if they understand the message correctly.

The questions for checking comprehension are:

1. Did you say...?
2. You said...?
3. You mean...?

The steps of training are as follows:

1. The trainer gives students pieces of wood with different colors and shapes such as circle, rectangle and square.
2. The trainer asks them to follow the instructions.

### **Assumption:**

In this activity, as students are asked to follow some complex instructions, if they do not comprehend them, they will have to use comprehension checks strategy in order to perform the task correctly.

### **Comprehension checks task for training**

Put a green rectangle at the bottom.

Then put yellow and red triangles on it to make a square.

Put a green square under the green rectangle which is put before.

Put two green rectangles on the top to form a roof.

## APPENDIX H

### Activity for assessing four interactional strategies.

#### Instructions:

Students will get a worksheet. The trainer reads the text and the student have to fill in the blanks. Then, give the worksheet to the trainer. After that, these pieces of paper will be returned to the students again. The trainer will read the riddle again and ask “Who am I?”. Students are allowed to ask the trainer about the English word of the answer for practicing appeals for help strategies.

1. I am short and stout.

Here is my handle, here is my spout.

When the water’s boiling, here my shout,

“Tip me over, pure me out”

Who am I? (Teapot)

2. I am short and fat.

Here is my broomstick, here is my hat.

When the jolly sunshine comes to stay.

Then I slowly melt away

Who am I? (Snowman)

***Anticipation of difficulties of the task that may require interactional strategies***

1. I am short and stout (Clarification requests; speak unclearly).

Here is my handle (Repetition requests; speak too fast), here is my  
spout(Clarification requests; speak unclearly).

When the water's boiling, here my shout,

“Tip me over, pure me out” Who am I? (Teapot) (Comprehension check and  
Appeals for help)

2. I am short and fat.

Here is my broomstick (Clarification requests; speak unclearly), here is my hat.

When the jolly (Repetition requests; speak too fast) sunshine comes to stay.

Then I slowly melt (Clarification requests; speak unclearly) away (Snowman)

(Comprehension check and Appeals for help) will be use when the students try to  
find the answer

## Students' worksheet

### Fill the hearing words in the blank

1. I am ..... and .....

Here is my ....., here is my .....

When the water's ....., here my .....,

“..... me over, ..... me out” Who am I?

2. I am ..... and .....

Here is my....., here is my hat.

When the .....sunshine comes to .....

Then I slowly ..... away Who am I?

## APPENDIX I

### Lesson plan

**Unit 1:** Body parts- common health problems

**Time:** 40 minutes

**Objectives:** Students should be able to...

- identify their body parts.
- describe their common health problems

<b>Time (Mins)</b>	<b>Activities</b>
1-5	Teacher informs the topic and objectives of the lesson.
6- 30	<p>Teacher presents vocabulary: Body parts.</p> <p>1. Teacher presents vocabulary concerning body parts and plays game “Part to Part”. For example, the teacher says “back to back,” then the students have to turn their back to each other. When the teacher says “arm to arm,” students move their arms close to their partner’s arm.</p> <p>2. Check their vocabulary by asking them to draw a picture of a monster to clarify the instruction.</p> <p><b>Monster’s description:</b></p> <p>The monster has got a big face. It has two tiny eyes and ears. Its body is too fat. It has two small arms and hands. But it has two big legs and feet. It is smiling.</p>

Time (Mins)	Activities
	<p>3. Then the teacher will present some common help problems. He will put a some band aids on the parts of the body picture and say the sentence and also write them on the board:</p> <p>a. He has a headache.</p> <p>b. He has a toothache.</p> <p>c. He catches a cold. He is sick, has a running nose and coughs a lot.</p> <p>d. He has a sprained angle.</p> <p>e. He has a cut. It is bleeding now.</p> <p>f. He has got some allergies on his arm. It is very itchy.</p> <p>4. Then students do an exercise – match sickness with the symptoms.</p>
30-40	<p>Assessment</p> <p>5. Pair work:</p> <p>Two students go to the teacher's desk. A student draws a piece of paper (with sickness on it). Then, she/he acts out (pretends) to have that sickness and describes its symptoms. The other student gives appropriate suggestions.</p>

