EFFECTS OF CLASS OBSERVATION ON THE STUDENTS-TEACHER INTERACTION IN THE ENVIRONMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASS AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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ARTICLEINFO	ABSTRACT
	This work investigates the influence of class observation by an outside observer on the interaction in the class environment between teacher and learners which can cause the efficiency of class and learning process. To this end, 90 English language learners at a pre-intermediate level were selected from an English Language Institute in Tehran (Safir) based on Oxford Placement Test (OPT) and were distributed into two groups of 45, one as the control group and the other as the experimental one. Each of the groups was also divided into three classes of 15. Three teachers taught both the control group and the experimental one. The classes in the control experimental were observed by the institute supervisor for 3 times during the term while the classes in the control group were not. At the end of the term, a questionnaire developed based on Brown's (2001) framework adopted from Moskowitz (1971), known as Foreign Language Interaction Analysis (FLINT) was distributed to the study participants in both groups, to which they were supposed to provide answers on a five-point Likert Scale: (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) no opinion, (4) agree, or (5) strongly agree. Both the descriptive and the inferential statistical analyses of the results of the study showed that the classes observed by an outsider outperformed the classes without observation with respect to interaction between the students and the teacher. Furthermore, the analysis of the focus group interview done on both experiment and control group showed that the classes on with observation were more interactive than the one without observation. © 2019 INT TRANS J ENG MANAG SCI TECH.

1. INTRODUCTION

The past two decades of language teaching and learning research has given strong support for communicative aspects of language both as a means and end. Following the paradigm shift in language teaching as an influence of pragmatic / discourse – based theories in linguistics, language educationists shifted their focus on social aspects of language. In other words, the language was not viewed any more as a purely mental system, but also as a device for interaction in the social setting

with meaning generated not only from the lexicon and the sentences but the whole text and in fact the context of communication (Halliday & Hassan, 1985). In this view, the role of action research has become raised in the past decades as a means of collecting invaluable data regarding the nature of the type of interactions happening in class between the language learners and the teacher. Class observation is one of the tools of action research which serves as a tool for self-monitoring of the teacher on his task of teaching Wichadee (2011). Meanwhile, other scholars believe in classroom observation as an efficient tool for staff evaluation as well as educational supervision as it also does serve as a means for research (Choopun & Tuppoom, 2014). But one question which may arise is whether class observation can have any influence on the nature of the interaction between the students during the process of language learning. Meanwhile, does class observation affect the teacher with respect to how he will handle the task of teaching? The present study tries to focus on these aspects of class observation in the paradigm of interactionist perspective in language teaching and learning.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The classroom is an environment from which lots of information can be collected with relation to the nature of interactions between the students and the teacher as well as the degree of effectiveness of these activities for the achievement of the ultimate objective in learning. This flow of dynamic information can be subject to direct observation from both inside and outside. This can be done by the teacher as an action researcher or by the institution as the administrator of the teaching profession in a more formal level for the aim of evaluation and subsequent necessary remedial measures and further decision making.

Classroom observation can be done in a variety of ways ranging from descriptive, subjective observation to more objective and systematic ones. Martinez's (2011) interactive coding system is among the most systematic types of observation which is based on a principled analysis of the observable behavior of both the teacher and the learners in the class in a non-judgmental manner. If done systematically, classroom observation serves as a strong resource for gathering insightful information about the learning process and also the nature of the interaction between the participants of such a process (here, the learners and the teacher) (Mackey & Gass, 2005).

Among the most important outcome of classroom observation for teaching and learning, it helps researchers to get access to natural data in the learning process in its realistic setting. It also paves the way for both stimulating the necessary changes in the teaching and learning process as well as verifying that those changes really happened. Danielson (2011) believes that systematic classroom observation can provide meaningful feedback on how teachers can reform their performance in class. He further states that such an effect can help the teachers to reflect on their work and do self – assessment (Danielson, 2011). Elsewhere, Marshall (2013) believes that growth in educational setting results from the feeling of collective responsibility of the teachers and administrators which can be done through constant feedback make possible through systematic monitoring.

