Interaction in reading comprehension in the English and Igbo classroom

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ABSTRACT

This is a case study of classroom interaction of SSS1 English and Igbo in reading comprehension at Premier Secondary School, Aba, Nigeria. The purpose is to determine whether interaction in reading comprehension in English and Igbo is constrained by language in terms of interaction patterns, style and culture. The class sessions were described using Sinclair and Coulthard's (1992) model of class interaction. The findings reveal that interaction patterns are similar. However, patterns that were specific to languages were in the form of cultural transfer, circumlocutions characteristic of Igbo as opposed to precision in English, and excessive exhibition of teacher's authority. The study recommends that teachers in language classrooms should engage the students in interesting interactions that encourage active participation and reduce the rate of harsh responses and negative feedback as they can be inhibitive to students' participation.

Keywords: Classroom interaction, feedback, repair, initiation, opening move, communicative language teaching.

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INTRODUCTION

The activities that take place in the classroom involve interaction. Wray (1999) points out that early classroom research started in the 1920s and 1930s in the United States with investigations on the effectiveness of teacher behaviour and talk. There was the step-by-step drill; learning was through reading and translating literary texts, learning grammar rules, and memorizing vocabulary lists. Brooks (1964) states that this type of learning, in North America, was challenged by the advent of audio-lingual teaching with language learning centred on imitation, repetition, and drills, which led to the formation of habits of correct language production. Teachers saw their responsibility as making sure that students practised and learnt every dialogue and drill. Lightbown (2000) states that teachers were more at ease with their textbooks based on Lado's (1964) 'scientific approach' to second language teaching; students were not allowed to move into free use of the language as a result of the fear that unstructured

language production would lead to errors, which, in turn, would result in interference with the establishment of correct habits. There was a shift in the methodology in the 1950s as a result of the teacher training course. Nunan (2005) argues that this change at this time was given further impetus in the 1960s by the methods-comparison studies that involve large-scale investigations, comparing various teaching methods. Consequently, former instruments used in teaching, which were more prescriptive, were replaced by ones that had descriptive purposes.

According to Lightbown (2000), by the late 1980s, there was another shift in the methodology, where communicative language teaching (CLT) took over many language classrooms. At this time, it is observed that exposure to comprehensible input and the opportunity to interact in group work is needed in order to give students what is necessary for language acquisition to proceed.

Hence, students were engaged in interesting and meaningful interactions. Furthermore, the syllabus

developed was based on ideas drawn from the British notional/functional syllabus. Lightbown further maintains that:

The case for approaches to language teaching that were eventually subsumed under the name of CLT was not based on SLA. It came partly from a debate within linguistics theory and partly from discussions among language teachers and textbook writers about what students needed and wanted to do with the language they were trying to learn and whether strictly structured-based approaches could lead to the accomplishment of their goals (p.435).

Commenting on the shift engineered by CLT, Mitchell (2000) argues that it is a result of the reflections of educators and applied linguists who wanted to see a greater emphasis on the rich complexity of language use. For them, CLT is a move away from linguistics as the basis for deciding what the units of language teaching would be, rather, emphasis was placed on language in context, language in use for a specific purpose, and language to do something with.

Classroom interaction is one of the most commonly used teaching methodologies that can be applied to develop linguistic competencies in second language instruction. Interaction in the classroom refers to the conversation between teachers and students, as well as interactions between the students (Wang and Lai, 2023). However, according to some scholars (Zhao, 2013; Anthony, Rosliza and Lai, 2019), the relationship between interaction and SLA is hard to quantify because the interaction is a complex and dynamic process and embodies many variables. It can be said that classroom interactional patterns also depend on some contextual, cultural and local factors. According to Ellis (1990), the interaction provides learners with opportunities to encounter input or to practice the target language, and also creates within the learners a 'state of receptivity', defined as "an active openness, a willingness to encounter the language and the culture". As Gil (2002) said, in such an institutional setting, a teacher is a person institutionally invested with not only the right to talk most of the time, but also the power to control both the content and procedure, discussion topic, and who may take turns at any given point in time. Chaudron (1988) notes that, in recent years, a much greater role has been attributed to interactive features of classroom behaviours such as turn-taking, questioning and answering, negotiation of meaning, and feedback. The above assertion is based on the fact that language classroom is a highly interactive process and, as Richard and Lockhart (1996) put it, the quality of this interaction is thought to have a considerable influence on learning. Wang and Lai (2023) posit that getting feedback is a key part of classroom interaction. In order to improve, students should get feedback and corrections. Boulima (1999), commenting on classroom interaction, states that it is only through a better understanding of the classroom interaction process that teachers can render their teaching more profitable for learners.

