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Preservice EFL teachers' talk during a teaching practicum at a lower secondary school: A report on video-stimulated reflection (VSR)

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ABSTRACT

This article reports on a small scale qualitative investigation into English as a foreign language (EFL) pre-service teachers' perception of their own talk during a teaching practicum at a lower secondary school in Jakarta province, Indonesia. Three preservice EFL teachers participating in the study were asked to videotape their activities during a classroom teaching and write reflections. Content analysis was employed to analyse such reflections with a focus on three aspects of preservice EFL teachers' talk during classroom instruction, including types and function of talk and the amount of talk during classroom instruction. The results of the analysis of the three preservice EFL teachers' written reflection highlight the sequence initiation-response-feedback (IRF). The results also show the role of beliefs about EFL learning and a good EFL teacher in determining the amount of teacher talk. More importantly, such beliefs have been primary drivers for the teachers to use the target language as a medium of instruction regardless their students' low level of English proficiency. Pedagogical implications of the findings are also discussed in the study.
Keywords: teacher talk; English as a foreign language (EFL); teacher; reflective practice; video-stimulated reflection (VSR)

RESUMEN

El presente artículo comunica los resultados de una investigación cualitativa a pequeña escala sobre la forma en que profesores de inglés como lengua extranjera perciben su propia producción oral durante su práctica docente en una escuela secundaria de la provincia de Yacarta, Indonesia. Se les solicitó a tres estudiantes de profesorado que filmaran sus actividades de práctica y que escribieran reflexiones a partir del video. Se abordó el contenido de dichas reflexiones a través de un análisis de tres aspectos del habla del docente durante la clase, incluyendo tipos y funciones del habla y cantidad de habla durante la clase. Los resultados del análisis de las reflexiones escritas de las tres estudiantes revelan el patrón discursivo IRE (iniciación-respuesta-retroalimentación, por su sigla en inglés). Los resultados también muestran que las creencias sobre el aprendizaje de la lengua extranjera y sobre qué es un buen profesor tienen gran influencia sobre la cantidad de producción oral del docente. Esas creencias constituyen las principales motivaciones de los docentes para utilizar el inglés como medio de enseñanza independientemente de los conocimientos de sus alumnos. Este estudio además reflexiona sobre las implicaciones didácticas de los resultados.
Palabras claves: habla del docente; inglés como lengua extranjera; docente; práctica reflexiva: reflexión a partir de video (VSR)

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TEACHER TALK HAS been recognised as having a significant role in the teaching and learning processes in a classroom. Teacher talk not only serves as a medium of instruction but also as a source of content (Yanfen & Yuqin, 2010). Additionally, it functions as a tool to organise classroom activities that may involve giving directions, lecturing and asking questions (Pujiastuti, 2013).

Given its importance, teacher talk has been studied quite intensively over the past years. Many studies have focused on the varied aspects of teacher talk, including the quantity and quality of teacher talk (Davies, 2011; Walsh, 2002), the features/functions of teacher talk (e.g., Forman, 2012; Inceçay, 2010; Pujiastuti, 2013; Yanfen & Yuqin, 2010), the balance of teacher and student talk (e.g., Zhang, 2012), questioning and feedback patterns (Liu & Zhu, 2012) and appropriate teacher talk (e.g., Walsh, 2002). Regarding the duration of teacher talk time (TTT), studies have indicated that teacher talk dominates classroom interaction (Liu & Zhu, 2012; Pujiastuti, 2013; Setiawati, 2012; Zare-Behtash & Azarnia, 2015; Zhang, 2012). Several researchers have argued that the excessive amount of teacher talk in the classroom does not offer enough opportunities for student talk time and does not promote active learning and students' participation (Davies, 2011; Walsh, 2002). In this sense, acknowledging the limitations of excessive teacher talk time, some scholars have proposed that teachers should pay more attention to the quality and duration of their TTT (Liu & Zhu, 2012; Walsh, 2002). Such a proposal is valid in the context of an English as a foreign language (EFL) setting, where the appropriate balance between the amount and quality of teacher talk is considered crucial in facilitating the learning of a second or foreign language (L2).

