The development and validation of an English language teacher talk functional scale

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A B S T R A C T

Teacher talk is of noteworthy significance in mainstream education and several attempts have aimed at evaluating it. The existing tools, nevertheless, are only general frameworks and with no specific focus on the main functions of teacher talk in ELT contexts. The present study gives a comprehensive account of ELT teacher talk and aims at developing a teacher talk instrument whose items are specific to ELT classes. Accordingly, extensive analysis of the related literature and the researchers' developed concept of the main functions of teacher talk were used as the foundation to develop a preliminary theoretical model of ELT teacher talk. The proposed theoretical conceptualization was refined through observation of the talk of ELT practitioners as well as interviews with ELT teachers and teacher educators. Ultimately, the theoretical conceptualization led to the development and validation of an observational English Language Teacher Talk Functional Scale (TTFS). The scale was piloted and then administered through having the talk of 182 ELT teachers rated by ELT teacher educators for final validation. TTFS was validated through both exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses. The result indicated that the constructed items in the TTFS and the conceptualization of the construct of teacher talk were meaningful to teachers, teacher educators, and teacher observers and indicative of the effectiveness of teacher talk in ELT contexts. We hope that the present study results in a more worthwhile understanding of the functions of teacher talk and provides an efficacious assessment tool for reflective practice and constructive feedback to ELT teachers.

Keywords: teacher talk; scale development; scale validation; teacher talk functions; exploratory factor analysis; confirmatory factor analysis

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Introduction

The significance of teacher talk in influencing the quality of teaching and learning has been well realized. "Teachers' ability to control their use of language is at least as important as their ability to select appropriate methodologies" (Walsh, 2002, p.3). In education literature, teacher talk, which refers to the language that a teacher uses to talk to learners (Kumaravadivelu, 2006), has been one of the determining teacher related variables which requires modifications at phonological, lexical, grammatical and discoursal level of language (Ellis, 2003). Research suggests that teacher talk training be prioritized in teacher education programs for communicative classes (Evans & Cleghorn, 2010; Moser, Harris & Carle, 2012) as it exposes learners to linguistically rich input, promotes self-regulated learning of instructional material, and enhances social behaviors and emotional control (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009).

Much has been written about the prominence of teacher talk in classroom interactions documenting its remarkable influence on language skills and learning accomplishments (Bristol, 2014; Ellis, 2013; Horst, 2010; Kwon, Elicker & Kontos, 2011; Muñoz, 2017; Pekarek Doehler, 2002). These studies which focus on what the teachers actually do through their talk suggest a shift of attention from the previous concerns with the quantity of teacher talk and discuss the processes through which teachers form and reorganize their concepts about teaching practices (Tasker, Johnson & Davis, 2010). For instance, teachers' language awareness comprises both knowledge of language and knowledge of language teaching. In fact, these two interconnected competencies have close association with the pedagogical practices (Andrews, 2003). Language teachers need to understand and be aware of the overt and covert influence of the language they use on learners' classroom interactions and output (Ernst-Slavit, & Mason, 2011).

The scope of research on teacher talk ranges from the investigation of the general constructive or obstructive characteristics of teacher talk, (McNeil, 2012; Tompkins, Zucker, Justice, & Binici, 2013; Wallace, Sung, & Williams, 2014; Walsh, 2002), the analysis of teacher talk in different contexts(Mercer, 2010, Tasker, Johnson, & Davis, 2010), the pedagogical functions of teacher talk across L1 and L2 environments(Forman, 2012; Kim & Elder, 2005), the strategies for improving the quality of teacher talk (Moser, Harris &Carle 2012; Sharpe, 2008) to comparisons of native and non-native speaker teachers(Arva & Medgyes, 2000; Clark & Paran, 2007; Shin, 2008; Tajeddin & Adehb, 2016). Overall, these studies outline the major features and functions of teacher talk, give special importance to mutual interaction of teacher talk and learning developments, and discuss the privileged positions of native-like teacher talk in professional settings.