In research conducted by Kane and Staiger (2008), it was found that classroom observation could predict the level of learning gains by the individuals in such a setting. Elsewhere, in another study, it was found that children taught by teachers with better scores on classroom observation instrument

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showed a better gain in learning featuring better self-regulation (Grossman et. al., 2010; Araujo et. al, 2014). According to Farrell (2006), teachers can link their practice to real classroom interaction with their students. However, it is believed that classroom observation needs to be done in a meaningful, focused systematic way if it is supposed to produce the intended outcome for education (Vélez-Rendón, 2002).

In a study by Lawson (2011), it was found that the nature of the teacher's procedures, as well as his interaction with the students, could change as a result of the teacher's planning for his own learning and reformation. A further study shows that the majority of English language teachers in Spain expressed willingness for it although, by nature, it can be stressful due to its causing of external monitoring (Lasagabaster, 2011; Sierra, 2011).

In order to fulfill its objectives, a model was developed by Marzano (2011) which highlighted the importance of the goals of the teacher as a contributor to the learning process. In this model, the teacher's initiation, as well as active participations in the evaluation process, can push a successful education forward. To this end, both the teacher and the external evaluator (here, the observer) cooperate to make necessary reformations in the practice type and the interactions in the class.

Meanwhile, in order to work effectively, classroom observation needs to take some important point into consideration. Papay and Kraft (2015) believe that any evaluative measure on the teacher should address a wider perspective of growth which results from a cooperative development.

In another development, Nolan and Hoover (2010) believed that an effective observational evaluation needs to focus on the teacher as well as the learners' responsibilities while it tries to collect data from different sources available from the class which can happen as a result of the evaluator's training of the sound standards for such a purpose.

On the nature of the relationship between classroom observation and successful classroom interaction, Walsh (2006) believes that social interaction and the context where it happens cannot be separated from each other. In this perspective, classroom serves as a miniature society in which social interaction happens and classroom observation is the best means for realistic data collection as a basis for both data collection and diagnostic as well as prognostic measure. The significance of classroom observation as a window into classroom interaction becomes more certain when we understand that focusing exclusively on input (as the main component of language acquisition based on Krahen's (1985) input hypothesis) has been seriously criticized by later scholars in second language acquisition. According to Dornyei (2003), language learning cannot be minimized to input alone but it calls for the employment of qualitative interactive strategies which induce collaborative work among language learners.

The classroom climate is developed by the overall pattern of interaction between the students and the teacher. Interactional perspective to language teaching and learning, it is imperative on the teachers to be actively engaged in interactions with their students (Hamre et. al., 2012).

In another development, Long (2014) believes that much of the learning of language happens in class implicitly when learners make sense of what they hear or read in an interactive relationship in

the class both with their teacher and with other learners. However, there is strong evidence that peer interactions are not the same as interactions with an expert user of the second language (Sato, 2015), in that peers do not provide as much feedback as native speakers, or in the case of the class, as the teacher. Elsewhere, teacher Sato can teach specific interactional strategies to their learners which may include providing feedback to errors which increases their attention to language form as they are interacting with it. There is also important evidence on the role of the teacher as an individual who can integrate classroom activities with the real world needs of the students (Adams & Nik, 2014; Weaver, 2012).

3. METHODOLOGY

The present study followed a mixed-method design. The quantitative data in this research were collected from one developed 12-item questionnaire. The theoretical foundations of the revised questionnaire are based on Brown's interaction analysis (2001). This survey used the questionnaire as its medium of the instrument. The participants rated their opinions about each aspect on a 5-point Likert Scale – (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) no opinion, (4) agree, or (5) strongly agree.

For the qualitative analysis, focus group interview was executed which focused on the interactive aspects of the six classes (both the control group and the experimental one.