Few studies have specifically focused on teachers' own perceptions of their TTT. Zhang (2012), for example, investigated her own teacher talk to discover the pattern of interaction between a teacher and students in a reading class in a Chinese university. The classroom interaction was audio-recorded. The findings yielded that the teacher talk followed the IRF (initiation-response-feedback) or IRE (initiation-response-evaluation) pattern. Overall, the teacher dominated the classroom interaction. In another study conducted in a private English school in Japan, Davies (2011) explored the amount of his own teacher talk time (TTT) and the extent of its effectiveness. It was revealed that the teacher talk was longer than predicted. Also, he found that students' time to practise English (L2) in the classroom was too short. For most of the recorded class time, the students spoke in Japanese (L1). The teacher applied some changes to increase the effectiveness of TTT and student talk time (STT). The changes made included the use of student L1 (Japanese) to clarify classroom rules. This particular change not only enabled the teacher to communicate his expectations but also caused the students to recognise the importance of listening to the teacher talk. It also led to a doubled amount of L2 STT.

Although the body of literature on teacher talk continues to grow, studies on teachers' perspectives of their own teacher talk remain scarce, especially in an Indonesian EFL

context. What do pre-service EFL teachers think about of the timing, frequency, types and function of their own teacher talk during classroom instruction? More studies that investigate teachers' own TTT are needed as teachers need to critically reflect on, analyse and be aware of their own talk to better understand the rationale of what they are doing in the classroom (Zare-Behtash & Azarnia, 2015). Such reflection will, in turn, assist them with their evaluation of the effectiveness of their teaching strategies (Richard & Lockhart, 1994), including deciding when to use L1 and L2 appropriately to create a comfortable environment that stimulates positive interactions. The current study attempted to obtain a better understanding of EFL teacher talk from the teachers' own perspectives. A video stimulated response (VSR) method was chosen to enable the participating teachers to speak for themselves and share their perceptions of their own teacher talk in the classroom.

Literature Review

Teacher Talk in EFL Classroom Instruction

In EFL classrooms, teacher talk perhaps plays an even more significant role than it does in other classrooms. In many EFL contexts, the classroom is the primary place where students are exposed to L2 (Forman, 2012), as the opportunity to practice and learn L2 outside of the classroom is limited (Myojin, 2007; Zhang, 2012). Teacher talk in this context serves as both a tool to organise the classroom and a major source of comprehensible input to acquire L2 (Walsh, 2002). Furthermore, Walsh (2002) asserted that EFL students have limited choices regarding language input because teachers control most activities in the classroom including the selection of topics, content and procedures. They also decide who participates, and the modification of their teacher talk may outweigh student talk time. Thus, one of the central questions posed concerns how teacher talk facilitates the learning of L2.

Recently, researchers have conducted studies to explore teacher talk in light of L2 learning. Yanfen and Yuqin (2010), for example, examined the types of teacher talk preferred by teachers and students. Twenty-nine college teachers and 350 students participated in this study. The data from observation, audio-recordings and questionnaires showed that both teachers and students preferred initiating interaction and invitation. However, the teachers used these two features to a lesser extent. Moreover, teachers approved of the frequent use of questions, though students did not. Teachers do not prefer direction but more used, and students prefer them instead of questions. Sadeghi, Ansari, and Rahmani (2015) examined the effect of appropriate teacher talk regarding learners' interaction opportunities, language achievement and attitudes. The participants of the study were 50 students and two language institute teachers in Iran. Participating students were divided into two classes; of these two classes, one was provided with appropriate teacher talk, and the other class was not. Data from the questionnaire, test, and observation revealed the positive effect of appropriate teacher talk on learners' engagement and attitudes. Moreover, in a descriptive study

conducted by Zare-Behtash and Azarnia (2015), audio-recordings were used to examine four Iranian language teachers' talk proportions in the classroom. The results showed that teacher talk time comprised a large amount of class time.

In another recent study, Wang (2014) studied eight teachers and 117 students at a University in the US to explore factors affecting students' attentiveness towards teacher talk. Data were gathered through classroom observation and stimulated recall interviews. The findings showed that students who pay attention to teacher talk were influenced by several factors. These included students' ability to understand a language feature, strategies used by teachers, engagement in language activities and peers' reaction to mistakes. It was also found that peers' behaviour and non-involvement in language activities and the fear of 'losing face' contributed to the minimal or complete lack of attention directed towards teacher talk.