With the rising interest in professional development programs and the urge to enhance the quality of teaching and learning, teachers are receiving more and more attention. Whatever the teacher does through his/her talk in the classroom, whether it is explaining, evaluating, giving instructions, showing feedback or building rapport can make a world of difference in contributing to students' success or failure. Given the significance of classroom interaction and teachers' distinguished control for creating the appropriate context for learning opportunities, teacher educators need to enhance teachers' understanding of the determining impact of the language they use in classrooms. Such understandings will, in turn, lead to reflective practices including teachers paying more attention to their talk and increasing the potential chances for interaction in their classrooms (Walsh, 2002). Accordingly, the availability of an assessment tool for evaluating the quality of teacher talk can assist novice teachers, teacher educators and teacher observers in pinpointing the potential weaknesses in teacher talk and be utilized as a systematic basis for follow-up discussions and feedback sessions to promote the quality of the teacher talk.

The development of teacher talk instruments has been the topic of a number of studies such as the ones by Walsh (2003) (Self Evaluation of Teacher Talk, (SETT)) and Kim and Elder (2005) (Functional Language Alternation Analysis of Teacher Talk' (FLAATT)). There are also a number of studies which have attempted to examine the effectiveness of teacher talk in specific contexts through different designs (Ernst-Slavit & Mason, 2011; Wallace, Sung & Williams, 2014). The FLAATT is a multiple category coding system intended to investigate the relationship between teachers' language choices and particular pedagogic functions. Walsh (2003) proposed a process model of reflective practice (SETT grid) based on naturalistic research methods to encourage teachers to have better understanding of the interactional architecture of the L2 classroom. Believing that interaction and pedagogy are inextricably linked through talk, he defined four main modes of *managerial, materials, skill and systems* and *classroom context*. However, the model is an initial framework primarily intended to extend teachers' understanding of classroom interactions and does not provide teachers and teacher educators with a validated assessment tool which takes the specific functions of ELT teacher talk into account. Moreover, the model gives no credit to the invaluable amount of student learning which happens through teacher-student rapport building classroom interactions in spite of the numerous reported positive student outcomes attached to the rapport between teachers and students (Wilson & Ryan, 2013). Accordingly, in order to extend prior work on the evaluation and analysis of teacher talk and to compensate for lack of an existing assessment tool to evaluate the ELT teacher talk in terms of its main functions, the present study will address the key issue of developing and validating an English Language Teacher Talk Functional Scale which takes main features of teacher talk into account. The following research questions guide the present study:

1.   What are the underlying functions of teacher talk in ELT context?

2.   Can the effectiveness of teacher talk in ELT contexts be measured through the development of an assessment scale?

Theoretical framework of the study

To construct a measurement instrument which is specifically designed for evaluating teacher talk in ELT contexts, developing a theoretical framework or model was deemed necessary. The review of the literature indicated that the most relevant framework to the present day is that of Walsh (2003) which is based on social constructivist theory of learning (Lantolf, 2000; Vygotsky, 1978). The Self Evaluation of Teacher Talk grid (SETT), presented by Walsh (2003), is an awareness-raising tool initially developed for the self-evaluation of teacher talk. It relates pedagogic purpose to language use and contributes to an understanding of what constitutes appropriate teacher talk in a particular mode. However, as Walsh (2003) rightfully has clarified, the SETT is an initial framework representing a process model of reflective practice for L2 teacher-fronted classrooms, and thus without specific focus on the function of teacher language in potential classroom interactions which are not necessarily initiated or led by the teacher. Moreover, this model provides no measurement tool for assessing the quality of ELT teacher talk in terms of its main functions.

In order to compensate for the mentioned limitations, and with the aim of developing and validating an instrument to assess the effectiveness and appropriateness of ELT teacher talk, the main functions and components of teacher talk were identified by the researchers by observing ELT practitioners' teacher talk, interviews with ELT practitioners as well as through a detailed review of the literature. The factors identified at this level, along with the insights gained from SETT framework proposed by Walsh (2003), led to a tentative theoretical conceptualization of ELT teacher talk developed for the purpose of this study. Table 1 shows the tentative theoretical conceptualization of ELT teacher talk developed for the purpose of this study.

