


## Negotiation of Meaning and Form Processes in Student-Teacher Communication

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### A B S T R A C T

The process of negotiating meaning and form can contribute to successful communication and become an attempt of the interlocutors to overcome comprehension difficulties when the communication is interrupted. The present research explores the interactional nature of teacher-student communication during English classrooms. Analyzing the process of negotiation relatively serves as a major basis in this study; however, the extended process needs to be seen as the negotiation reaches mutual understanding. This study, therefore, aims to identify whether the negotiation of meaning and form reach the resolution and mutual interchangeability, and investigate the structures. The data were 20 teaching practicum videos of 10 student-teachers. Mixed method research was employed in this study. The quantitative and qualitative analysis were used to find out the number of negotiations that reached resolution and the structure of negotiation process respectively. The results showed 70% of interactional work between teacher and students in the negotiation processes, for both meaning and form, achieves mutual interchangeability with variety of negotiation route. Variations of its structure are made as strategies of successful communication for teacher candidates to acquire. Eventually, this study provides theoretical and practical benefits for the student-teachers, the lecturers, and the English Education Department.

**Keywords:** *EFL Classroom, ELF Student-Teacher, Negotiation of Meaning, Negotiation of Form*

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## INTRODUCTION

The interest in research on interactions in classroom settings is widespread along with numerous phenomena in the Second Language Acquisition (SLA) process. Studies on the interaction between teacher-student and student-student focus on how the process supports learner's language acquisition. Long (1990, as cited in Hahn (2011), proposed that language learning can be best achieved in the context of interaction because interaction is the forum of meaning negotiation. The process of negotiating meaning can facilitate comprehension while at the same time it contributes to successful communication. "Negotiation of meaning is generally defined as conversational modifications or adjustments that take place in interactions when learners and their interlocutors experience difficulty in understanding messages" (Hartono, 2017). In short, negotiation of meaning takes an important role in successful classroom interaction which might be significant for second language (L2) learning.

From the second language learning point of view, negotiation facilitates the learner's comprehension in meaning and form. Learners initially acquire the language through conversation and interaction, and then the language structures are developed (Ellis, 2003) as the negotiation process supplies learners with enhanced input for meaning and its structural possibilities that help them notice forms in their interlingua communication. Pertaining how meaning and form is comprehended, the existence of the negotiation can actually be seen in the classroom settings. Hence, negotiation of meaning and form can be promoted in an English classroom when the teacher constructs an interactive learning environment with appropriate communication tasks (Lengluan, 2008). This condition also becomes a prominent concern,

especially for English teacher candidates who will dominantly provide second language input for the learners.

In classroom language learning settings, the negotiation of meaning and form takes an important role in facilitating learners' interlanguage development (Cook, 2015). According to Doughty (2000), when learners are encouraged to engage in authentic communication and are exposed to meaningful input, they are most likely to notice linguistic gaps and seek clarification, confirmation, or correction – processes essential for language acquisition. In this context, student-teachers must not only be aware of the interactional mechanisms but also be able to design and manage tasks that foster such negotiations. By doing so, they contribute to create a communicative classroom dynamic where learners are actively involved in constructing their understanding of the language as well as bridging the gap between input and internalization. Consequently, exploring how future English teachers can effectively promote and manage negotiation becomes a crucial area of inquiry in second language pedagogy.

The contribution of negotiation to comprehension has massively been investigated in numerous SLA research. However, the majority of those studies were only conducted to analyze either the Negotiation of Meaning (NfM) or Negotiation of Form (NfF) as the negotiation strategy in the communicative classroom without looking at the accomplishment of the communication purpose. For instance, Shim (2003) conducted a study on the investigation of NfM in English as a Second Language (ESL) classroom to describe the negotiation process and the relationship between the linguistic meaning and the social contexts of classroom discourse. Then, in 2007, Shim conducted an analysis of NfM between an English teacher and students in face-to-face interaction and computer-mediated communication interaction. She only focused on the signal that indicated the speaker had problems in comprehension. Another study was conducted by Hwang (2010) who researched NfF across L2 proficiency levels. He looked at the employment of negotiation about form by a pair of advanced English L2 users engaged in collaborative composition tasks, and compared their negotiation with that of a beginner English L2 pair. It can be seen that those negotiation strategies were examined separately. Referring to the previous studies, therefore, this current study aims to fill out the gap by covering up the ultimate objective of successful communication in which most studies did not see whether or not the negotiation process has reached a resolution of the problematic utterances in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom setting.

Brown (2001) stated that interaction in any contexts is at the heart of communicative competence. In classroom situations communicative competences may be manifested in several classroom behaviours as turn-taking, questioning and answering, feedback and negotiation of meaning (Chaudron, 1998:10). Taking the importance of meaning negotiation in classroom interactions, enabling teachers as well as teacher candidates to possess negotiation of meaning strategy has been seen as crucial to achieve successful communication between teacher and students during the course. Nevertheless, such a strategy might have been neglected in the majority of teacher education training resulting in student teachers' inability to conduct conversational modifications during the interactions which facilitate successful communication. Driven by curiosity to measure student teachers' capacity and investigate their capability in performing interaction with the students, hence, student teachers would be appointed as the subjects of the present study instead of experienced teachers.