In the Indonesian EFL context, many studies have been conducted on teacher talk. Several studies focus on teacher talk in English for young learners (EYL) classrooms. Setiawati (2012), for example, studied four teachers and 18 primary students to determine the teacher talk features used in the classroom as well as students' perceptions of their teacher talk. Data were collected through questionnaires, video recording and field notes. The findings revealed that teacher talk dominates classroom interaction and that students want to be given more opportunities to participate. Similarly, Pujiastuti (2013) conducted a study to investigate types of teacher talk and student talk as well as teacher's roles in EYL classroom interaction. One teacher and 15 primary students participated in the study. The results showed that the talk types/categories performed by the teacher confirmed the Flanders Interaction Analysis Categories (FIAC), i.e. giving directions, lecturing, asking questions, using students' ideas, praising, criticising students' behaviour and accepting feelings. Furthermore, student talk covers two features: giving responses and displaying initiation. Overall, it was found that teacher talk was dominant and that the teacher controlled the interactions in the classroom.

Altogether, the above studies reveal that teachers perform different types of teacher talk and that the talk takes most of the classroom interaction time. It is argued that in EFL classroom contexts, teacher talk time should be carefully thought out and should focus on its quality in promoting authentic L2 input. This is particularly the case for young EFL learners who require as much L2 exposure as possible. However, the question remains: How much teacher talk time is appropriate? Responding to this issue, Walsh (2002) explained that "appropriate language use is more likely to occur when teachers are sufficiently aware of their goal at a given moment in a lesson to match their teaching aim, their pedagogy to their language use" (p. 5). He further noted that teachers and learners adjust their language use based on the specific tasks in which they are engaged. For example, explaining a new concept or new terminology may require more teacher talk than student talk while questioning may result in students' active participation as students respond to the questions

that teachers pose. Thus, teacher talk is context-specific. Teachers should design and plan classroom activities in a way that encourages students' active participation in the learning of L2 based on the particular classroom culture and context. Teachers might need to modify their TTT to facilitate students' understanding (Harmer, 2007; Sadeghi et al., 2015). Therefore, the role of teachers in EFL classrooms is to provide an atmosphere in which students can actively learn and practise the language.

Teacher Talk and the Role of L1 in L2 Learning

Another important issue related to teacher talk in an EFL context concerns whether teachers should use L1 (first language, i.e. mother tongue) or L2 (second language, i.e. target language) in the classroom. There have been many debates on the use of L1 in EFL classrooms. Several researchers have argued that only L2 should be employed, as students need the maximum exposure to the target language to facilitate L2 acquisition (Nunan, 1999; Walsh, 2002). However, recently, there has been growing support for the role of L1 in L2 learning (Forman, 2012). For example, Cole (1998) affirmed that the appropriate use of L1 would especially benefit low-level students. The use of L1 in this instance can save time and motivate students. Moreover, Zacharias (2004) studied the beliefs of tertiary teachers in Indonesia regarding the use of the students' mother tongue when learning English. This study found that the participants believed in the thoughtful use of L1 in the classroom. Most teachers shared similar thoughts about the potential benefits of using L1, though many were uncertain how often to use it when they teach English.

Forman's (2012) study specifically focused on the major pedagogic function of teacher talk across both in L1 and L2 in EFL classrooms at a university in Thailand. Using a naturalistic approach, nine teachers were observed and interviewed. Forman established a bilingual framework of teacher talk consisting of six pedagogical functions: animating, translating, explaining, creating, prompting and dialoguing. The findings confirmed that the teachers in this context perform these six pedagogical functions. Furthermore, it was revealed that the use of L1 serves as a source and tool for learning L2.

Similarly, in Bhooth, Azman and Ismail's (2014) study of 45 EFL Yemeni students, they found that a teacher can use L1 as a pedagogical tool to enhance students' learning experiences and to maximise students' engagement in the classroom. These studies confirm that in EFL classrooms, in which teachers commonly share L1 with their students (Cole, 1998; Forman, 2012), an appropriate use of L1 in L2 learning should be maintained depending on the context where learning takes place. Thus, more research that examines specific classroom settings, especially from the perspective of teachers, is necessary. Each classroom has its own features, such as cultural background, class size and teachers and students' language proficiency, that can affect the quality and amount of teacher talk and student talk (Davies, 2011) in both L1 and L2.