The purpose of this study, in broad terms, is to determine whether interactions in reading comprehension in English and Igbo classroom interaction are constrained by language in terms of interaction patterns, style, and culture. Specifically, the objectives are to determine the interaction patterns in reading/ comprehension in the two languages and how they differed in terms of style, and culture (if any) in the two languages.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This is a case study of classroom interaction in reading comprehension of Senior Secondary One students of English and Igbo at Premier Secondary School, Aba which is a co-educational secondary school that teaches, among other subjects, English and Igbo from the junior secondary to the senior secondary. The choice of Senior Secondary One is informed by criterion purposive sampling (Oluikpe, Ndimele and Oluikpe, 2018) since the class has an adequate level of proficiency in English and Igbo at the junior secondary to study the subjects at the senior secondary level.

The class sessions which lasted for ten weeks consisted of ten class sessions of 60 minutes duration in each language classroom. The sitting arrangement is the arrangement in Nigerian classrooms. The teachers were female teachers and the participants in each class were male and female. Each class session was tape-recorded, transcribed graphemically and described using Sinclair and Coulthard (1992) as the model of description. The model was adopted because it helps in examining the interactions in layers. At the end of the description of the two class sessions, the major findings of each language session were noted. The interaction between the teachers and students, arising from the reading passages, constituted the corpus for analysis. The major findings were mapped, compared, and contrasted.

Theoretical framework

This study is informed by social constructivism theory which derives from constructivism. Constructivism is a theory of learning that started in about 1913 with Jean Piaget as its proponent. Its underlying tenet is how people learn. Sequel to the issues arising from constructivism, Mitchell and Myles (1988) posit that social constructivism is a teaching approach that provides a psycho-linguistic explanation for how learning can be fostered effectively through interactive pedagogical practices.

Social constructivism is propounded by Vygotsky (1978). The underlying tenet here is that learning occurs through dialogue. Vygotsky maintains that this dialogue is initially "*intermental*", that is meaning takes place between teacher and student, or between students, or even between text

and reader. This is to say that in social constructivism, learners are active constructors of their learning environment. Consequently, learning is interactive in that students take an active part in reconstructing ideas in their minds and also interact with the sources of the ideas; students do not learn as isolated individuals. The social constructivist approach to language learning holds that teachers should stop teaching by simply practising reading and focus on assisting students to extend their capacity to learn constructively.

Mapping

In the mapping, expressions in Igbo are translated literally, enclosed with double quotation marks, and classically, enclosed with single quotation marks.

Mapping of opening move

Table 1 shows that the interaction in the two languages share similar opening moves in the form of greeting/ greeting in return. In contrast, the greeting in Igbo shows an expression of endearment unlike that of English which is detached and formal as in:

Ndeewo onyenkuzi anyi
"Good morning our teacher"
'Good morning Aunty'

Table 1. Mapping of opening move.