Exercise: Match sickness and symptoms

- |                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| 1. catch a cold | a. have a queasy feeling in the stomach |
| 2. red eyes     | b. sore throat                          |
| 3. flu          | c. labored breathing                    |
| 4. cough        | d. running nose                         |

- |                   |                     |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| 5. can't breathe  | e. swollen ankle    |
| 6. upset stomach  | f. pain eyes        |
| 7. sprained angle | g. high temperature |

**Unit 2: Fashion****Time:** 40 minutes**Objectives:** Students should be able to ....

- use vocabulary about clothes.
- talk about the ways that they usually dress up, or for some special occasion such as birthday party.

<b>Time</b>	<b>Activities</b>
1-5	Teacher informs about the topic and objectives of the lesson.
6-20	<p>1. Teacher presents them vocabulary using pictures.</p> <p>2. The teacher elicits vocabulary concerning clothing from students and tells the students if they do not know the vocabulary.</p> <p>Sweater Jacket Shorts Trousers Suit Shirt Skirt Jeans</p> <p>Dress Blouse Polo shirt Shoes Tie Shoes Slippers Socks</p> <p>Glasses The teacher gives an example of the sentence: I like to wear shorts and t-shirt on the weekend. Then, show the pictures to the students and ask them to describe what he/she is wearing.</p>
21-30	<p>3. Teacher asks them to present their clothing styles.</p> <p>1. How about your style? What kind of clothes do you like best to wear?</p> <p>2. If you go to a birthday party, how will you like to dress up?</p>

<b>Time</b>	<b>Activities</b>
30-40	<b>Assessment:</b> Two students go in front of the class and perform a conversation about what they like to wear at home and some other occasion or optional: Pair works- one student tells others about what he/she likes to dress up. Then, ask their partner to select a picture that corresponds to his style.

## APPENDIX J

### Article for teacher

#### IMPROVING YOUR TEACHING THROUGH EFFECTIVE QUESTIONING TECHNIQUES

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Questioning is one of the most often used teaching techniques according to Kim and Kellough (1987). According to Callahan and Clarke (1988), the use of questions is one of the most important of all teaching techniques. We use questioning during a class to stimulate thinking, assess student progress, check on teacher clarity, motivate students to pay attention, maintain classroom control, provide repetition, emphasize key points, and many more things.

If we try to structure our lessons using problem solving as a teaching method, as described by Crunkilton and Krebs (1982) and by Newcomb, McCracken, and Warmbrod (1986), then questions are central. Not only is much of the instruction organized by questions, we even state the problems to be solved as questions.

The way a student is expected to respond to questioning is determined by the levels at which the questions are worded: recall, comprehension, analysis, or evaluation. But

the success of the student in answering the question is more often determined by the teacher's questioning techniques.

## Questioning Skills

### Presenting Questions

Most questions that teachers ask are simple recall questions that require the student to remember some factual information and recite it to the teacher. Comprehension questions require the student to demonstrate understanding in addition to mere recall. Analysis questions cause the student to apply that comprehension to a new setting. Evaluation questions ask the student for his or her beliefs or opinion.

Most people think that questioning is so straightforward and easy that anyone can do it right. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Here are a number of simple guidelines to asking questions that should improve most teachers' questioning skills:

1. Be sure the question is clear in your own mind. Think through what you want from the student before you ask the question.
2. Frame (state) the question without calling on a specific student. When you call on a student before the question is asked, every other student is free to ignore the question.
3. After framing the question, pause while everybody has a chance to think of an answer, then (AND ONLY THEN) call of a student to respond. That is called wait time, and it is amazing how few teachers use this important questioning skill. The average wait time, when the teacher waits at all after a question, is less than a second. There should be at least 2 to 4 seconds after any question before any student is called on to answer it. You might even try counting to yourself to force you to wait an appropriate time.