As discussed above, the recent study attempts to seek information concerning the negotiation of meaning and form in the natural classroom setting involving student teachers in a practicum program. In particular, this study focuses on twofold issues as follows:

*identifying whether the process of negotiation of meaning and negotiation of form in the context of natural EFL classroom with student teachers during their teaching practicum reach the resolution and mutual interchangeability;*  
*investigating the structure of the negotiation process which reaches the resolution and mutual interchangeability.*

The result of the study, furthermore, provides significance for EFL students in which clear understanding about meaning and form of the target language is achieved at the end of the negotiation process. Meanwhile, EFL student teachers are enabled to develop their teaching competence by increasing their awareness toward the use of negotiation strategies that reach mutual interchangeability in the classroom interaction. Eventually, the result of the study might enlighten teacher educators on techniques for managing classroom interaction provision for student teachers in their preparation of becoming EFL teachers.

### **Negotiation of Meaning (NfM) vs Negotiation of Form (NfF)**

The exposure to comprehensible input obtained from NfM and NfF results in the increase of linguistic competence. It is proven when language learners are able to process language-containing input slightly above their current level of comprehending the language itself so that they can increase their language developmental level (Krashen, 1985). This condition might be carried out in the setting of teacher-student communication, particularly during the negotiation process in the EFL classroom. Fuente (2002), as cited in Hartono (2017), also argues that promoting language acquisition through negotiation is necessary since the learners try to understand structures or words beyond their current level of competence and eventually incorporate their L2 production.

Not only does comprehensible input that language learners can gain from the negotiation process help them to achieve comprehensible output, but also this plays a part in the process of mutual interchangeability in which the possible way to 'make an input comprehensible' is through 'interactional adjustments' (Long, 1996). When the communication is interrupted, the process of negotiation of both meaning and form becomes the attempts of the interlocutors to overcome comprehension difficulties. Pica (1992:200) states that negotiation of meaning (NfM) arises when there is a signal to the speaker that the message is not clear and then both interlocutors work linguistically to resolve the problematic utterance. Within the negotiation, there are possibilities of communication breakdown triggered by something incomprehensible in which the learners recognize an inadequate linguistic rule system (Mackey et al, 2000:476). In addition, Long (1996:425) describes such a condition as 'communication trouble' which leads the learners to notice the linguistic problem, identify it, and switch their attentional focus from message to form.

To achieve message comprehensibility between meaning and form there is a way that interlocutors will include the process of negotiation of form (NfF). NfF refers to "an instructional treatment that overtly draws students' attention to linguistic elements as they arise incidentally in lessons whose overriding focus is on meaning or communication" (Long, 1991). Thus, students will build their awareness and notice the utterances they produce when the interaction takes place. Improving accuracy of students' output, teachers can make use of four interactional moves proposed by Lyster and Ranta (1997); those are clarification requests, repetition of error, metalinguistic clues, and elicitation. Those interactional moves focus on form aiming for both accuracy and mutual comprehension (Lyster, 2002, p. 243).

### **Negotiation Process**

The process of NfM and NfF happens when it is triggered by incomprehensible messages that signal linguistic problems. The interlocutors will check, clarify, repeat, and modify the problematic utterances so that they achieve explicit resolution. To identify the communication breakdowns and how they are repaired, Doughty (2000) proposed the model of negotiation process that embodies a trigger, a signal, a response, and a reaction. A trigger is "an utterance or part of an utterance that is not understood" (Doughty, 2000, p. 48). It can be in the form of lexical item, phonetic error, language complexity, or task complexity. A lack of comprehension can be seen from a signal. It is identified with the confirmation check, comprehension check, or clarification request. Then, when the interlocutors try to follow up and repair the problematic utterances, it is mentioned as a response. It covers repetition, expansion, reformulation, or even the use of a first language (L1). The final process is a reaction in which it is a response to the repair like exclamation, non-verbal, or correction. Different from Doughty (2000), the model of negotiation proposed by Varonis and Gass (1985) comprises two big stages namely trigger and resolution (figure 1). This resolution is divided into three

substages such as indicator (I), response (R), and reaction to response (RR). This study adapted Varonis and Gass' model of negotiation to figure out whether the negotiation accomplishes the resolution. However, the term indicator (I) is replaced with signal (S) since its analysis was identified with the confirmation check, comprehension check, and clarification request as proposed by Doughty (2000).

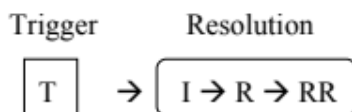


Figure 1. model of negotiation according to Varonis & Gass (1985:74)

When the process of negotiation, both meaning and form, steps on the response to reaction, it is expected that mutual interchangeability has been reached. However, certain conditions might inhibit the accomplishment of the resolution. It is influenced by the speaker's decision in the negotiation process. The decision on resolution of the NfM and NfF processes involves several components like social and institutional factors (Shim, 2003). The resolution phase becomes reciprocal when the speakers reconstruct the language to achieve understanding.

Negotiation remains a good language learning technique if the process can enhance the learners to push and develop their language acquisition. Nevertheless, not all negotiation processes serve as successful interaction between the interlocutors because of the communication breakdown that might occur. Avval (2011), as cited by Fitriani (2019), suggests that communication breakdown is a situation where a person is unable to receive information, express what they mean and understand. Failure in communication can be experienced by second or foreign language learners because of the lack of grammar knowledge and pragmatic problems (Fitriani, 2019). This present study will also research the causes of communication breakdown occurred during the NfM and NfF processes.