Feature	English	Igbo
Opening move	Session 1, line 2; session 2, line 2; session 3, line 2; session 4, line 2; "Good morning aunty" "Good morning class" (session 1, line 3)	Session 1, line 2, "Ndeewo onyenkuzi anyi" "Good morning our teacher" 'Good morning aunty'
		Session 2, line 2 "Ndeewo onyenkuzu anyi, ibiala" "Good morning our teacher, have you come?" 'Good morning Aunty, you are welcome'
		Sessions 3, line 2; 4, line 2; 5, line 2; 6, line 2; 7, line 2; 8, line 2; 9, line 2; and 10, line2, "Ndeewo onyenkuzi anyi" "Good morning our teacher"

Mapping of Initiation

From Table 2, initiations occur in both English and Igbo classrooms in the form of display questions. Igbo initiations are more verbose than their counterparts in English. English display questions are characterized by what this study styles *direct display questions* (Wh- questions) as in:

1. Where does Nurse Mary work? (Session 7, line 15)
2. How did the writer go about carrying out his research? (Session 8, line 16),
3. Why does the writer see work as an essential part of a child's life? (Session 9, line 16)

And indirect display questions (Wh- questions with a preposed phrase) as in:

i. From the passage, what was the thing that shocked the people? (Session 5, line 18)

ii. According to the passage we read, what comes naturally to human beings? (Session 3, line 15)

On the other hand, Igbo display questions used are essentially characterized by Wh- questions as in:

1. Gini ka ode na Jojo jiri banye óhia?
"What did the writer and Jojo hold and enter the bush?"
'What did the writer and Jojo enter the bush with?' (Session 10, line 14)
2. Olee ebe ode gara maka ihe omumuya?
"Where is the place the writer went because of his learning thing?"
'Where did the writer go for his research?' (Session 8, line 13)
3. Kedu nkpahara ulogwu Mary na-aruoru?
"What is the part of the house of medicine Mary is working?"
'Which section of the hospital does Mary work?' (Session 7, line 15)

Table 2. Mapping of initiation.

Features	English	Igbo
Initiation	Session 1, line 13 "What did the writer tell his students?"	Session 1, lines 13 and 15: Gịnị gaara abụ ihe ọghọm nye onyenkuzi ahụ n'afọ mbụ? (13) "What was the thing going to be the something bad for the person teaching in his first year?" 'What would have been the unfortunate thing for the teacher in his first year?' Gịnị kpatara o ji nye ha ohere onyemereuche ya? (15) "What brought about that he gave them chance everybody to do as you want?" 'Why did he give them freedom?'
	Session 2, line 15, "Who and who were good friends?"	Session 2, lines 14 and 16 :Gịnị mere Ichie Ibezim ekweghị ahapụ obodo ya?(14) "What happened that Chief Ibezim did not agree to leave his village?" 'Why did Chief Ibezim refuse to leave his village?' Ọbụrụ na ị bụ Ichie Ibezim, I ga- `ekwu' megide obodo gi? (16) "If it is that you are Chief Ibezim, will you talk against your village?" 'Would you testify against your people if you were Chief Ibezim?'
	Session 3, line 15, "According the passage we read, what comes naturally to human being?	Session 3, lines 14 and 19 Kedụ ndịche dị n'etiti 'ịsụ` asụsụ n' ide ihe? (14) "What different thing is there between to speak and to write" 'What is the difference between speaking and writng?'  Gịnị bụ otu` n' ime nsogbu dị n' odide ihe? (19) "What is one inside the trouble that is in writing?" 'What is one of the difficulties in writing'
	Session 4, line 15, "What is the finest asset any child can have?"	Session 4, lines 21 and 33 Gịnị bụ uru kacha 'mma` nwatakịrị ga-enweta? (21) "What is the gain that is most beautiful that a child can have?" 'What is the greatest gain a child can have?' Dika ode siri dee, gịnị ka 'ikpe' mkwụmọtọ pụtara? (33) "As the writer said it what does judgment standing mean?" 'According to the writer, what is sound judgement?'
	Session 5, line 18, "From the passage, what was the thing that shocked the people?	Session 5, lines 13 and 39 Gịnị kpatara ndị agbataobi Umoru jiri bịara ya ngbaru? (14) "What brought about that people living around Umoru came to visit him?" 'Why did Umoru's neighbours visit his family?' "Kedụ ihe mere ka 'ahụ' ndị ohi ahụ?" (39) "What happened that they saw the thieves?" 'What exposed the robbers?'