4. Ask only one question at a time. Multiple part questions are confusing and are likely to result in student misunderstanding. Avoid what Kim and Kellough (1987) call "shotgun" questioning. That is where the teacher asks a series of related questions or restates the same question over and over without getting (sometimes without allowing) an answer.

5. Use recall questions first to be sure the students have the knowledge. Then proceed to comprehension and analysis questions. Follow those up with evaluation questions.

### Using Probing

Effective use of probing is one of the most important questioning skills. If the student does not provide a complete answer, he or she may know a partial answer. In some cases, even though the question is perfectly clear to the teacher, it might need to be restated or broken down into smaller pieces. The teacher should not accept "I don't know" as the final response.

Probing is the use of further questions to force the student to put together his or her partial knowledge into a more complete answer. Probing often involves the use of follow-on or leading questions to help the student answer the initial question or to provide a more complete answer.

Probing means going deeper; it means digging. It can sometimes be painful to both the student and the teacher. It requires patience on the part of the teacher. In any case, it means not answering your own questions until you have tried to make the students think through the answer. Even a simple recall question may lead to important new learning on the part of the students if probing is used effectively.

### Shifting Interaction

Another important questioning technique is called shifting interaction. This involves redirecting the class discussion from one student to another. If a student's response is incomplete or incorrect, the teacher should try probing that student first. If that is not productive, responsibility for the question should be shifted to another student. Positive reinforcement should be provided to the first student and the same question should be redirected to a second or even a third student.

Sometimes a student will respond to a teacher's question with another question. With shifting interaction, the teacher simply redirects the student's question to another student. If the student asks for an opinion, the teacher may even redirect it back to the same student.

#### Conclusion

Questioning is a means of getting feedback to evaluate student progress and well an important way to increase student learning. Just as importantly, it is a way to force students to think during class. Too often we treat our students like sponges--devices to soak up content--without expecting them to think.

Effective use of questioning is a critical asset in every good teacher's toolbox. But just as a good mechanic selects the right tool for the job and then uses it correctly, a good teacher uses questions at the right level and follows good questioning techniques.

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An Example:

Teacher goal To relate slope to soil erosion and then to the use of terracing as an erosion control measure.

Recall What causes most topsoil erosion? (WAIT)

Question Martin. (WAIT)

Martin I guess water does.

Probing How does water cause soil erosion? (WAIT)

Question Austin. (WAIT)

Austin It washes the soil away.

Probing That's true, but how does it do that?

Question (looking at Austin--WAIT)

Austin It dissolves the soil.

Probing That is partly right. It does dissolve some  
Question minerals. But what action of water causes  
the soil to move away?

(Looking at Austin--WAIT)

Austin ???

Shifting Can you help Austin with this? (WAIT)

Interaction Letitia. (WAIT)

Letitia As the water moves, it picks up soil  
particles and carries them along.

Comprehension That is right. Now, what does the slope of  
Question the field have to do with that? (WAIT)

John. (WAIT).

John The steeper the slope, the faster the water  
runs off and that makes the erosion worse.

Analysis Super! Now, what can we do to change the  
Question slope of a hill without flattening the whole  
thing out with bulldozers? (WAIT)

Dale. (WAIT)

ETC...

## **Improving Teacher-Student Interaction in the EFL Classroom: An Action**

### **Research Report**

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A common problem for EFL teachers is dealing with a passive class, where students are unresponsive and avoid interaction with the teacher. This is especially true when a teacher seeks interaction in a teacher-class dialog, such as asking questions to the class as a whole, expecting at least one student to respond. This can be a frustrating experience for both parties. Obviously, there will be times when no student can answer a teacher's question, but often students do not answer even if they understand the question, know the answer, and are able to produce the answer. Furthermore, students can often be very reluctant to give feedback or ask the teacher a question in front of the class. This action research project attempted to explore this problem and sought to create a more interactive teacher-class interchange in one class of Japanese adult English learners.

