

## Exploring the Role of Teacher Talk in Saudi EFL Classroom: Importance of F-Move in developing Students' Spoken Skill

**Mohammed Judaya M Alanazi**  
Ministry of Education, Saudi Arabia

**Jacque Widin**  
School of Education, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences  
University of Technology, Sydney, Australia

### Abstract

English language teaching in Saudi Arabia faces several challenges from both teacher and students' perspective. Teacher Talk (TT) is one of the areas of teaching and learning which is often neglected in classroom research even with its high importance in student learning. Identifying the literature gap on TT in specific sociocultural contexts, this study aims to investigate different types of f-moves in Teacher Talk and their impact on developing students' dialogic skills in English as Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms in Saudi Arabia. The IRF sequence (initiation, response, feedback or F-move) is considered a common sequence of TT in Saudi EFL classrooms. This study uses Cullen's (2002) analytical framework which focuses on the third sequence of the IRF and Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory to explore the emerging themes of TT in Saudi Arabian secondary classrooms. The methodology of the study is a qualitative case study, and the participants of the study are 18 secondary school teachers all share Arabic as their first language. The data was collected through classroom observation, audio-recording of forty-five-minute classroom lessons, and semi-structured teacher interviews. The analysis focused on the discursal and evaluative role of F-Move. The data analysis shows three F-Move types 1) F-Move Repetition Discursal 2) F-Move Evaluative 3) F-Move Elaborative Discursal. The findings point out that these F-Moves may increase student-teacher interaction, identification, and correction of errors, and maintain and guide dialogic conversation/interaction between teacher and students if it is correctly oriented. The data analysis shows examples in which TT promotes students' involvement and increases their dialogic skills while, on the other hand, when TT reduces students' potential to participate and consequently reduces the students' spoken output.

**Keywords:** EFL classrooms, dialogic skills, f-move functions, teacher talk, teaching English language, the IRF sequence, Saudi Arabia, sociocultural theory

**Cite as:** Alanazi, M. J.M., & Widin, J. (2018). Exploring the Role of Teacher Talk in Saudi EFL Classroom: Importance of F-Move in developing Students' Spoken Skill. *Arab World English Journal*, 9 (1). DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol9no1.22>