Table 2. Continue.

Session 6, line 17, "Who can explain what it means to be written off?	Session 6, lines 17 and 25 Gịnị mere ode jiri sị na okwesịghị ka-agụpụ mmadụ n'ọnụọgụgụ ma ọbụghị na- ọnwụrụanwụ? (17) "What happened that made the writer to say that it is not good to count somebody out of number if it not that the person died?" 'Why did the writer say that it is not good to write someone off unless the person is dead?' David owere iwe n'ihe ụmụakwụkwọ na-`eme' ya (25) "David was he angry in what children of book were doing him?" 'Was David angry over what they did?'
Session 7, line, 15 "Where does Nurse Mary work?	Session 7, lines 15 and 23 Kedụ nkpahara ụlọgwụ Mary na- arụ ọrụ? (15) "What is the part of the house of medicine Mary is working work" 'Which section of the hospital does Mary work?' Olee ebe nwatakịrị ahụ nwere mmerụ ahụ? (23) "Where is the place that child has wound?" 'Where was he wounded?'
Session 8, line 20, "How did the writer go about carrying his research?	Session 8, lines 13 and 23 Olee ebe ode gara maka ihe ọmụmụya? "Where is the place the writer went because of his learning thing?" 'Where did the writer go for his research?' Gịnị mere ụjọ jiri jupụta onye ọcha n'ahụ (23) "What made fear to fill the white man in the boby?" 'Why was the White man afraid?'
Session 9, line 16, "Why does the writer see work as an essential part of a child's life?	Session 9, lines 22 and 30 Gịnị mere ụfọdụ ndị ntorọbia jị arụ ọrụ n' 'awa` ole n' ole? (22) "What happened some youth have to work some hours, some hours?" 'Why do some young ones engage in some hourly works?' N' echiche odee, gịnị bụ ọrụike? (30) "In the thinking of the writer, what is work hard?" 'According to the writer, what is hard labour?'
Session 10, line 15, "What affected the price of kerosene?	Session 10, lines 14 and 39 Gịnị ka ode na Jojo jiri banye ọhịa? (14) "What did the writer and Jojo hold and enter bush?" 'What did the writer and Jojo enter the forest with?' Kedụ ihe ọzọ bụrụ ode ihe mgbagwoju anya? (39) "What thing again was to the writer a thing of confusion?" 'What else confused the writer?'

Mapping of nomination

Table 3 demonstrates that both English and Igbo share the same style of nomination. This is done either by pointing at a student as in English:

1. "You"; (Session 2, line 15)
2. "Yes, you", (Session 6, line 17)

Or by acknowledging a bidder or bidders as in Igbo:

1. Ehee, ginwa
"Yes, you, yourself",
'Yes, you' (Session 5, line 17),
2. Ginwa
"You, yourself"
'You'
There is a similarity in both languages when more than one person is needed for a response as in English:

Yes, you and you (Session 9, line 4); and Igbo:
Unu abuo zaa ya
"You two answer it",
'Two of you should answer it' (Session 9, line 18).

The two languages use more of the second person pronoun in their nomination. In contrast, nominations in Igbo are more emphatic than their English counterparts. Most often, there is the collocation of the second person pronoun and its reflexive counterparts as in Igbo session 8, line 21,
Ginwa
"You, yourself"
'You'.

Emphasis is also shown in the use of 'You all' as in Igbo session 9, line 30. This means that Igbo nominations are more verbose and emphatic than their English counterparts.

Table 3. Mapping of nomination.