Table 1
Tentative Theoretical Conceptualization of EFL Teacher Talk Functional Scale

Components and sub components of EFL teacher talk
- Representational function of teacher talk
  To provide a justified amount of linguistically rich and contextually appropriate input
  To provide comprehensible input well-adapted to learners' needs and proficiency level
  To expose learners to different types of sentences in the target language (declarative, imperative, interrogative and exclamatory sentence)
  To expose learners to maximum amount of target language
  To assist learning through message redundancies, repeated use of patterns and routines
  To expose learners to accurate and natural pronunciation of the target language
  To present relevant, helpful and updated lexical forms tailored to learners' learning needs and level of proficiency
  To provide learners with grammatically correct form of the target language
  To organize the physical learning environment and refer learners to learning materials
  To introduce, present, convey, explain, check the learning materials
- Interactional function of teacher talk
  To ensure learners' utmost comprehension though efficacious input modifications
  To facilitate communication through the use of interactional modifications
  To stimulate interactive patterns of communication and pushed output
  To promote mutual discussion of meaning and learners' engagement in the process of information building
  To create opportunities for real interaction in the target language
  To provide efficacious feedback on the form and content of learners' contribution
  To promote deeper level of understanding through scaffolding
  To facilitate learning through simplifying, regularizing and elaborating talk
- Rapport-building function of teacher talk
  To establish and maintain classroom rapport and create a friendly atmosphere
  To maintain a relationship based on trust and respect with the students
  To encourage, stimulate and create interest in learning the target language through the use of lively and motivating tone of speech
  To encourage maintenance of the goal of the learning tasks
  To build confidence and control learners' frustration in learning tasks
  To appreciate and admire learners' learning achievements

Method

Participants

In order to get a more comprehensive understanding of ELT teachers' views about teacher talk in ELT contexts and as a conceptual means of validating the scales, 10 English language teaching practitioners who were teaching at various proficiency levels were selected through purposive sampling to be interviewed and observed. The researchers ensured that the sample was representativeness of ELT teachers in terms of gender, age, experience, and degree and proficiency level. These teachers were heterogeneous in terms of their age (between 30 and 48), gender (7 female and 3 male), degree (8 MA and 2 PhD.), teaching experience (5 to 12 years), teaching context (3 teaching at schools and 7 at language institutes), and proficiency levels they taught (5 teaching elementary, 3 intermediate, and 2 high intermediate and advanced classes).

Furthermore, 4 teacher experts (2 male and 2 female) who were both experienced ELT teacher educators and observers, were interviewed in order to gain insights on the important issues related to teacher talk in ELT contexts. These experts were purposefully selected based on their

academic interest in conducting research in the field of teacher education and their practical experience of observing, evaluating and educating ELT teachers.

Finally, 90 ELT teachers teaching at different proficiency levels in ELT teaching contexts and 2 experienced observers who were experts at classroom observation and teacher education (with 5 to 7 years of experience) participated in piloting the instrument. For the final validation of the TTFS, 182 English language teachers, heterogeneous in terms of their proficiency level, age, gender, and experience and 2 expert observers (one male and one female) who were experienced at classroom observation and teacher education participated in this study. This serves the basis for the results reported in the remainder of the paper.

Data Collection Instruments

Classroom observations of 10 ELT teachers were conducted and they were also interviewed in order to gain insights about the features of ELT teacher talk and the potential factors that contribute to the richness, appropriateness, effectiveness and the quality of teacher talk, in general. Moreover, 4 teacher education experts, who were either university professors or teacher educators, were also interviewed to learn about their opinions on teacher talk in general and ELT teacher talk in particular.