3.1 PARTICIPANTS

For selecting our study participants, at the very outset of the study, 200 learners of English as a foreign language at a pre-intermediate level of language proficiency in a language learning institute (Safir Language Institute) in the Iranian capital, Tehran were subjected to OPT (Oxford Placement Test). The purpose of using this test was to make sure of group homogeneity and also using its results as a means of the sampling procedure. Following the test, 90 of those whose scores were above and below the mean were selected as the participants of the present study. Then they were distributed randomly to 6 classes, each class consisting of 15 students. Following that, three classes were decided as the control group and the three others were considered as the experimental group. Meanwhile, the participants' age range varied from 22 to 34 and they included both genders with the Persian language as their mother tongue. Both the control group (which consisted of three 15-student classes (ten males, five females) and the experimental group (also consisting of three classes of 15 students, nine male, six female) received instruction as a treatment for one term taking two months. The sessions were held three times a week, each session taking 1.5 hours. In order to avoid intervening variables, the program was arranged in a way that the teachers in the experimental and control group were the same. To do that, three teachers which have the certificate of English teaching in the institute were randomly selected, and they taught the three classes in the control group on the odd days, and also the same teachers taught the three classes of the experimental group on the even days of the week.

3.2 INSTRUMENTS

For conducting the presents study, these instruments were used: first of all, for sampling and homogenizing the study participants, the Oxford Placement Test (OPT) was used. Meanwhile, the course book "American English File, book 2" (which is at pre-intermediate level) was used for teaching both the control group and the experimental group.

Also, a 12-item questionnaire was developed based on the following framework known as Foreign Language Interaction Analysis (FLINT). The other instrument used in the study was the class observation sheet used by the observer, which is a conventional tool of class observation used by the institute supervisor. Another instrument used for the present study was the IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 19, which was employed for statistical analysis.

3.3 INTERACTION ANALYSIS FRAMEWORK

For analyzing classroom interaction, several frameworks have been suggested. The most famous one was suggested by H.D. Brown (2001) (adopted from Moskowitz, 1971), which is known as foreign language interaction analysis (FLINT). In order to operationalize the study, we should first consider the items of the framework which is as follows:

In an interactive class, the teacher:

1. Deals with feelings: In a non-threatening way, accepting, discussing, referring to, or communicating an understanding of past, present, or future feeling of students.
2. Praises or encourages: Praising, complimenting, telling students why what they have said or done is valued. Encouraging students to continue, trying to give them confidence, confirming that answers are correct.
3. Uses ideas of students: Clarifying, using, interpreting, summarizing the ideas of students. The ideas must be rephrased by the teacher but still be recognized as being student contributions.
4. Asks questions: Asking questions to which the answer is anticipated.
5. Gives information: facts, own opinion, or ideas, Lecturing or asking questions.
6. Corrects without rejection: Telling students who have made a mistake the correct response without using words or intonations which communicate criticism.
7. Gives directions: Giving directions, requests, or commands that students are expected to follow; directing various drills; facilitating whole – class and small group activity.
8. Criticizes students' behavior: communicating anger, displeasure, annoyance, dissatisfaction with what students are doing.
9. Responding to the teacher with the student's own ideas, opinions, reactions, feelings. Students must now make a selection- Initiating participation.
10. Non-Verbal: Gestures or facial expressions by the teacher or the student that communicate without the use of words.

Base on the above Interaction Analysis framework, a questionnaire was adopted and developed suitable to be implemented for the study participants (English language learners in the present study). The questionnaire also included 12 items to which the study participants both in the control group and experimental group was supposed to provide answers on a 5-point Likert Scale: (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) no opinion, (4) agree, or (5) strongly agree.

1. The students did not feel fear to communicate in the class.
2. The students were given the chance to speak and communicate about their past, present, or future feeling of students.
3. The students were praised for what they said and were encouraged to continue communing.
4. The teacher sometimes used the ideas of students: interpreting, summarizing the ideas of students.
5. The teacher gave information using facts and his own opinion, or ideas.
6. The teacher corrects the students without rejecting them.
7. The teacher gives directions, requests, or commands that students are expected to follow.
8. The students are engaged in pair and group communication in class.
9. The students can criticize ideas in the class.
10. The students could use their own ideas, opinions or feelings in class communication.

11. Students were given enough chance and freedom to start a conversation.
12. Both the students and the teacher could also use non-verbal communication cues such as Gestures or facial expressions to communicate ideas.