Features	English	Igbo
Nomination	Session 1, line 13, "Yes, you"	Session 1, lines 15 and 28 " 'Ngwa', ginwa (15) "Okay, you, yourself" 'Okay, you' Ginwa, zaa ya (28) "You, yourself, answer it" 'You, answer it'
	Session 2, line15 "You"	Session 2, lines 12 and 20 Ehee? (12) "Yes" 'Yes' Ginwa (20) "You, yourself" 'You'
	Session 3, line 48, "Yes, one after the other"	Session 3, lines 5 and 21 Ginwa (5) "You, yourself" 'You' Gi (21) "You" 'You'
	Session 4, line 28, "yes"	Session 4, lines 18 and 21 Zaa ya (18) "Answer it" 'Answer it' Zaanu ya (21) "Answer you all it" 'Answer it'

Table 3. Continue.

Session 5, line 18, "You"	Session 5, lines 17 and 29 Ehee, ginwa (17) "Yes, you, yourself" 'Yes, you' Ehee, zaanu ya (29) "Yes, answer you all it" 'Yes, answer it'
Session 6, line 17, "Yes, you"	Session 6, lines 13 and 32 Zaanụ ya (13) "Answer you all it" 'Answer it' Unu zaa ya (32) "all of you answer it" 'You all answer it'
Session 7, line 20, "You"	Session 7, lines 13 and 33 Ehee, gịnwa (13) "Yes, you, yourself" 'Yes, you' Zaa ya (33) "Answer it" 'Answer it'
Session 8, line 47 "You, and you"	Session 8, lines 21 and 31 Ginwa (21) "You, yourself" 'You' Unu zaa ya otu n' otu (31) "All of you answer it one and one" 'You answer one after the other'
Session 9, line 4, "Yes, you and you"	Session 9, lines 18 and 30 Unu abụọ zaa ya (18) "You two answer it" 'Two of you should answer it' Unuzaa ya (30) "You all answer it" 'You answer it'
Session 10, line 23, "Yes"	Session 10, lines 18 and 30 Unu abụọ zaa ya (18) "You two answer it" 'Two of you should answer it' Unu zaa ya (30) "You all answer it" 'You answer it'

Mapping of feedback technique

In Table 4, there is a similarity in the feedback technique in both English and Igbo interactions. The two languages gave both positive feedback, in the form of affirmation or repetition, and negative ones in the form of disagreement with the students' response. On the contrary, there is emotional attachment in Igbo as in:

 I zatara ya nkeoma,
"You answered it very well",
'You answered well', (Session 6, line 19)

The English is formal as in:

That's correct (Session 5, line 17)

More so,
 I zataghi ya, onye ozo,
"You did not answer it correctly, another person",
'You are wrong, another person' (Session 3, line 21)
This is a rude and demoralizing way of addressing students. It, therefore, appears that while English negative feedback is civil, its Igbo counterpart is rude and demoralizing.

Table 4. Mapping of feedback technique.

Feature	English	Igbo
Feedback technique	Session 1, line 20, "Correct, he wanted them to like him"	
	Session 2, line 23, "You are right…"	
	Session 3, line 17, "No…"	Session 3, lines 16 and 21 Ọ bụ eziokwu… (16). "It is true talk…" 'That is true…' Izataghi ya, onye ozo (21) "You did not answer it correctly, another person" 'You are wrong, another person'
	Session 4, line 27, "Okay…"	Session 4, line 24 and 32 Ezinaulo ebe enwere obiuto (24) "Family where they have happiness" 'A happy family' Ọ dimma (32) "It is good" 'That's right'
	Session 5, line 17 "That's correct"	Session 5, lines 35 and 41 Maka n' ihe ha na- achọ karịrị ha, ha achọtaghị ndị ohi ahụ ha na- achọ (35) "Because what they were looking for is bigger than them, they did not find the thieves they were looking for" 'The search was beyond them, they did not see the robbers' Nkịta na- achọ ihe o ga- eri (41) "Dog that was searching for what it will eat" 'A dog that was searching for food'
	Session 6, line 32 "Okay…"	Session 6, lines 16 and 19, Ọ bụ 'otu` n' 'ime' ndị ikpeazụ n' ụlọakwụkwọ ha (16) "He was one inside those last in their house of book" 'He was one of those that never did well in his class' I zatara ya nke 'ọma' (19) "You answered it very well" 'You answered well'

Table 4. Continue.