Methods

In this qualitative study, we explored three pre-service EFL teachers' perceptions of their own teacher talk during a teaching practicum at a public lower secondary school in the province of Jakarta, Indonesia. The central question addressed in the present study was as follows: How do the three pre-service EFL teachers perceive the types and function of their teacher talk and their amount of talking during classroom instruction?

Context, Setting of the Teaching Practicum Programme and Participants

This qualitative study was carried out at a faculty of teacher training and pedagogy (FTTP) in a private university in Indonesia. FTTP is the oldest of eight faculties in the university, and it is well known for its reputation for preparing quality teachers. To date, FTTP has twelve education departments, one of which is the English Education Department.

The teaching practicum programme is one of the teaching preparation modules in the English Education Department in FTTP. The programme offers four credits and is compulsory for third-year students (semester six). The programme has several perquisite modules, including Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) 1 (focusing on the methods of English language teaching, TEFL 2 (focusing on lesson planning), TEFL 3 (focusing on teaching simulation), curriculum and materials development (CMD) and language testing modules. Students enrolled in this teaching practicum programme should also have already passed advanced English language skill modules.

Three female pre-service EFL teachers (later in the article, we refer to them as "teachers") participated in the present study. Each of the teachers was given a pseudonym: Anita, Selma and Maria. These three teachers majored in English and attended the teaching practicum programme at the same school. Prior to the teaching practicum programme, we had evaluated the teachers' study reports and the grade point averages (GPA) to ensure their eligibility. The teachers had taken the prerequisite modules and had attained good grades; as such, we assumed that the teachers were already knowledgeable about the methods of teaching English as a foreign language, how to develop curriculum and instructional materials and how to plan, apply and evaluate a lesson. More importantly, these teachers had an advanced level of English language proficiency.

As previously mentioned, the teaching practicum occurred at a lower secondary school in the province of Jakarta, Indonesia. The school was located in the centre of the capital city of Jakarta. All the teachers were assigned to practise teaching English to grade seven students. There were 35 students in the classroom. It is important to note here that these 35 students had learned English for about three years in primary school. Despite these years of learning English, students' English proficiency was still inadequate in terms of being able to communicate in English. Therefore, as suggested by a supervisor teacher at the school, their native language of Bahasa Indonesia was used for classroom instruction.

Data Collection

The qualitative data on teachers' perceptions of their own teacher talk were collected through a video-stimulated-reflection (VSR) method, also known as video-elicited-reflection (VER). The VSR method has been used in educational research since the 1950s and started to be practised in language teacher research in the 1970s (Borg, 2006). Some studies have identified several benefits of using VSR to facilitate teachers' reflection on their experience (e.g., Endacott, 2016; Orlova, 2009; Rayford, 2010; Sewall, 2007). For example, Sewall (2007) suggested the use of video to stimulate reflection, since it

> encourage[s] more reflective commentary on the part of the novice teacher in both depth and breadth, but that commentary related to state standards for evaluating teaching performance is also broadened and deepened with the use of video elicitation. (p. xiv)

In the present study, when collecting the data using the VSR method, Orlova's (2009) five-phase procedure was adopted, as shown in Figure 1 below:

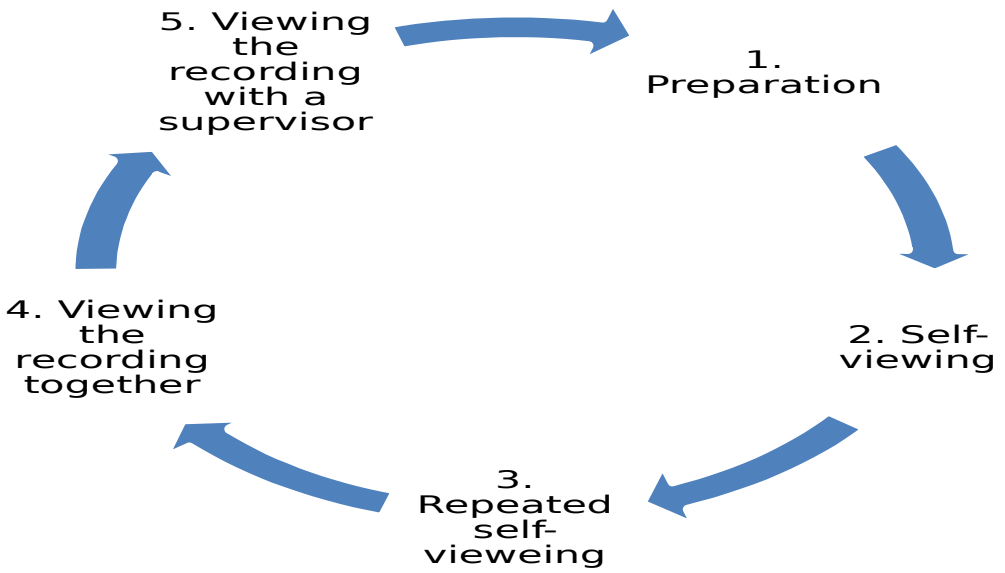

Figure 1. Orlova's (2009) video-elicited reflection procedure.

In the first phase, prior to the videotaping of the pre-service teachers' teaching activities, we prepared the microphone and video-recording equipment. We also collected consent forms from the pre-service teachers that requested our recording of their instructional activities in the classroom. As soon as the teachers consented to the recording, we placed a video recorder at the back of the classroom and started the recording of a 60-minute classroom activity. In the second phase, the video recording of the teaching activities was transferred from video file format to an .mp4 file. This transfer enabled the pre-service

teachers to view the video on their smartphones and laptops. When the file was ready, we sent it to the pre-service teachers and asked them to view the recordings individually. Then, in the third phase, we encouraged them to repeat this self-viewing three times. In this phase, we also requested for the pre-service teachers to write a reflection on their own TTT during classroom instruction. The period of reflection focused on three aspects of their teacher talk, including the amount of talking, the types and the function of the talk time. In the fourth phase, the pre-service teachers were encouraged to view the recordings together with their colleagues; in the fifth phase, they viewed the recordings with a supervisor teacher (see Table 1).

Table 1. Focus of pre-service EFL teachers' reflections

Aspects	Description
Types	Types of pre-service EFL teacher talk during the lesson
Function	Function of each talk type employed by the pre-service EFL teachers
Amount of talking	How frequent the pre-service EFL teacher talked during the lesson

Analysis of Qualitative Data

The qualitative data of the three pre-service teachers' written reflections were analysed using a content analysis method. The present study adopted Rayford's (2010) content analysis procedure. We first colour-coded the written reflections of the three pre-service teachers. The coding was based upon the predetermined categories, as shown in Table 2 below:

Table 2. Themes and codes.

Themes	Codes
Types & function	Initiation through questioning Instruction and explanation Giving feedback and motivation
Amount of talk	Teacher dominant Fair amount of teacher talk Minimal teacher talk

In addition to the predetermined categories, the emerging themes from the reflections were colour-coded. These predetermined categories as well as the emerging themes helped us maintain our focus during the analysis (Rayford, 2010). After the coding process was completed, as suggested by Rayford (2010), 'a tally sheet was created to show [the] frequency and pattern' that emerged from the coding.

Findings

Types and Functions of Teacher Talk

The results of the current study demonstrated that teacher talk was mainly employed to facilitate instruction, to explain, to provide feedback and for translation purposes. The written reflections of the three teachers expressed that they utilised their talk time to instruct the students about what they had to do during the classroom activity and to explain instructional materials to the students. For example, Selma wrote that she employed her talk time to explain about several aspects of the target language such as 'grammar, meaning, usage or culture of the L2' to the students (Selma's written reflection). What is important to note here is that teachers talked to facilitate instruction, to explain and to provide feedback was observed as following the IRF (initiation-response-feedback) pattern. This was shown in Selma's reflection:

> The most common classroom talk that I showed [has] three 'turns': (1) [the] teacher asks, (2) [the] student answers [and] (3) [the] teacher evaluates the answer and gives feedback. This sequence repeats thousands[of] times during my classroom teaching sessions.(Selma's written reflection)

As in the quotation above, teachers frequently used the questioning method as a way to start their classroom instruction. For instance, the teachers often asked their students about the pictures that they had prepared on the board. The questions were typically closed-ended ones (i.e. 'yes' or 'no' questions) as well as 'What'-type questions, as Maria exemplified below:

> Do you know this artist? (Maria showed her students a picture of a famous artist)
> What color is her hair? (Maria's written reflection)