Furthermore, it must be mentioned that the other instrument used in this study was the newly developed Teacher Talk Functional Scale (TTFS) (more information below), which is an observational scale on a likert scale assessing the main features of ELT teacher talk and the extent to which the teacher talk is effective in terms of its empirically accepted specific features.

Procedure

Based on the review of the existing literature and the theoretical conceptualizations proposed for the purpose of this study, observations of ELT practitioners' teacher talk and interviews, a pool of candidate items to be eventually included in the scale was generated. At first, classes of 10 English language teachers who were teaching at various proficiency levels in Iran Language Institute were observed. The reason for classroom observations was to get further insight on the features of teacher talk in ELT contexts. In order to make sure of the stability of observations, a checklist including different features of teacher talk extracted from the literature was used (Appendix A) and the researcher checked each specific feature in the checklist, and remarked on potential reasons for each. The final observation reports were then analyzed in terms of the main components of the theoretical framework of the study.

Afterwards, observing teachers, the researchers interviewed the teachers to gain knowledge of their ideas about how their use of language influenced the quality of teaching and learning, what factors contributed to the efficiency or inefficiency of ELT teacher talk, how constructive their talk was, and how they evaluated and interpreted specific characteristic of their talk. The interviews, which were conducted by the researcher in person and each lasted for about 15 to 20 minutes, were audio recorded for further analysis.

Besides, four teacher education experts, either university professors or experienced observers at Iran Language Institute were interviewed in order to discover their opinions on the efficacious characteristics of teacher talk in ELT settings. The interviews included questions about the definition and the nature of teacher talk, the facilitative and debilitative features which influence

the quality of teacher talk, the relationship between characteristics of efficacious and inefficacious teacher talk, and general comments on teacher talk. These interviews were also audio-recorded and transcribed. The transcribed interviews were coded base on their underlying themes using the *MAXQDA 12* software which is designed for computer-assisted qualitative and mixed methods data, text and multimedia analysis in academic, scientific, and business institutions. In the present study, the program was used to analyze and code the interviews based on their underlying themes. Eventually, the themes resulting from both interviews and observations were classified under several main components of the theoretical model along with a thorough review of the literature and the theoretical model proposed for the purpose of this study were used as the basis for the generation of an item pool of 43 observational items to be included in the scale.

The newly developed instrument was reviewed and piloted before its administration to the intended participants. To this end, two experienced experts whose fields of interest in research were teacher education reviewed the instrument and remarked on the content as well as clarity, preciseness and the format of the items and eventually some modifications were made. Next, in order to pilot the Teacher Talk Functional Scale (TTFS), two experienced experts in classroom observation with major research interest in teacher education and the researchers observed classes of 90 ELT teachers and evaluated ELT teacher talk using the scale.

Ultimately, to establish the construct validity of TTFS, 182 ELT teachers were observed in their actual English classrooms. These teachers who were heterogeneous in terms of their English proficiency level, age, gender and teaching experience were selected through convenient sampling from Iran Language Institute which is one of the most popular English language institute in Iran with several branches in each city in Iran. To rate English teachers' talk, two experienced classroom observation experts were invited to observe English language teachers while teaching in their actual English classrooms. It must also be noted that every teacher was observed by both expert observers and each classroom observation lasted for the whole session which was one hour and forty-five minutes.

Results and Discussion

In the initial stage of this study, a theoretical framework of teacher talk which represents the context-specific nature of teacher talk in English language settings was developed. This framework led to the generation of a pool of 43 potential items for eventual inclusion in the scale. Table 2 indicates the series of items that fall within each component in the theoretical framework of the study. The Cronbach alpha reliability of the 43-item questionnaire proved to be.72, which is at a satisfactory level. In order to examine the construct validity of the newly developed scale in terms of its fundamental construction and the classification of items under each component, both exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses were employed as factor analysis is a commonly used procedure which specifically addresses construct validation in test and scale developments (Brown,2015; Comrey & Lee, 2013).