Session 7, line 17 "Yes"	Session 7, lines 17 and 22 Ebe a na – elekọta ndị nwere nkwarụ "Place where they look after those who have injuries" 'Where people with injuries are treated' O nwere mmeru ahụ (22) "He has injury" 'He had a wound'
Session 8, line 39, "No, it will not fit in" Session 9, line 29, "Thank you…" Session 10 , line 23, "No, that's not what the passage said"	

Mapping of repairs

Table 5 indicates that repairs as used in the two languages are for correction. They differ in that those in English are more polite and formal, while those of Igbo appear impolite and authoritative. Example, English session:

No… what shocked them was the modern way robbers now use in their activities" (5, line 23)

And, the Igbo session:

1. I nwetachaghi ya, otu I ga-esi saa ya bu, ihendi ha zuru gunyrere elekere ekonyere n'ahu aja…, "You did not get it very correctly, how you would have followed to answer it is what things they stole counted wall clock that was hung on the body of the wall…",
'You did not get it correctly, what you would have said is the things they stole included a wall clock hanging on the wall' (5, line 24).
2. I zataghị ya. Ọ ga-`eme' ka onye ahụ dị njikere ihe o ga-'asa` mgbeọbụla
"You did not answer it correctly. It going to make that person be prepared for what he is going to say every time."
'You are wrong. It will make the person to be ready to speak at all times, Session 3, line 36.

Table 5. Mapping of repairs.

Feature	English	Igbo
Repair	Session 1, line 16, "No, the teacher said that they were mature enough to comport themselves"	
		Session 3, line 36, I zataghị ya. Ọga-`eme' ka onye ahụ dị njikere ihe o ga- 'asa` mgbe ọbụla "You ''you did not answer it correctly. It going to make that person to be prepared what he is going to say every time" 'You are wrong. It will make the person to be ready to speak at all times'
		Session 4, line 19, Ihe ga- akpata ya bụ nsogbu nke ezina'ụlọ…. "What is going to cause it is problem of the family" ' What causes it is family problem …'
	Session 5, line 23, "No…. What shocked them was the modern way robbers now use in their activities"	Session 5, line 24, I nwetachaghị ya, `otu` I ga-esi saa ya bụ, ihe ndị ha zuru gụnyere elekere ekonyere n' ahụ 'aja'… "You did not get it very correctly, how you would have followed to answer it is what things they stole counted wall clock that was hung on the body of the wall…"
	Session 7, line 22, "No. All the people who have accident and sudden illness"	

Table 5. Continue.

Session 8, line 34, "The passage said he could not help but shed tears"	Session 8, line 18, Mgbe ha na- enwerebeghị onwe ha ''When they have not had ownership of themselves" 'When they were not yet independent'
Session 10, line 20, "The use of firewood"	Session 10, line 24, N' ebe ahụ ka ha ga- ahụ osisi kpọrọ nkụ "It is t '' It is that place that they will see tree that is dry" 'That' 'That is where they could get dry wood'.

DISCUSSION

The major findings from the English and Igbo classroom interactions form the basis for our discussion here. The interaction pattern in this study takes the form IR(F) as illustrated in the areas of opening, initiation, and feedback.

Every interaction, be it formal or informal, begins with an opening. The opening moves in the two classroom interactions are in the form of greeting/greeting in response, which indicates similarity. From the greeting in the Igbo language,
Ndeewo onyenkuzi anyi
"Good morning, our teacher"
'Good morning Aunty'

There is an expression of endearment, evidence of cultural transfer, which is in contrast to the greeting in English that is just formal as in: 'Good morning Aunty'.