It is interesting that teachers' main reason for employing close-ended and 'What'-type questions was to suit students' low levels of English proficiency. However, according to Maria, a few students were unable to answer her questions and remained silent in many circumstances. The teachers observed that students' lack of vocabulary was still the main factor contributing to such a situation. Maria expressed the following:

> Once I asked the students to mention some adjectives. But they kept quiet; there was no answer. Then, I provided a brief explanation about the adjective. I said to them, '[An] adjective is something that describes a person—for example, the word "beautiful"'. Then I asked them if 'beautiful' described a person. When my students already understood the adjective 'beautiful', I gave another example, like 'clever'. (Maria's written reflection)

In addition to the use of teacher talk to initiate classroom instruction and to respond to

their students, the teachers also applied it for feedback purposes. The analysis of the teacher reflections revealed that teacher feedback (e.g. 'good', 'good answer', 'well done') was not necessarily aimed to address students' correct responses. Instead, in the cases of students giving the wrong answer, the expressions were used to appreciate students' work and to motivate them to participate in classroom learning. Interestingly, the teachers' method of giving feedback featured the utilisation of tone and repetition to indicate students' errors. Selma, one of the teachers, addressed this particular strategy:

> You can emphasize certain parts of the sentence [of the student's answer] with your tone, and [you can also] use a meaningful facial expression to signal [to] the students that you are making a correction of their language.(Selma's written reflection)

The written reflection also confirmed that when giving instructions, explanations and feedback, the teachers applied self-repetition to a great extent. Repeating instructions and explanations, according to the teachers, may help students understand what the teachers asked them to do. More importantly, such repetition may allow the teachers to check the students' understanding of the learning materials being taught. As Selma stated, "I might talk too soft[ly,] so I don't think they [the students] heard my voice. So I have to repeat my talk several times". This is similar to Maria who commented, "I have to repeat the instructions so that my students know what I have asked them to do". The following is an excerpt taken from Maria's teaching session. In the excerpt, Maria repeats her instruction for the students to make a description.

> We have just described people at our house,
> Now, let us look at the picture on the board! [Students remained silent]
> Again, look at the picture!
> Can you describe it? [Maria then translated her English instruction to Indonesian]
> Can you describe . . . [Maria spoke in Indonesian, and then wrote some questions on the board]
> You will describe [the picture] based upon the questions, OK?

One interesting feature of the teacher talk is the use of English (L2) as the language of instruction. When asking questions and giving explanations and feedback, the teachers decided to primarily use L2 regardless of students' low English proficiency level. The findings showed that the teachers' decision to use L2 was influenced by their beliefs about foreign language learning as well as their beliefs about what it means to be a good English teacher. First, teachers felt that students needed to be exposed to the real use of English and that their talk was an effective means to do so. As Selma expressed, "teacher talk is a way to expose the students [to] useful [English] language". Second, teachers perceived that a good language teacher should use L2 in the classroom to minimise the use of students' first language (L1) and develop students' L2 proficiency. This was the case for Anita, who kept

using English regardless of students' low English proficiency level. Similarly, Selma was concerned with whether or not the students would be able to understand her instructions in English:

> Before the lesson, I felt a little worried because I was not sure if the students were going to comprehend everything in English. (Selma's written reflection)

What was surprising was the fact that all the teachers decided to talk more and seemed to overlook students' inability to comprehend their talk. The analysis of teacher reflections showed that teachers' decision to talk more in English despite their students' inability to comprehend what was being said was due to teachers' strong belief that a foreign language-learning classroom should be dynamic. According to the teachers, a dynamic classroom environment was represented by teachers' talking and students' active participation in the classroom activity. In such a classroom environment, teachers were required to enthusiastically deliver instructions through their teacher talk, and the students were expected to actively respond to the teachers' explanations by either raising questions or answering questions the teacher asked. When students remained silent in the classroom, teachers were required to talk to keep the classroom discussion going. However, the teachers admitted that their use of L2 contributes to students' silence, as students did not understand the teachers' instructions and explanations. One of the teachers, Anita, wrote the following:

> Students were not active in the classroom nor [were they] asking me questions. … I asked one of the students why [she] kept silent during the session. She answered that many of them did not understand my talk in which I used English.(Anita's written reflection)

While the teachers perceived the use of L2 as a medium of instruction to offer benefits to students, the written reflection indicated that the teachers' choice to use English resulted in their frequent attempts to clarify ideas by translating their teacher talk to L1. Maria's written reflection illustrated that she desperately translated her talk several times to make the students understand what she wanted them to do. Such attempts eventually took a significant amount of class time.