## METHOD

In order to reach the objectives, mixed method research was employed. Mixed-method research was adopted in this study since this study looked for involvement of the participants in data collection and sought to build rapport and credibility with the individuals (Creswell, 2003). Quantitative research was employed to answer the first research question, whereas the second research question dealt with qualitative research.

The participants of this study were ten student-teachers of the Education and Language Faculty, Atma Jaya Catholic University of Indonesia majoring in English Education. They have completed a Micro Teaching course and are equipped with pedagogical theories. After passing this course, they were required to have an internship program which is part of the Teaching Practicum course. These participants specialized in teaching English at secondary level.

The data collection was conducted within three months. Initially, the videos were collected from the participants as a part of their report after the internship program was accomplished. The data are obtained from each participant's two teaching videos selected from the last two teaching performances out of eight videos because the student-teachers are expected to have the teaching competence. Then, the videos were thoroughly transcribed. The utterances taken from the transcribed videos were analyzed based on the process of negotiation of meaning and form.

To analyze the research data, the researchers identified the NfM and NfF utterances with and without resolution, then put those in separated tables consisting of five columns. The first column is the pieces of negotiation utterances. The second column is the negotiation structure – trigger, signal, response, and reaction based on Varonis and Gass' (1985). The next column is identification of the signal categories; confirmation check, comprehension check, or clarification request (Doughty, 2000). The fourth and fifth columns contain the number and percentage of the negotiation type occurrences respectively.

Furthermore, to answer the first research question, this study adopted quantitative analysis in looking for the number of the negotiation process which undergoes trigger, signal,

response, and reaction to response. From the utterances that have been classified based on the negotiation strategies, the utterances in which the process of negotiation reaches the resolution of the communication problem were marked. Those marked utterances were counted, and then converted into percentage. Meanwhile, to answer the second research question, qualitative analysis was used to investigate the negotiation process reaching the resolution and investigate the factors that inhibit the resolution respectively. From the classified utterances, the process of negotiation that undergoes the resolution process would be investigated afterwards.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Resolution of the Negotiation Process

Through a careful examination, the results are strong enough to demonstrate that the interactional work between teacher-student and student-student in the negotiation of meaning process achieves mutual interchangeability. It is seen that most of the negotiation process solves the communication breakdown exceeding 70% of the natural interaction in the EFL classroom, while only 29.54% of the interactional work does not achieve resolution.

#### *Example 1 (reaching resolution)*

*Teacher (T): We have discussed the exercises. Flip the paper to the back. But, because we don't have enough time, you may submit to me at the end of the school hour. At the end of today's school hour.*

*Student (S): Maksudnya apa? (What does it mean?)*

*Teacher : Okay so, the evaluation is at the back of the paper, right? There's a dialogue. But we do not have enough time to complete it now. So, you have to submit it to me after Socio. After Socio, you go to the teacher's office, then give it to me. Is that clear?*

*Student : Yes.*

#### *Example 2 (not reaching resolution)*

*S: Saturday or Wednesday?*

*T: Saturday itu. (That's Saturday)*

*S: Wednesday itu apa? (What is Wednesday?)*

*T: \*gasps\* Lho?*

These two excerpts show the negotiation moves occurring in an EFL natural setting between teacher and student. While Example 1 shows resolution achievement, Example 2 fails to reach mutual interchangeability. In Example 1, the communication breakdown occurs when triggered by the teacher's unclear instruction. The signal of incomprehension is shown when the student requests clarification. The teacher repeats the instruction and is pushed to modify the language to make it more comprehensible. The reaction from the student shows that he understands the modified response. The utterance problem is solved, and this process shows successful completion. Meanwhile, in Example 2, the interactional work shows unanswered signals of incomprehension. The student asks for clarification, i.e., "What is Wednesday?" However, the teacher does not solve this communication problem as he does not provide the correct response. The teacher gives a verbal response, but it only shows how he is surprised with the student's vocabulary mastery. This interactional work does not resolve as the student's incomprehension is ignored and it seems to go unanswered.

The analysis of the negotiation of form occurrence has shown identical phenomena as its counterpart, i.e. the negotiation of meaning, in the notion of resolution achievement and mutual interchangeability. From all the interactions between teacher-students and students-students in the EFL natural classroom setting understudy, it is identified that the negotiations of form have reached resolution in almost all incidences. The percentage of successful negotiations (the ones solving the communication problems or breakdown) attends approximately 61.9 %. Meanwhile, 38.1% of form negotiation, although the processes have been through some steps of negotiation of form, fail to solve the comprehension problems.

#### *Example 3 (reaching resolution)*

*T: If it didn't rain the whole day, we...*

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S: *We can go camping.*

T: *We can go ato (or) we could go?*

S: *We could go.*

*Example 4 (not reaching resolution)*

T: *So, the reality is? So the reality is or*

S: *The fact is that she...*

S: *She did not give up.*

T: *She had not given up or She didn't give up (raising intonation). So, number 5 should be false.*

The two above examples of negotiation, generally, demonstrate that classroom participants (teacher and students) decide to engage in the resolution process through negotiation in order to solve problems relevant to form comprehension. One thing that differentiates the two situations lies in the success of helping students attain the solution of their difficulty. In Example 3 the process of negotiation commences when students cannot supply correct responses to the teacher's incomplete question (which shows lack of understanding of the use of the form in the sentence). The teacher subsequently sends a signal through a confirmation question, allowing students to realize that there is an incorrect answer. Through her question, the teacher attempts to lead students to the resolution of the problem which is then, responded by the students to their provision of correct response, i.e. "We could go." Example 4, on the other hand, presents a contradictory situation. The communication breakdown students are facing (inability to provide a correct answer related to a conditional sentence) cannot be solved by both the teacher and the students. Even though the teacher has sent a signal in the form of a confirmation question, there are no students' responses that signal understanding. Furthermore, even if the teacher confirmation itself is actually aimed at settling the problem, it is either unclear or not understandable.