This is seen in the use of the possessive pronoun 'our'. More so, from the greeting in the English interaction:
Good morning Aunty, you are welcome (Session 5, line 2)

And that in the Igbo interaction:

Ndeewo onyenkuzi anyi, ibiala
"Good morning our teacher, have you come?"
'Good morning Aunty, you are welcome' (Session 2, line 2)

The students express respect and acceptance for the teachers by going beyond greeting to welcoming the teacher. Though from the literal translation, the rhetoric of 'ibiala' sounds like a question. It, however, is a traditional Igbo way of welcoming someone. Thus, there is a transfer of culture in the Igbo classroom. In contrast, the English version is a straightforward expression and does not need any extra-linguistic explanation to be understood.
The initiations in this study, both in the English and Igbo interactions correspond with Coulthard and Sinclair's (1992) opinion that the head act of eliciting exchange is an elicitation act realized by a question, meant to obtain verbal contribution from someone. For instance, the teacher's initiation in the English interaction:

Who and who were good friends? (Session 2, line 15) is a question eliciting students' verbal responses. Likewise, the initiation in Igbo:

Gini gaara abu ihe oghom nye onyenkuzi ahu n'afombu?

"What was the thing going to be something bad for the person teaching in his first year?"
'What would have been the unfortunate thing for the teacher in his first year?'

These are questions that elicit students' verbal responses. However, there is evident verbosity in the Igbo interaction following the literal translation. Thus, Igbo interaction is verbose, which results from its circumlocutionary nature, unlike the English. There is also a contrast in the syntax of the two languages. While the initiations in English are characterized by direct display questions in the form of Wh-questions, and indirect display questions (with pre-posed phrases), the Igbo initiations are only direct display questions.

The teachers provided both positive and negative feedback. McCarthy (1991) maintains that feedback is very important as it shows whether the students have done what the teacher wanted them to do or not. Teacher's provision of feedback after students' responses in the interactions in the study conforms to Sinclair and Coulthard's IRF model. The positive feedbacks in the English interactions include:

1. Correct, he wanted them to like him (Session 1, line 20)
2. That's correct (Session 5, line 17).

From Igbo interactions, the positive feedback are:

1. Session 3, line 16 "O bu eziokwu …
"That is true talk"
'That is true' (Session 3, line 16)

2. O dimma
"It is good"
'That's right' (Session 4, line 32)

3. I zatara ya nke oma
"You answered it very well"
'You answered well' (session 6, line 19).

The feedback in the English interaction does not depict the expression of emotion as those in Igbo.

The rhetorical contrast in 'That's correct' used in English and:

"O bu eziokwu"
"That is true talk"
'That is true'

in Igbo depicts emotional attachment in that of Igbo. This is clearer in:

I zatara ya nke oma
"You answered it very well"
'You answered well' (Session 6, line 19).

The expression of emotion is observed from the literal translation by the use of the intensifier 'very well' which goes beyond 'you answered well'.

On the other hand, the negative feedback in the English interactions include:

1. No, it will not fit in' (Session 8, line 39)
2. No, that's not what the passage said (Session 10, line 23).

That in Igbo is:

I zataghi ya, onye ozo
"You did not answer it correctly, another person"
'You are wrong, another person' (Session 3, line 21).

Unlike the positive feedback, the negative feedbacks in the English interaction sound polite while that of the Igbo is rude, which can make students unwilling to communicate since to an extent, the Igbos, by nature, are intolerant of negative answers especially when a positive one is expected. This cultural tendency is transferred into the classroom.

There are some exchanges both in English and Igbo interaction where the teachers provided no feedback contrary to McCarthy's (1991) and Sinclair & Coulthard's (1992) positions that feedback is obligatory. Such exchanges where there are no feedback correspond with Mehan's (1976) opinion that feedback is optional. However, the position of the researchers, here, is that when the teacher does not provide any feedback but proceeds to another exchange, it is assumed that the student's response is correct.