The Amount of Teacher Talk

An analysis of the teachers' written reflections showed that teachers' amount of talking during the teaching practicum session ranges from approximately 40% to 80% of the overall session. One of the teachers, Selma, indicated that approximately 40% of the classroom sessions involved her teacher talk. She affirmed that talking 40% of the time during classwas reasonable in that she was able to provide her students with 'more spaces and opportunities to speak and practice the language'. She also expressed the following:

> I believed that I had given them chances to express their thoughts using the language

[they were learning].(Selma's written reflection)

In contrast to Selma, who limited her teacher talk to allow her students to practise the target language, the two other teachers, Anita and Maria, expressed that their teacher talk dominated the classroom time. Anita indicated that her talking occupied about 70% of class time. She mentioned that her talk mostly aimed to present the instructional materials. More importantly, she expressed that she would continue to talk if no interruptions occurred on the part of the students. Similar to Anita, Maria indicated that she talked throughout the classroom activities:

> During the teaching, I think that I took almost all [the] class time for my talk; maybe about 80 percent. It means [I] dominated the classroom session.(Maria's written reflection)

While Maria felt that her talking dominated the classroom sessions, she acknowledged that she provided less time for students in terms of giving them the opportunity to talk during the teaching sessions. She stated, "in the classroom, I provide little opportunity for my students to talk". This quotation suggests that the teacher talk prevented students from expressing their ideas during the classroom activities.

The results of the analysis revealed at least one reason why teachers' talking took a large amount of class time: students' low English proficiency level. According to the teachers, the students did not have adequate skills in spoken and written English. Consequently, the teachers found it important to do more talking, which involved repeating their talk and giving students more explanations about the English lessons.

However, with regard to students' proficiency level, the findings demonstrated that the teachers preferred to address their talk to students with a higher level of English proficiency. The teachers observed that students who have a higher level of English proficiency actively responded to teachers' explanations and questions while those students with a lower ability tended to remain passive. One of the teachers, for example, mentioned that she spent more time talking to students with a higher level of English proficiency than those with the lower one. As she explained, "I gave more questions to some clever students [students with a higher level of English proficiency]". Her reason was as follows:

> … if I [asked] questions to students with a low level of English language proficiency, it would be useless. They (the lower-level students) would never answer my questions. (Maria's written reflection)

Discussion

This present study was conducted to gain a better understanding of EFL teacher talk from teachers' own perspectives. The central question that was addressed concerned how three pre-service EFL teachers perceive the types and functions of their teacher talk and the

amount of time they talked during classroom instruction. The current study reveals the variation and complexity of EFL teacher talk in the Indonesian context. First, the pre-service teachers employ talking for a variety of purposes, which include giving instructions, offering explanations and feedback, and providing translations. This finding is consistent with other findings from earlier research conducted by Forman (2012), who examined teacher talk in a bilingual EFL classroom context, found six pedagogical functions of teacher talk, including animating, translating, explaining, creating and dialoguing.

Furthermore, the findings of the present study correspond to earlier studies on the dominance of teacher talk, such as those conducted by Liu and Zhu (2012), Pujiastuti (2013), Setiawati (2012), Zare-Behtash and Azarnia (2015) and Zhang (2012). Many authors have presented teacher talk as a pedagogic tool to expose the target language to students (e.g., Polio & Duff, 1994; Wagner, 2014), which the present study supported. However, this study also showed that the excessive use of teacher talk in the classroom may limit students' learning opportunities, particularly the opportunity to practice the target language (Davies, 2011; Walsh, 2002). In a wider context, teachers' tight control over classroom interactions may potentially result in fewer opportunities for students' classroom interactions (Guitterrez, 1994; Johnson, 1995 cited in Zacharias, 2014).