Based on the findings, the teacher-student interactions that occur in natural communicative settings take pivotal role in the acquisition process. Since the current study took place in the English classrooms, such characteristics are typical of social settings conducive to language learning. Social interaction, in the Vygotskian theory, is the basis of language learning. The role of expert, whether it is a teacher or older person who possesses better command of the language, in modelling behaviour and in scaffolding it is a key factor comprehension and hence acquisition (Al-Marooqi & Tuzlukova, 2011). Despite the theoretical basis is inferred positive relationship between negotiation and comprehension, Al-Marooqi & Tuzlukova (2011) argued that there is no direct relationship has been traced so far. It means learners' and interlocutors' negotiation does not always lead to immediate comprehension. Due to this fact, learner variables and other variables involved in the context of interaction have to be put into perspective. Comprehension could occur after the negotiation because some learners hold some unresolved issues in the back of their minds for further consideration and analysis. In other words, what works for one learner may not work for another and what works in one setting or one context may not be successful in another.

### **Structure of the Negotiation Process**

In order to answer the second research question, the investigation of the NfM process which reaches the resolution and mutual interchangeability was taken place. From all utterances in which the resolution was gained, 9.68% of them involved only Trigger-Signal (T-S) in the process as presented in the excerpt below.

*Example 5 (T-S)*

S: *Sir, itu artinya apa? I nggak ngerti. Yang contohnya "I either like cats or dogs." [Trigger] (Sir, what does it mean? I don't understand this sentence "I either like cats or dogs.")*

T: *This is just an example kan. That means I will only like one of the two.*

[Signal] *Jadi saya suka kalau nggak anjing, kucing. Antara anjing atau kucing. (This is just an example, right? That means I will only like one of the two. So I like it if it's not a dog, it's a cat. Either dog or cat.)*

The trigger was indicated when the students asked about the meaning of a sentence. Then, the teacher's response directly answered the student's question and demonstrated a signal indicating a comprehensive answer toward the inquired meaning. In this case, the resolution was achieved even though the student's confirmation did not appear afterwards. This shows that communication breakdowns occur, but the classroom participants, especially students, seldom choose to have further negotiation moves (Shim, 2005). Furthermore, studies on teacher-student interaction in L2 classroom settings (Doughty & Pica, 1986; Long & Sato, 1983; Pica, 1987; Pica & Doughty, 1985; Pica & Long, 1986 as cited in Shim, 2005) have focused on determining participants' involvement in negotiation work. These studies found that teacher-student interactions provide less favorable environments for negotiation compared to peer interactions in the classroom. Another argument regarding this is that affective variables and unequal power relationships between students and teachers may discourage classroom negotiation.

The results of NfM also showed that all processes had been through the T-S stages and followed by various communication stages, such as Trigger-Signal-Response (T-S-Re), Trigger-Signal-Response-Reaction (T-S-Re-Ra), Trigger-Signal-Trigger-Signal-Response-Reaction (T-S-T-S-Re-Ra), Trigger-Signal-Response-Reaction-Response (T-S-Re-Ra-Re), and Trigger-Signal-Response-Signal-Response (T-S-Re-S-Re). The examples of each variant can be seen as follows.

*Example 6 (T-S-Re / reaching resolution)*

T: *Ini summary-nya. (This is the summary.)* [Trigger]

S: *Summary itu apa? (What is it?)* [Signal]

T: *Summary itu ringkasan\*.* [Response]

\* *the Indonesian language for summary*

*Example 7 (T-S-Re-Ra / reaching resolution)*

T: *We have discussed the exercises. Flip the paper to the back.* [Trigger]

*But, because we don't have enough time, you may submit to me at the end of the school hour. At the end of today's school hour.*

S: *Maksudnya apa? (What do you mean?)* [Signal]

T: *Okay so, the evaluation is at the back of the paper, right? There's a dialogue.* [Response]

*But we do not have enough time to complete it now. So, you have to submit it to me after Socio. After Socio, you go to the teacher's office, then give it to me.*

*Is that clear?*

S: *Yes* [Reaction]

*Example 8 (T-S-T-S-Re-Ra / reaching resolution)*

T: *And if you have negative condition, where should you put the "not"?* [Trigger]

S: *Have not.* [Signal]

T: *Would not have or would have not?* [Trigger]

S: *Would have not.* [Signal]

T: *Based on the sentences, based on the text?* [Response]

S: *Would not have* [Reaction]

T: *Would not, so the "not" should be here, not after the have.*

*After would not after have. Unless it was present perfect sentences, okay. Do you understand so far? Okay.*

*Example 9 (T-S-Re-Ra-Re / reaching resolution)*

T: *So your job is to read what's written in these papers and the others just need to guess.* [Trigger]