3.4 FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW

Focus group is a tool for collecting qualitative data on a certain issue. It is an interview which is held like group discussion. As compared to other techniques of data collection such as questionnaire or observation, the interview may serve as a rich source for exploring people's inner feelings and attitudes which is highly desirable for obtaining information extracted from an insider experience point of view. Elsewhere by principle, qualitative research is designed to investigate the quality of relationships, activities, situations or materials (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003). As our research is on interaction, communicative activities between group members are given a particular value rather than just gathering opinions of people.

To conduct the focus group interview, the following list of the question was used by the mediator to ask the participants through which the group interview was conducted:

1. To what extent did the classroom teacher encourage the students to take part in group conversations?
2. Did the teacher give standard models for authentic conversations in the class by means of real samples?
3. Did the teacher use linguistic and non-linguistic clues (body language) to make the meaning clear?
4. to what extent were the students given the freedom to express themselves and get involved in interaction?
5. What was the status of teacher talking time and students' talking time in the class?
6. What was the status of using technological facilities in promoting class interaction?
7. How did the teacher and the students use the listening skill as a means of promoting interaction?
8. Were the students given the chance to look at the concepts in reading passages critically?
9. Were the students encouraged to get involved in group tasks and assignments?
10. Did the lessons and the approaches used for presenting them encourage critical thinking among the students?

4. PROCEDURE

Following the distribution of the study participants into the 6 classes, 3 of them comprising the control group and the 3 other serving as the experimental group, the English language course was held for each group 3 times a week. As stated earlier, 3 teachers were assigned to teach both the classes of the control group and the classes of the experimental group. The course was held based on the English learning textbook "American English File, Book 2", Oxford University Press. The course was based on communicative language teaching. The teachers were experienced ones having passes Teacher Training Courses (TTC) enjoying a record of around 5 years' experience of English teaching in the institute. One of them held a Bachelor of Science in English Literature and the other two held a Bachelor's degree and Master's degree in TEFL respectively.

For the control group, no class observation was done by the Institute supervisor during the term, while in the experimental group, 4 times class observation was done by the supervisor during the term. At the very outset of the whole course, the teachers were told that their classes on the even days (the classes of the experimental group) were going to be regularly observed. Each observation took 30 minutes and the observer wrote and filled out the observation sheet during the observation time.

Although data collection is not supposed to be done from the observation report, it is necessary for the observer to be well-informed of the criteria of an interactive language learning and interactive class environment. He tried to focus on the important points and aspects of the interaction between the students and the teacher and following each observation, the teachers were briefed on their performance as the class instructor. As stated, the control group did not receive any class observation during the whole term at all.

At the end of the whole course, the research questionnaires were distributed to the study participants in both groups (control and experimental). The students were asked to complete their surveys independently, without discussion with other students.

For the focus group interview as one of the parts of the present research, all 6 classes were interviewed in a separate focus group session where the class observer (institute supervisor) arranged the session and the students reflected on interview questions in group discussion. As focus group interviews are mostly conducted within one and a half hours, the group sessions' time was 1.5 hours in the present research. The questions of the interview were extracted from the general ideas reflected in the questionnaire, but with some modifications so that they could include most of the criteria of an interactive class.

As the process developed, the moderator introduced the questions one by one involving the students in discussion without expressing any value on the answers. Participants were encouraged to interact with each other and not merely respond to the moderator. In this way, the range and complexity of attitudes and beliefs could find a better chance to emerge.

All the class conversations between the interviewer and the students were recorded as a means for data collection. Later, the recorded interview sessions in all six classes were analyzed for further understanding the difference of the nature of the interaction between the control group and the experimental one.

5. DATA COLLECTION

In the present study, the main source of data collection was the 12-item questionnaire answered by the study participants both in the control group and the experimental one. In order to avoid observer-influence and minimize consciousness by the study participants, the questionnaire was distributed at the end of the term. The participants rated their opinions about each item of the Interaction Analysis questionnaire on a 5-point Likert Scale: (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) no opinion, (4) agree, or (5) strongly agree. The data collected from the questionnaire was used as a means for analyzing class interaction.

Elsewhere for a focus group interview, the data collection was done by means of a voice recording which was later followed by qualitative analysis of the recorded voice. As mentioned earlier, a 10-item list of questions was used as a baseline for data collection the focus group interview.