### **Action Research Defined**

Action research is concerned with trying to improving one specific point in a teacher's technique in a particular classroom using empirical measurement. Richards, Platt & Platt (1992) have defined it as:

Teacher-initiated classroom research which seeks to increase the teacher's understanding of classroom teaching and learning and to bring about improvements in classroom practices. Action research typically involves small-scale investigate projects in the teacher's own classroom

This usually includes having an observer collect data, and together with the teacher develop a plan to bring about the desired change, act on the plan, and then observe the effects of the plan in the classroom.

### **Class Description**

The class observed was a group of twenty-three sophomores majoring in Japanese at a small private Tokyo women's college. The teacher was an American male with several years teaching experience at Japanese universities. The goal of this required class is to teach the students basic English conversation, reading, listening and writing skills. Their English ability level ranged from upper beginner to intermediate. During the observation period, the students appeared motivated and attentive, and they seemed to be enjoying the class.

### **Problem Identification**

The students, as a class, didn't respond voluntarily to the instructor's questions and did not participate in class discussions. Students also never asked the teacher questions outside one-on-one situations. Thus the teacher received little oral feedback. According to the teacher:

Most of the class members sit looking straight ahead using minimal facial expressions, gestures and verbal utterances. What I want is for the students to be more demonstrative and more overtly communicative in their feedback. I want these behaviors: I want the students to ask questions, make comments and to respond with nods and shakes of the head, with sounds of agreement or sounds of understanding. Also, I want them to be both reactive and proactive.

### **Preliminary Investigation**

I observed the teacher's class in the fourth week of the semester. In the first 45 minutes, the class went through an intermediate level taped dialogue. The students first listened to the tape with their books closed, then again with the books opened. Next, they did a dictation exercise consisting of 25 short sentences based on the dialogue. The teacher then talked about the sociolinguistic and grammar points of the exercise and went on to probe for comprehension:

- T: Any questions? Do you understand everything?
- Ss: Š(no one responds)
- T: Okay, how many people were speaking?
- Ss: Š(no response)
- T: How many people were speaking?
- Ss: Š(no response)
- T: There were two. Two people. Were they friends or strangers?
- Ss: Š(no response)Š

The teacher asked a few other questions which also drew no response or reaction from the students. The students then had to answer some questions about the conversation in their book. Most of the students seemed to have little trouble doing this, and if there were any questions, they readily asked the student sitting next to them.

The second half of the class was devoted to pair work using the phrases and vocabulary from the taped dialogue in role play. The students seemed to enjoy this, and most tried to create their own dialogues. The teacher circulated the room checking

on the progress of each pair. The class atmosphere was markedly different from the first half of the class, with chatter and occasional laughter filling the air. The students answered most of the teacher's questions with alacrity, and some even asked their own questions.

### **Hypothesis**

Because the students seemed to generally understand the teacher's questions, it was felt that there was something else that kept the students from responding voluntarily in the class-teacher dialogues. Since most Japanese students are taught to listen and not to question a teacher in class, Japanese students have little or no experience in in-class interaction with the teacher, such as questioning or commenting or giving feedback. Students are usually taught to be quiet and respectfully listen to the teacher.

By teaching the students that class interaction with the English teacher is not only acceptable, but normal, useful and beneficial, it was believed that the students would become more interactive with the teacher in teacher-class interaction.