S: *Gimana? Gimana? (Sorry?)* [Signal]

T: *Want an example? Mau contohnya? (Do you want an example?)*

[Response]

S: *Mau. (Yes!)* [Reaction]

T: *Okay, everyone ready? Listen to me ya. I was born in San Francisco in*

1955. [Response]

*I became interested in computers when I was a teenager and attended lessons after school at Hewlett Packard (HP).*

*S: Bill Gates, Bill Gates.*

*T: Wait, hold on. Listen until finish. In 1974, I got a job as a technician at the video game maker Atari. I created Oscar-winning movies such as "Toy Story" and "Finding Nemo". My name has a connection to innovative products like the iPod, iPhone, iTunes, and iPad. Steve Wozniak and I founded Apple in 1976 and together we developed Mac. Who am I?*

*Example 10 (T-S-Re-S-Re / reaching resolution)*

*T: Okay... Now, I want you in each row to write the if conditional [Trigger] type 3 sentences and you will present it to me. Is five minutes enough?*

*Only three sentences. ... The condition was Eric lost Nova and met Vanessa.*

*So the sentence is if Eric had not lost Nova, he wouldn't have met Vanessa.*

*So, five minutes from now.*

*S: Write it?*

[Signal]

*T: Yes and you will present it to me.*

[Response]

*S: Per baris miss? (per line, Ms?)*

[Signal]

*T: Yes*

[Response]

The model of negotiation proposed by Varonis and Gass (1985) has been widely used as the principal norm to identify negotiation processes in many studies. In fact, the negotiation process does not always follow the T-S-Re-Ra pattern. This study revealed that the NfM process reaching mutual interchangeability occurred in different variants without limitation on the stages from trigger to reaction. All processes got through the T-S stage, but the most frequent process was T-S-Re which gained 51.62%. followed by T-S-Re-Ra (25.81%) and T-S-Re-S-Re (6.45%). T-S-T-S-Re-Ra and T-S-Re-Ra-Re shared the same frequency of occurrence, that is 3.22%. Among 5 NfM patterns, the majority of the first-three-moves is T-S-Re. In Example 8, the negotiation has repetition on T-S because the student had not provided a complete answer that fits the context, so the teacher had to restate the trigger.

In examples 6-10 above, it can be seen that there are similarities in the process of negotiation. Firstly, the initiation of negotiation or triggers are always carried out by the teacher, meanwhile students give signals indicating their lack of understanding of the explanation or instructions given by the teacher. This is in line with Shim's (2007) findings, which highlighted that the teacher initiated most of the negotiation, especially in the face-to-face meeting. The teacher-student power dynamic, language teaching tradition, and classroom expectations could also be contributing factors to the occurrence of teacher-initiated interaction in L2 classrooms. The other similarity is that participants involve the strategy of using their mother tongue in negotiating meaning. They use language translation to clarify the meaning of words, to express concepts that are difficult to articulate in the target language, and to prevent conversation breakdowns (Kotter, 2003 as cited in Canals, 2021). Moreover, the role of translanguaging, particularly by the teacher and students, is notable. According to Adinolfi dan Astruc (2017) in their analysis of teacher-student and student-student interactions, as cited in Canals (2021), there was frequent use of translanguaging on the part of the teachers, mainly for giving instructions and eliciting nonverbal responses. However, students rarely engage in translanguaging. This implies that students are less likely to use their bilingual skills to improve comprehension and close communication gaps than teachers are, perhaps as a result of classroom norms or their level of target language proficiency.

Another finding from the data analysis was that negotiation could be achieved even though the process has not reached the resolution. The response was a definite answer to the matter being negotiated and preceded by a signal reflecting confirmation, clarification, and comprehension. The following examples show each negotiation process.

*Example 11 (Signal: confirmation check)*

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T: *So here you say something, and this is an activity you will do, but here is another activity happening.*

*So there are two activities at the same time.*

S: *So in one time two activities?*

T: *Exactly.*

*Example 12 (Signal: clarification request)*

S: *Zero!*

T: *Zero what?*

S: *Zero conditional!*

*Example 13 (Signal: comprehension check)*

T: *Ini summary-nya. (This is the summary.)*

S: *Summary itu apa? (What is that?)*

T: *Summary itu ringkasan\*.*

*\* the Indonesian language for summary*

Despite the processes showing mutual interchangeability, there is still a lack of indication whether the speaker really understands the meaning of the utterance. Perhaps, it is because the reaction stage does not exist that brings difficulty in identifying a successful negotiation. In example 11, the interaction between the teacher and student follows a distinct pattern of negotiation. The teacher initially explains a concept of complex sentences. The student then attempts to confirm their understanding by rephrasing the concept into simpler sentences. This simplification acts as a signal to the teacher indicating the student's effort to grasp the concept. The teacher responds to this signal with an "exactly" statement, providing a clear confirmation that the student's understanding is correct. This affirmation is crucial as it validates the student's comprehension and reassures them that they are on the right track. In such scenarios, students may react with expressions of gratitude or other acknowledgments of their understanding, such as saying "thank you" or nodding, which further reinforces the communication loop and the learning process. In contrast to Example 11, where the teacher's confirmation facilitates understanding through affirmation, Examples 12 and 13 demonstrate different approaches in response to communication breakdowns. The responses include providing the correct answers directly and translating meanings into the first language, without any further reaction. Apparently, Long (1996), as cited in Cook (2015), also found the same way that when there is a communication breakdown, negative feedback can be implemented explicitly through overt error correction. This method is more explicit in addressing misunderstanding.