According to Nunan (1993), there is an unequal power relationship in class interaction as the teacher selects a topic and nominates students for the response. This is in line with the nomination patterns in both English and Igbo interactions in this study as the teacher nominates students who bid or even those who are unwilling to communicate in order to make them active participants. Similarly, from the English nomination:

1. You, and you (Session 8, line 47)
2. Yes (Session 10, line 23)

And in the Igbo

1. Zaa ya
"Answer it"
'Answer it' (Session 4, line 18)
2. Ginwa
"You, yourself,
 'You' (Session 8, line 21)

"Ginwa" ("You, yourself") depicts a more direct pointing at the referent than the English version "You". In contrast, "Zaa ya" ("answer it"), as a nomination pattern, is authoritative. Thus the tone of nomination in the English interaction is simple and formal, not with a commanding style like that of Igbo, which is culturally bound. For instance, in Igbo, when an elder nominates a younger person, there is always an air of authority depicting the power relationship between the elderly and the youth. This unequal power relationship is transferred into the Igbo classroom of this study as also observed in the work of Mustapha (2010).

Students' responses could be wrong at times. This necessitates a repair. Schegloff, Sacks and Jefferson (1978) propose some methods by which repairs can be done. They include: self-initiated, self-repair; self-initiated other-repair; other-initiated, self-repair and other-initiated, other-repair. The pattern of repairs observed in this study is other-initiated, other-repair because the teacher points out the error spot and says or asks another to say the correct form, sometimes with the student who commits the error repeating what has been said. This is seen in the following sessions from the English interaction:

1. No, the teacher said that they were mature enough to comport themselves (Session 1, line 16)
2. No, what shocked them was the modern way robbers now use in their activities (Session 5, line 23)

From the Igbo interaction, we have the following:

1. I zataghi ya. Oga- eme ka onye ahu di njikere ihe o ga-asa mgbeobula
"You did not answer it correctly. It is going to make that person be prepared for what he is going to say every time"
'You are wrong. It will make the person to be ready to speak at all times') (Session 3, line 36)
2. "I nwetachaghi ya, out I ga- esi saa ya bu, ihe ndi ha zuru gunyere elekere ekonyere n'ahu aja…"
"You did not get it very correctly, how you would have followed to answer it is what things they stole counted wall clock that was hung on the body of the wall…"
'You did not state it well, what you should have said is that the things they stole include his wall clock…' (Session 5, line 24).

Rhetorically, the tone of the repairs both in English and Igbo interactions is polite, with the teacher providing the

correct answer. However, there is a tone of authority and supremacy in the Igbo repairs as the teacher, unlike in English, did not only give negative feedback, 'No' before the repair, but went ahead to tell the student the extent of incorrectness of his response as in "I nwetachaghi ya…", "You did not get it all", 'You did not get it correctly', and then how it should have been said. This corresponds to the Igbo rhetorical device of expressing negative repair. This rhetorical device is also transferred into the classroom. Thus, the difference between Igbo and English classroom interaction is marked.

Conclusion

Since this is a qualitatively oriented study that focuses on individual meaning (Oluikpe, Ndimele, Olouikpe, 2018) and, therefore, cannot be generalized, the conclusion of this study is based on the findings of the case study in the present study. The following conclusions are made:

• Interaction features appear to be identical in the two languages.
• Igbo interactions appear to differ from their English counterparts in that they have cultural, rhetorical, and linguistic colouring as pointed out in the discussion. This difference appears to be the concern of Contrastive Rhetorics (Connor, 2002). Consequently, it is that classroom interaction is culturally, rhetorically and linguistically constrained in Igbo interactions in reading/comprehension classrooms in this study. Teachers dominated the class and exhibited unequal power in the interaction processes.
• Students did not have the privilege to initiate any interactions because of the tight control the teachers manifested in the reading/comprehension classroom.

RECOMMENDATION

Teachers in language classrooms should engage the students in interesting interactions that encourage active participation.

Suggestion for further studies

The following suggestions for further studies are made:

• Replication of this study, using another location and participants.
• Interaction in grammar in English and Igbo classrooms.

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