Table 2
Number of Items in each Component of the Theoretical Framework in the Teacher Talk Functional Scale

Components of the Teacher Talk Functional Scale	Number of items in each component
Representational function of teacher talk	20
Interactional function of teacher talk	17
Rapport-building function of teacher talk	6
Total	43

The outcome of exploratory factor analysis showed the existence of four factors unlike the three factors which were speculated in Table 1 with three of the factors comprising 53% of the total variance. As far as the factor loadings resulting from the exploratory factor analysis did not appear to be the most favorable, a number of confirmatory factor analyses were also examined on the data with several constant factors ranging from two to eight. This was done through principal components analysis technique with Varimax rotation. Based on confirmatory factor analysis, it was concluded that the best model of factor loadings was three-factor model which constituted 53 % of the total variance (Table 3). Moreover, the KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity for three factors was 0.72 (p < .05), which indicated that the original components were adequately correlated. It should be mentioned that the item loadings resulting from the three factors were somehow different from what was assumed based on the tentative theoretical framework of this study, that is to say, some items which were related to different components in the theoretical framework loaded on the same factor. This led to a few modifications in the original theoretical framework as indicated in Table 4.

Table 3.
Rotated Component Matrix of the Main Factors of Teacher Talk Functional Scale

Item No	Gist of the item	Factors		
		1	2	3
1	Teacher total talking time	.47		
2	Functional distribution of talk	.25		
3	Rate of speech	.41		
4	Frequency and duration of pauses	.46		
5	Wait time for responses	.48		
6	Types of sentences	.45		
7	Questioning strategies	.40		
8	Exposure to the target language	.47		
9	The use of meta-language	.43		
10	Types of repair	.41		
11	Phonological properties of teacher talk	.48		
12	Lexical properties of teacher talk	.42		
13	Grammatical properties of teacher talk	.44		
15	Modelling	.41		
27	Clarity, conciseness and helpfulness of instructions	.55		
31	Appropriateness of talk to students characteristics	.32		
34	Exemplification	.55		
14	Speech modification		.81	
16	Echoing Learners' contribution		.66	
17	Latching		.74	
18	Interrupting		.72	
19	Interactive Pattern		.79	
20	Trend of teaching and learning		.77	
22	Negotiation of meaning		.75	
23	Negotiation choice/decision		.55	
24	Demanding/encouraging talk		.60	
25	Feedback on content		.54	
26	Feedback on form		.60	
32	Reformulating students' contribution		.62	
33	Extending learners' contribution		.61	
35	Interactional modifications		.64	
36	Elaboration		.73	
21	Politeness and respect			.58
28	Advice and communicating expectations			.76
29	Valued teacher-learner relationships			.74
30	Praising learners' attempts to establish rapport			.58
39	Showing personal interest			.62

40	Use of humor and fun	.74

On the basis of the results gained through factor analysis and in order to increase the reliability of the instrument, three items were deleted from the 43-item instrument. These items focused on 'the teacher's use of corrective strategies', 'the teacher's sensitivity to learners' general proficiency', and 'the teachers' discourse management strategies such selecting salient topics, treating topics simply and briefly and relinquishing topic control'. Moreover, the item-total statistics indicated that if these items were deleted, the Cronbach Alpha would increase. After the omission of these three items from the instrument, its reliability was computed again through the Cronbach alpha. The reliability of the finalized 40- item instrument (Appendix B) was found to be .83. In fact, the deletion of these three items contributed to higher reliability and fewer items in the scale which indicated that the deleted items did not contribute much to the overall construct validity of the TTFS.

Table 4
Final Factor Loadings of the Teacher Talk Functional Scale (TTFS)

Finalized Observational Teacher Talk Instrument
Representational function (factor 1): 1, 2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,15,27,31,34,37 (n=18)
Interactional Function (factor 2):16,17,18,19,20,22,23,24,25,26,32,33,35,36,38 (n=16)
Rapport-building function(factor 3): 21, 28, 29, 30, 39,40 (n=6)

It must be mentioned that items 2, 16, 17, 18, 27 were reverse scored. These items were about the functional distribution of teacher talk, the debilitative features of teacher talk which inhibit communication such as completing, echoing or interrupting students' contribution, Effectiveness of teaching instructions and the teachers' tone of voice.