In addition, the analysis also shows a finding of processes of NfM that do not reach resolution and mutual interchangeability. They are T-S, T-S-Re, and T-S-Re-S-Re. T-S-Re is the process that majorly contributes to the unreachable NfM processes with a percentage of 69.23%. It is followed by T-S, which takes 23.08% of the total of unreachable NfM occurrences. The last process is T-S-Re-S-Re that happens only one time during the negotiations in the EFL classrooms.

*Example 14 (T-S)*

S: *Saturday or Wednesday?*

T: *Saturday itu. (That's Saturday.)*

S: *Wednesday itu apa? (What is Wednesday?)*

T: *\*gasps\* Lho?*

*Example 15 (T-S)*

T: *For example, Henry, do you like using iPhone? And you answered me not only you like using iPhone, but you also like using Android. Do you get it?*

S: *Repeat it again miss.*

*Example 16 (T-S)*

S: *Miss, I don't understand.*

T: *You ask Glenn about full name, tempat lahirnya di mana \*unclear\* (You can ask Glenn's full name and his place of birth)*

S: *\*The audio is unclear\**

T: For parents, it doesn't have to be full name. Can be first name only.

\*Teacher hands out another exercise worksheet.\*

T: If you're done with this, you can group them in this box.

S: \*The audio is unclear\*

T: I've told you a couple of times. (unclear) stages of his life; what schools has he gone to, and then where has he lived.

These examples show a process of NfM consisting of trigger (T) and signal (S) that are unable to solve the problem occurring in the instructions. In examples 14 and 15, the resolution and the mutual interchangeability cannot be reached as the processes stop at signal (S) from the learners without a further response from the teachers to resolve the problems. Similarly, example 16 is considered as unreachable negotiation since signal (S) from the learners that appear at the beginning of the process seems not to acquire a clear response from the teachers.

As previously stated, the T-S-Re stage is the most prominent communication stage in the context of the unreachable NfM process. T-S-Re happens in nine out of thirteen (69.23%) circumstances of negotiation in the instruction activities. The T-S-Re cannot meet the resolution and the mutual interchangeability because it mostly ends with the response (Re) from the teachers without a reaction (Ra) from the learners to repair the problems during the negotiation, as follows:

Example 17 (T-S-Re)

T: What you have to do is you have to find the other half of the sentence.

S: The other half?

T: Yes, the continuation.

Example 18 (T-S-Re)

T: Yeah, this is where it gets tricky. Jadi subject-verb agreement itu, kalimat yang terakhir relate-nya itu subject yang kedua. (So, in the subject-verb agreement, the last sentence relates to the second subject.)

S: Jadi Glenn cewek? (So, Glenn is a female, isn't she?)

T: Bukan begitu. Jadi maksudnya mereka berdua itu termasuk ke dalam dua itu... (It is not like that. That means they are both included in those two.)

Example 19 (T-S-Re)

T: Wouldn't have lost

S: Would have lost?

T: Wouldn't.

Example 20 (T-S-Re)

T: More impossible, in a way, yes. But why more impossible?

S: Because, it's already happened.

T: Because, it's already happened?

S: Regret bukan? (Is that regret?)

T: In a way it's a regret. So what about regret? What makes regret impossible, more impossible to happen?

Example 21 (T-S-Re)

T: We will start with different material, okay? Pelajarannya beda lagi. (We'll move on to the next lesson). The first one is this. Okay, when you hear something beautiful. Sorry, please just turn on the record button on the camera! Okay, misalkan menurut kalian, something beautiful itu apa? (In your opinion, what is something beautiful?)

S1: Cantik. (beautiful)

T: Cantik. Gitu (beautiful.)

S2: Beautiful women.

T: I'm sorry, maksudnya itu something beautiful itu misalnya kaya seseorang, atau sesuatu gitu. (Something beautiful is for a person or an object)

Example 22 (T-S-Re)

T: So, you are right now at school. And then, but you actually want to be at home, right? The reality is you are at school. So, what you say is that: If I were at home, I would sleep. When doing these sentences, we don't use was.

Everything uses were, okay? And then, when we talk about the past... what about yesterday, who wish they were at home yesterday? You had been at school yesterday, right? And then, who wish they were at home yesterday? Everybody. So, how you say is that: If I had been at home yesterday, I would... yang pertama tuh I would sleep. I would have... slept. Mind the difference. Past participle of sleep is slept. You don't need to say it like that. Be natural.  
S: Tapi kalau pakai past participle itu kapan aja \*The audio is unclear.\*  
(When do we use past participles?)

T: Past participle is only used in third conditional. This is third conditional.

Example 23 (T-S-Re)

T: Can you guys try making a sentence using those two words?

S: Apa? (sorry?)

T: Connect two nouns and use those words together.

Example 24 (T-S-Re)

T: Bukan begitu. Jadi maksudnya mereka berdua itu termasuk ke dalam dua itu... (It's not like that. What I mean is that both of them are included in those two.)

S: Dua apa? (Both of them?)

T: Dua subjek itu lebih mengikuti subjek yang kedua. No. It's also... yeah.  
(The two subjects follow the second subject more closely)

Example 25 (T-S-Re)

T: You can act it out with words but without the word itself.