### **Plan Intervention**

Following the hypothesis, two steps were taken to implement a plan:

- First, on the following class, the teacher distributed an explanatory paragraph about "rules" for asking questions in class in English speaking countries. The teacher made an exercise out of it and had students read the paragraph out loud to the class and explained a few difficult words and spent additional time expanding on the text. The "rules" were extrapolated from a culture point in Helgesen & Brown (1994) and were as follows:

Each culture has different "rules" about how students should act in the classroom. In some countries, students are expected to listen and only the teacher should lecture or talk in class. But in English-speaking countries (and in English class), it is good-and important-to answer the teacher's questions and interrupt with questions of your own. It means that you are interested and paying attention. In English, it is your job to ask questions if you don't understand. (p. 3)

The teacher went on to say that if they still felt uncomfortable asking and answering questions, they had to at least nod or shake their head as a response to the teacher's questions.

- Secondly, the teacher reminded the students of the "rules" at the beginning of each subsequent class and further encouraged them to become more active in the class when the instructor was talking.

### **Outcome**

In the eighth week of the semester, the class was observed again. A lesson similar to the one in the fourth week was presented. At the beginning, the instructor reminded the class of the "rules." After playing the taped dialogue twice, the teacher began talking about the dialogue, making grammar, usage and sociolinguistic points, interspersed with questions about the passage and the instructor's explanations. This went on for about twenty minutes and included general comprehension check questions such as 'do you understand?' and 'are you okay?' as well as specific questions about the dialogue.

Regarding general comprehension questions, most of the students did nod in response and a few answered 'yes' to these questions. And it was believed that they did, in fact, understand.

With the specific questions, however, something unexpected happened. When the teacher asked a question, he was usually greeted with poker-faced stares, as before. But when he moved closer, looked specifically at a student, or pair of students, and repeated the question, the students usually tried to answer. In general, I noted, the instructor was paying much more attention to the students, moving closer to them, and looking at specific students and trying to make a better connection with them. Instead of asking questions with the feeling that they really weren't going to be answered anyway, as before, the teacher made a greater effort to communicate the questions, and acted as if he expected to get responses.

Also, toward the end of the instructor's talk on the dialogue, two students, without prompting from the teacher, asked questions before the class. Although the questions were not related directly to the dialogue, the fact that the questions were asked before the entire class was considered a breakthrough.

### **Conclusion**

There were some areas where the results of this action research were not as successful as hoped. For instance, the students needed to be prompted with eye contact and a repeated question from the teacher to answer a question, and when they did not understand something, they still did not interrupt the teacher with a question.

And yet some progress was definitely made, especially when the brief span between observations is considered. The students did interact with the teacher by nodding,

some did answer the instructor's questions, and two, on their own initiation, even asked questions before the class. The unanticipated side effect of the teacher becoming more concerned with the interaction was a welcome surprise and contributed to the improvement. There seems to have been some success in instructing and reminding and then expecting the students to become more interactive with the teacher.

### **Reflection**

This action research project forced both the teacher and the observer to remember that ESL teachers in Japan are not just teaching a language, but also a culture, and this includes instructing the sociolinguistics appropriate for the native English speaking classroom. Perhaps more importantly, they had to think about why the cultures are different, in this respect, and how to try and bridge that difference. This led to questioning the conventional notion that Japanese students simply do not like the native English speaking classroom culture.

An additional reason for interest in the problem addressed here was the belief that this was a common problem in Japan. Teachers, especially native English speaking ones, often become frustrated with a lack of initial success in obtaining an interactive dialogue with the class. This often leads them to mistake a lack of familiarity with a lack of interest, and to teach within the students' culturally conditioned classroom expectations, instead of introducing the expectations commonly found in classrooms in English speaking countries. While intending to be more accommodating to students, they are failing to give students a useful sociolinguistic skill, which students would likely want and derive benefit. Some may think encouraging the use of this student-teacher interaction common in native English speaking countries is culturally arrogant.

But if it is introduced in a sensitive and reasonable manner, it actually contributes to a more fulfilling English class. After all, most students don't study English just for linguistic competence. They will also want to develop sociolinguistic competence for communicating in different situations in English speaking countries, and this includes the classroom.

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