Table 5 reports the mean and standard deviation of the observers' ratings in each of the components as well as the total of the Teacher Talk Functional Scale. The observers' ratings were calculated by adding up the values of the options they selected while rating each item with one meaning *very little* and five meaning *very much*. It must be noted that before adding up the values, the options in the reverse scored items were inverted. For example, the talk of a teacher who has received a total score of 130.43 on the observational teacher talk instrument is more efficacious than the talk of a teacher who has received an overall score of 112.56. In the same vein, a teacher whose score on the interactional component of the scale is 70.12 is more effective than a teacher with a score of 58.23 on the same component.

Table 5
Descriptive Statistics of Teacher Talk Functional Scale (TTFS) (n=182)

Components of Teacher Talk Functional Scale	N of items	mean	SD
Representational function of teacher talk	18	94.15	11.52
Interactional function of teacher talk	16	56.33	10.37
Rapport building function of teacher talk	6	11.97	3.12
Total	40	177.68	19.50

As mentioned earlier, the item generation process was partly and initially inspired by the modes described in Self Evaluation Teacher talk Grid (SETT) proposed by Walsh (2003). The items guided by SETT, however, were at best loaded on either representational or interactional

components of Teacher Talk Functional Scale. Based on the observed factor loadings, it can be argued that a large number of pedagogical goals that the teacher aims at achieving through his/her talk in language learning classrooms, whether it is in the managerial, material, skills and systems or classroom context mode, depends largely on the teachers' mastery of the representational and interactional functions of their talk. What is missing in Walsh's (2003) SETT, however, is the teacher-learner rapport which the teacher builds through his/her use of language in classroom. However, research on this issue indicates that teacher-student rapport seems to be the greatest contributor and predictor of learners' motivation. While teacher-student rapport is negatively associated with face threats and participation anxiety, it is positively related to face support and participation (Frisby, et al., 2014).

The observation that 'Representational' and 'Interactional' and 'Rapport-building' functions of teacher talk were treated differently by the teacher education observers can be interpreted with reference to the nature and goals of these two functions. 'Representational' function of teacher talk, as indicated in Table 1, has to do with the quality of the input which the language teacher provides in the learning contexts in relation to the learning and teaching goals. It is largely determined by the educational policies, instructional goals, the teacher's pedagogical content and subject matter knowledge as well as teaching expertise. It has to do with teacher qualification and knowledge in instructions and management of students and materials as well as building new knowledge, values and skills in the students. On the other hand, success in accomplishing the goals of 'Interactional' function of teacher talk depends largely on mutual teacher –student interactions which happen naturally in classroom context. The extent to which the goals of interactional function of teacher talk are realized depends on the input and interactional modifications, the nature of classroom interactions and feedback. The *Representational* and *Interactional* functions mainly deal with learning the knowledge of language, the former directly and intentionally by the teacher and the latter peripherally and incidentally through genuine classroom interactions. However, the *Rapport-building* function of teacher talk focuses on the affective support and emotional relationship that both the teacher and learner constantly shape and reshape in classroom exchanges. Respect, patience, honesty, empathy, welcoming attitude, mutual trust, personal interest in learners and their contribution are but a few major points which a language teacher is advised to consider in his/her use of language in classroom.

Conclusion

English language teaching profession has become increasingly aware of the prominent role of teacher talk in determining the quality of language learning and education. However, the available instruments have proved to be inadequate in measuring the effectiveness of ELT teacher talk in terms of its main functions since they neither offer a validated scale for measurement nor capture the uniqueness of the nature of teacher talk in the ELT learning contexts. The underlying functions of teachers talk with all their complexities in ELT contexts make it necessary to come up with a different conceptualization of teacher talk which reflects the distinguishing characteristics of teacher talk in ELT contexts.