S: Using the word?

T: Expressing the word!

Examples 17, 18, and 19, 22, 23, 24, and 25 altogether begin with utterances of trigger (T) misunderstood by the learners. It is followed with signal (S) from the learners by asking for clarifications regarding the previous statements. Teachers merely provide responses (Re) towards the questions. In the case of example 20 and 21, the trigger (T) is suggested by the learners who answer the question. It proceeds to the signal (S) from the teachers, which is the moment teachers confirm the learners' answer in this negotiation. The explanation to correct the examples provided by the students becomes the response (Re).

Example 26 (T-S-Re-S-Re)

S1: Jadi, ini kan, 1 kalimat, tapi ada 2 klausa.

S2: Klausa itu apa?

S1: Clause...

S2: Apa itu...?

S1: Itu kayak, apa ya? Pokoknya dia yang ngebentuk di dalam kalimatnya gitu deh....

T: And then?

S1: Nah.... Itu tuh ada if-clause sama main-clause.

T: Okay...

Example 26 demonstrates the occurrence of trigger (T), signal (S), response (Re), and recurrent signal (S) and response (Re) in the negotiations of language classroom settings. The negotiation begins with the misconceived explanation from students as the trigger (T). The signal (S) is the question from their peers regarding it continued with the response (Re) from the student as the interlocutor. However, the response (Re) raises another question by the other students, which becomes the recurrent (S). The negotiation ends with a repeated response (Re) from the student. In this context of NfM, the failure to reach mutual interchangeability is evident. It causes the absence of achieving a full potential of interaction for language learning, whereas Long (1996) proposes the interaction hypothesis that emphasizes interaction involving negotiation of meaning to help learners acquire language more effectively. As cited in Masrizal (2014), Long (1996, p. 451-452) further explains that "negotiation for meaning, especially negotiation work that trigger interactional adjustments by the NS or more competent interlocutor, facilitates acquisition because it connects input with internal learner capacities, particularly selective attention, and output in productive ways." In addition, as

cited in Mcleod (2024), Vygotsky's theories (1934, 1978) highlighted the importance of social interaction in cognitive development in which in the context of learning process, the interaction between teachers and students involves summarizing and clarifying that can construct knowledge. The more knowledgeable other (MKO) plays a pivotal role in students' cognitive development. As a result, teachers' failing to respond to signals throughout the negotiation process will miss the process of scaffolding as teachers do not provide assistance students need to understand and overcome language barriers. In short, that the interaction process ends with resolution is important to help learners to acquire language.

Apart from the NfM, NfF also characterizes the classroom interaction under study. 61.9% of the total NfF reaches the mutual interchangeability. The data analysis on negotiation of form (NfF) which reaches the resolution and mutual interchangeability went through three distinct general phases or stages. The three include: (1) trigger - signal/TS; (2) trigger - signal - response/TSRe; and (3) trigger - signal - response - reaction / TSReRa. The first process, which is the least in its occurrence (7.7%), has the shortest process. Triggers, either initiated by the teacher or the student(s), are directly followed by a signal showing comprehension. Example 27 below displays the incident of TS with the student's initiation in the form of an incomplete sentence serving as a signal which was subsequently continued with signal through teacher's brief explanation and correction.

*Example 27 (T-S)*

*S: Would took.*

*T: Would take, would ga boleh pake took lagi. (The V1 form of took is take.*

*Would is followed by the V1). Would take our parents out more often. And what about number 2?*

The second process has somehow a longer route of trigger - signal - response. Compared to the TS stage, TSRe process took place more often with 46.1% of occurrence. An example is provided below.

*Example 28 (T-S-Re)*

*S: Have been wearing.*

*T: Has been atau (or) have been atau (or) had been*

*S: Has...have...*

*T: Children itu lebih dari satu. Jadi (so) have been wearing hard hats for the past 2 days. (The noun, children, is plural.)*

As can be seen from the interaction in the classroom in example 28, NfF commences with a trigger in a form of students' false sentence demonstrating a problem or lack of understanding towards the learnt sentence pattern. The teacher proceeds to alternatives of the correct answer as a trigger and requires the students to make a selection. However, the problem continues as students are unable to correctly pick the answer. The negotiation eventually ends with a response from the teacher which confirms the expected answer and appears to be the solution of the problem.

The third process as the longest process of NfF which gains resolution goes through 4 stages, i.e. trigger - signal - response - reaction / TSReRa. Among 13 NfF which successfully solves the communication breakdown, 6 of them, or approximately 46.1% of the total NfF takes the route of TSReRa. This variation of interaction is exemplified by two following NfF.

*Example 29 (T-S-Re-Ra)*

*S: We should not... Sombong\**

*\*The Indonesian Language\**

*T: We should not be...*

*S: Arrogant.*

*T: We should not be arrogant.*

*Example 30 (T-S-Re-Ra)*

*S: He had joined.*

*T: He had joined, he joins or he joined?*

*S: He joins.*

*T: He joins the opera club.*

The two instances of NfF with the T-S-Re-Ra stage begin with a trigger that demonstrates students' misunderstanding of the form. The teacher, through her utterances of an incomplete sentence or provision of choices, attempted to signal the problem and required a repair from the students. Responses are given by the students who confirmed the accurate form as expected by the teacher. At this stage, resolution occurs. The entire process is finished by reactions from the teacher (which might aim at reconfirming students' correct responses).