This current study demonstrated that teachers' views of EFL learning and about being an effective EFL teacher were significant factors that influence teacher talk in the classroom. Such a finding confirms the results of Nespor's (1987) study, in which teachers' teaching beliefs factored into their teaching practices in the classroom. As discussed earlier in the findings section, the amount of teacher talk while teaching English was partly determined by the teachers' beliefs about a dynamic EFL classroom environment. The teachers believed that both teachers and students should actively talk. In other words, the noise of 'talking' in the English language classroom was viewed as a representation of a dynamic English language teaching and learning environment. Within this view, teachers were required to maintain their active talk and student talk during classroom learning activities. Several studies indeed confirm that interaction between teachers and students is central to classroom activities (Davies, 2011) and that balanced turn-taking between teacher and students is important for promoting students' active learning. However, in this study, when the students remained silent, the teachers felt that they needed to deliver an active talk to disrupt the silence in the classroom in order to maintain a classroom dynamic. Teachers' excessive talk to promote a dynamic classroom is, in fact, in contrast with the findings of Zacharias' (2014) study. Zacharias, who investigated the contribution of teacher talk to student classroom participation in Indonesian contexts, found that excessive teacher talk played a great role in promoting student silence in the classroom. Nonetheless, it is important to note other possible contributing factors to students' silence such as students' L1 learning culture (Tatar, 2005), students' inability to comprehend teachers' questions (Farahian & Rezaee, 2012) and teachers' short wait-time (Harmer, 2007).

In addition to their belief about a dynamic EFL classroom environment, the teachers maintained their belief about a good English teacher. With regard to the use of English in the classroom, the teachers viewed a good English teacher as one who employs English as a medium of interaction. It is interesting that such a belief has driven the teachers to excessively use English despite their supervising teacher's suggestion to use L1 as the medium of instruction. Another possible explanation for the overuse of L2 is the fact the pre-service teachers in this study possessed an advanced level of English proficiency. Studies show that teachers' proficiency level, experiences and background contribute to the amount of teacher talk time in the classroom (Davies, 2011; Trakulkasemsuk & Ketwandee, 2013). However, it was surprising that the teachers were aware of their students' low English proficiency. As shown in the findings, pre-service teachers expressed concern regarding whether students were able to comprehend their English. While the use of L2 in EFL classrooms is beneficial to mediate the target language proficiency (Turnbull, 2001), the benefits of the use of L1 in L2 learning classrooms have been evidenced in a number of studies (see, among others Bhooth et al., 2014; Forman, 2012; Storch & Aldosari, 2010). Particularly in the Indonesian classroom context, the use of L1 is still regarded as necessary, such as for explaining the meaning of new vocabulary, grammatical concepts and reading content, to check students' understanding and to give feedback and instructions (Zacharias, 2004). However, teachers' use of L2 should be explicit and should consider students' proficiency level to facilitate L2 acquisition (Davies, 2011).

Finally, the findings of the current study reveal the complexity of EFL teacher talk in the classroom. This complexity lies in the fact that teacher talk is not only influenced by teachers' beliefs about EFL teaching and learning but is also constrained by factors related to the classroom realities, such as students' low proficiency level as well as other possible factors related to the specific educational context.

Conclusion

As previously discussed, the findings of this study are consistent with those from other studies conducted in different contexts (e.g., Forman, 2012; Li & Zhu, 2012; Pujiastuti, 2013). Dominant teacher talk is evident in the current context. In the EFL context, this means that students do not have many opportunities to practise the target language. However, it is important to understand teachers' values and perceptions concerning the teaching and learning of EFL as well as their consideration of the consequential aspects of dominant teacher talk within a specific instructional and societal context (Zacharias, 2014). A more thorough understanding from the sociocultural perspective of the values teachers hold —in particular, an educational and cultural context— is crucial.

Furthermore, the findings revealed that some of the features and functions of teacher talk could facilitate learners' language learning while other features and functions may restrict the learning of the target language. Teachers' self-repetition, for example, might help

students understand teachers' instructions and questions. However, other features, such as translating teacher talk into L1, may take a significant amount of class time and hence reduce the amount of L2 input as well as students' active participation.

As noted earlier, very little research has focused on teachers' reflections on their own teacher talk. The present study has attempted to contribute to the understanding of teacher talk in an EFL context and to the development of an EFL teacher education curriculum. However, this study only investigated such talk on the basis of three teachers' self-reflection through VSR. As such, there is a need for further qualitative data collection that includes in-depth, open-ended interviews that address why the teachers do what they do as well as the sociocultural aspects of the reasons. Future studies should include more teachers with different English proficiency levels and should also investigate their students' perceptions of teacher talk.

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