Through a detailed review of the literature, classroom observations, interviews, the present study aimed at developing and validating a Teacher Talk Functional Scale (TTFS). The ratings of teacher observers and scores received by the ELT teachers (Table 5) indicated that the constructed items and the conceptualization of the construct were meaningful to teachers, teacher educators and teacher observers and indicative of effectiveness of their talk. It was found that there are three main underlying components of ELT teacher talk: *Representational*, *Interactional* and *Rapport-building* functions. Although each of these components was treated differently by

teacher observers, they must not be viewed as completely distinct. This study reinforces the findings of the previous studies which have differentiated between the informational and socioemotional aspects of teacher talk (Wallace, Sung & Williams, 2014) and attempted at improving, measuring, and evaluating different aspects of teacher talk (Kim &Elder, 2005, Moser, Harris, & Carle, 2012; Walsh, 2003). The present study provides ELT teacher educators and observers with a validated measurement tool for improving and giving feedback on the effectiveness and quality of teacher talk in terms of its main functions. Undoubtedly, raising awareness of ELT teachers and teacher educators of the underlying functions of teacher talk supports learning development and results in more structured lesson plans and responsive teacher feedback (Sharpe, 2008).

Context-sensitive measurement instruments, like the scale developed for the purpose of this study, suggest meaningful and practical pedagogical implications. Teacher Talk Functional Scale can be used as a prompt to enhance and develop teachers' reflective practice. It also provides ELT teachers, teacher students, teacher educators, and teacher observers with a systematic, meaningful, and precise tool which portrays a more detailed picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the language which ELT teachers use in ELT learning context where exposure to the target language is often more confined. This scale can also offer formative information for those who value the importance of teacher language on student learning and can be used in remedial training and teacher education programs and eventually may lead to improvements in the process of ELT learning and teaching. The items included in Teacher Talk Functional Scale are all attempts to reflect the wide range of teacher talk functions in ELT contexts and to capture the inter-dependence of these functions under several main components. Further studies which examine the effectiveness of teacher talk in other learning contexts such as second language context or studies which result in the improvement of the developed instrument are appreciated. The present study investigated the effectiveness of teacher talk in ELT contexts based on the assessment received from teacher educators and teacher observers. Studies which investigate the efficiency of the teacher talk from the learners' perspectives can provide English instructors and teacher educators with valuable information about the nature and the effectiveness of the language which English teachers use in English classrooms.

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Appendix A

The Open-ended Checklist for Classroom Observations (Major Components of Teacher Talk from the Literature)

Features of teacher talk	Study
• Amount of talk • Functional distribution of talk • Rate of speech • Pauses • Wait time for responses • Phonological properties • Lexical properties • Syntactical properties	Aukrust (2007) Chaudron (1988) Carlsen (1993) Amsberry (2008) Walsh (2002) Trofimovich, Collins, Cardoso, White and Horst(2012) Gonzalez et al. (2014) Justice, et al. (2013)
• Types and frequency of questions (Display, referential, factual, reasoning, open, closed, social, pseudo, epistemic, echoing, referential and display, rote and comprehension questions) • Types and frequency of sentences (Declaratives, interrogatives, imperatives	Long & Sato(1984)
• Use of first language • Meta-language • Translation • Emphasis on communication and comprehension • Message redundancies • The avoidance of ungrammatical talk • Frequent use of patterns and routines • Repetitiveness • Tailored talk to students level of proficiency • General richness of language • Latching • Echoing learners' contribution • Interrupting learners' contribution • Input modification (Simplification, elaboration, regularization) • Topic selection • Topic treatment/control • Modelling	Copland and Neokleous (2010) Borg (1998) Ellis (2008) Ellis (2008)
• Phonological modification • Lexical modification • Syntactical Modification • Variation in teacher questioning strategies • Interactional modification(Or-choice questions, expansions, self-repetitions, other-repetitions, comprehension checks, confirmations checks,	Brulhart (1985), Early (1987), Wen-yi (2005 Cullen(2002)