In addition, the findings also reveal that 38.1% of the NfF processes do not reach the resolution or mutual interchangeability. The processes comprise of 5 different patterns, those are (1) Signal/S, (2) trigger-signal/TS, (3) signal-response/SRe, (4) trigger-signal-response/TSRe, and (5) trigger-signal-response-reaction/TSReRa. Among those, the T-S pattern takes two occurrences (33.3%) whereas each of the other patterns only appears once with 16.7% of the total NfF processes. The excerpts of each pattern are as follows.

Example 31 (S)

T: *The iceberg or icebergs. Any other?*

S: *Would have..*

(Students' negligence)

Example 32 (T-S)

S: *She did not give up.*

T: *She had not given up or she didn't give up? (raising intonation) So, number 5 should be false.*

Example 33 (S-Re)

S: *Zero conditional can use will, right?*

T: *Depends, whether it is a fact or not.*

Example 34 (T-S-Re)

S: *Have not.*

T: *Would not have or would have not?*

S: *Would have not.*

Example 35 (T-S-Re-Ra)

S: *Has closed.*

T: *Are closed or what?*

S: *Are closed*

T: *ini bisa dua sih. Bisa are closed okay. tapi kita lebih ke have closed.*

(This can be both. *Are closed* is okay, but we are more into *have closed*)

Examples 31-34 show that mutual interchangeability does not occur when the negotiation process is not complete. This incompleteness is influenced by several factors. First, there is a disconnection between the parties involved in the communication process. As in example 31, the teacher asks the correct use of the word 'iceberg', whether it ends with s or without s. However, the student gives another answer, which is 'would have'. In this situation, the discussion about 'would have' actually has been done before and is over. Then, the student's ability in comprehending the language form becomes another factor affecting the mutual interchangeability. This can be due to a lack of grammatical knowledge or the speaker's vocabulary (Fitriani, 2019). Consequently, the speakers cannot receive the message well. Examples 34 and 35 obviously show that students have not been familiar with the use of perfect tense causing the student's response is not as expected. Furthermore, the teacher's instructions also become the factor whether NfF can be done successfully. As in examples 32 and 33, the teacher has tried to give explanations about the language forms which direct to the answers. Unfortunately, the teacher did not provide a complete explanation of the meaning and use of the tenses in English as well as its examples. The teacher also did not check students' understanding about the topic.

The results of the study reflect that knowledge of the language rules used during the negotiation process is believed to be communicative competence. However, communicative competence also relates to the implementation of the language used like the appropriateness of certain utterances (Fitriani, 2019). Both teachers' and students' communicative competences

help to generate input, output, and feedback that inform them of their success in transmitting messages during the interaction as well as in acquiring the language. Therefore, interaction as a vehicle for information exchange takes a very important role in the NfM and NfF. This is in line with Al-Marooqi's & Tuzlukova's (2011) statement that "as long as the role of interaction is considered vital for language acquisition, negotiation will remain a good language teaching technique that can enhance language learning and push the process of language development further."

In addition, the various patterns of negotiation process might be affected by the situational factors which play important role in the learners' decision making. Situational factors include learners' variables, such as learning style and level of language proficiency, and type of tasks done in the class. If learners are not ready for a new word, then they cannot acquire it, so negotiation can do little towards it internalization. Some learners are out-going, so they like to participate and learn through that, whereas the introvert ones prefer to listen and internalize the language (Al-Marooqi & Tuzlukova, 2011). Open-ended conversations in class relieve learners from any immediate need to communicate clearly and allow them to avoid engaging in negotiation work. In contrast, procedural talk and group work activities push the learners to make an effort to negotiate by creating a strong communicative need at given moments. Furthermore, the learners' decision whether to pursue negotiation depends on their monitoring of the situation and their metacognitive judgement whether they should attempt to resolve communication problem (Shim, 2005).

Pertaining the entire findings above, some implications can be drawn in regards of teacher candidates' and teachers' interaction capabilities. Teachers can take opportunities during group work to engage in one-on-one negotiation with single learners in depth, have learners take a more active role in interacting, and design tasks that have immediate communicative purposes need to motivate students to produce successful communication. For example, jigsaw task and group-work-reporting activities. Lastly, teachers assist learners to overcome their limitations by teaching strategies that enable learners to use the language for comprehension or production despite limitations in knowledge.

## CONCLUSIONS

This study emphasizes the complexity of the negotiation process within classroom interactions, showing that mutual interchangeability occurs most of the time even though the structure of the negotiation process (T-S-Re-Ra) does not always result in resolution or mutual comprehension. To achieve mutual understanding, the negotiation process may follow varied routes, as structural variations serve as strategies for successful communication. Therefore, it is essential for prospective teachers to acquire such communication strategies to avoid breakdowns and establish effective classroom interaction. The findings provide EFL students and student teachers with a clearer understanding of how meaning and form in the target language are achieved through negotiation, which functions as an ongoing social activity generating comprehensible input and output. Learners must grasp the meaning and forms of information slightly above their current proficiency level, while teachers, as more knowledgeable participants, play a crucial role in facilitating language acquisition by resolving communication problems, responding to signals, and checking comprehension. As a contribution to the EFL learning context, this study also highlights the importance of teaching strategies, suggesting that further research should explore techniques for managing classroom interaction that can prepare prospective teachers more effectively for their future roles.

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