clarification requests)	
• Interactive pattern ((IRF (Initiation-Response-Feedback), IRE (Initiation-Response-Evaluation))	Long (1983)
• Initiated talk(teacher-initiated/learner-initiated)	
• Negotiation strategies(explicit/implicit)	Walsh, (1988, 2002)
• Feedback (form-focused/content-focused)	
• Creating friendly and fun learning atmosphere	The present study
• Maintaining relationships of trust and respect	
• Stimulating interest in learning	
• The use of lively and motivating tone of speech	
• Encouraging goal maintenance	
• Building learners' confidence	
• Controlling learners' learning frustration	
• Admiring learners' success in learning tasks	

Appendix B
Teacher Talk Functional Scale
Dear colleague
The purpose of this observational instrument is to evaluate the effectiveness of ELT teacher talk in ELT contexts. It is used as a tool for providing feedback to ELT teachers, student teachers, and teacher educators and stimulates teachers' reflections on their own practices.
Name: _____Age: _____Gender: male ☐ female ☐
Years of teaching experience: _____
Degree: _____ Major: _____ Teaching context: school ☐ institute ☐
Students' age: young learners ☐ adolescents ☐ adults ☐
Students' level: elementary ☐ intermediate ☐ advanced ☐
Please read each item carefully and indicate the extent to which each item is true about the talk of the teacher you are observing. Very little (1), little (2), so so (3), much (4), very much (5)

N	Questions	1	2	3	4	5
1	The teacher takes up a justified amount of the total talking time.					
2	The general picture is one of teacher dominance in that the teacher explains, questions and commands.*					
3	The teacher adjusts his/her rate of speech when talking to students of different proficiency level.					
4	The teacher adjusts his/her pauses when talking to students of different proficiency level.					
5	The teacher talk allows sufficient time to students before they can answer questions.					
6	The teacher uses different types of sentences (e.g. declaratives, interrogatives, and imperatives).					
7	The teacher uses different questioning strategies.					
8	The teacher exposes learners to maximum amount of comprehensible rich input in the target language.					
9	The teacher's use of meta-language is effective.					
10	The teacher encourages more learner-initiated types of repair.					
11	The teacher's pronunciation is accurate.					
12	The teacher's choice of vocabularies is appropriate.					
13	The teacher has a fair command of grammatical knowledge.					
14	The teacher effectively uses input modification strategies.					
15	The teacher models learning tasks properly.					
16	The teacher echoes learners' contribution.*					
17	The teacher completes learners' turns for them.*					
18	The teacher interrupts learners in the mid-flow.*					
19	The teacher talk encourages student-initiated negotiation.					
20	The teacher encourages discovery learning.					
21	The teacher talk displays respect to students.					
22	The teachers allows for genuine negotiation of meaning.					
23	The teacher allows the students to decide whether to contribute to an interaction or not.					
24	The teacher talk encourages students' participation.					
25	The teacher gives feedback on the content of the learners' contribution.					
26	The teacher attends to the correct formation of the students' contributions.					
27	The teacher's instructions are hard to understand.*					
28	The teacher communicates clear expectations regarding learners' educational goals.					
29	The teacher talk reflects valued relationship between the teacher and the learner.					
30	The teacher praises students' co-participation in creating rapport					
31	The teacher talk is well-adapted to learners' idiosyncratic characteristics (e.g. age, gender, background, needs, etc.).					
32	The teacher rephrases learners' contributions.					
33	The teacher extends learners' contributions.					
34	The teacher exemplifies effectively.					
35	The teacher effectively uses interactional modification strategies.					
36	The teacher elaborates his/her utterances to make the meaning clear.					
37	The teacher uses input-providing negotiation strategies.					
38	The teacher's metalinguistic feedback on the well-formedness of learners' utterances is helpful.					
39	The teacher talk offers personal interest in learners.					
40	The teacher creates friendly interactions in the classroom.					

*reverse scored