6. DATA ANALYSIS

For the quantitative section of the present research, a statistical procedure should be followed for

answering our research questions. As we will have two groups of study participants, one control and one experimental, and also since we want to compare the performance of the two groups based on the possible growth following the treatment period, t-test statistical analysis will be used. In order to do so, the data of the present study will be subjected to t-test analysis using SPSS software.

For analyzing the data on the focus group interview, the standards criteria for such interview were considered carefully which was based upon making a list of them the participants reactions to the questions as well as a consideration of the context of interaction in the focus group interview. To this end, a careful report of the inferences made of the interview served as the result of our analysis. In addition, the transcription of tapes was essential for data analysis which centered around reporting the summary of the main ideas.

7. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

For analyzing the data in the present study, both descriptive and inferential statistics need to be implemented. As for the descriptive statistical analysis, the data obtained from the study participants on the questionnaire were tabulated as follows:

Table 1: The mean value of the responses given by the participants in the control group and the experimental group to the questionnaire (each group N = 45).

Questionnaire Item	The control group		The experimental group	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
1	3.24	0.72	4.23	0.85
2	2.86	0.81	3.87	0.92
3	2.33	0.92	4.02	0.83
4	2.34	0.75	3.62	0.79
5	1.87	0.85	4.23	0.75
6	3.20	0.73	4.17	0.79
7	2.98	072	3.52	0.83
8	2.14	0.82	4.82	0.83
9	3.68	1.00	2.86	1.00
10	1.94	0.81	4.21	0.83
11	2.23	0.77	3.78	0.92
12	3.27	0.92	4.36	0.79

A look at the descriptive statistics of the results of the questionnaires show that in general, it seems that the classes which were observed by the external observer (here, the institute supervisor) show a higher performance with respect to interactive language teaching and learning criteria set by the Foreign Language Interaction Analysis (FLINT) framework. The responses in all items show a relatively higher score in the experimental group (the group with external observation) over the control group (the group without external observation). However, for a more accurate and sound judgment, inferential statistical analysis was performed on the data. To this end, the data obtained from the results of the questionnaire in both groups were subjected to t-test analysis, as the sample is presented in Tables 2 and 3.

Table 2: One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3.9					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
VAR00001	50.164	29	<0.001	16.43333	15.7633	17.1033
VAR00002	40.119	29	<0.001	15.66667	14.8680	16.4653

Table 4: One-Sample Test (Significance Level).

	Mean Difference	Test Value = 3.9				
		Bias	Std. Error	Sig. (2-tailed)	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower	Upper
VAR00001	16.43333	-.07889	.33112	.016	15.78652	17.02770
VAR00002	15.66667	-.12111	.40052	.016	14.81985	16.32770

The p-value in Table 2 is less than 0.001, which is smaller than 0.05, so the difference between the two groups is significant. We can conclude that class observation as an independent variable has a significant influence on the amount and quality of interaction in the class environment.

7.1 THE ANALYSIS OF FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW

This study investigates the influence of class observation by an outside observer on the interaction in the class environment between teacher and learners which can cause the efficiency of class and learning process. The result shows that by the observer the interaction between teachers and students increased which make the learning process easier and more efficient. It is in agreement with the previous studies such as Dornyei (2003) which presented the teacher and learners behave to each other was one of the main factors in learnings. The rationale for using focus group interview was that the elements of synergy and interaction between the group members as well as clarity of objective and the presence of skilled moderator can play an important role for understanding the phenomena in language interaction.

The result was drawn from the interview of the participants both the control group and the experimental group:

According to the students in the experimental group, the teacher encouraged conversation in the class by providing the students with model conversations. Also, the teacher used a variety of sources such as body language, eye contact, explanation and summarizing as well as paraphrasing for further clarification of the points and messages. Also as was found out in the interview, the students felt rather comfortable in conveying their feelings and expressing their thoughts in the L2 without feeling much stress. On the other hand, although the teachers in the control group classes also tried to encourage conversation in the class, this requirement was not pursued as strongly as that of the experimental group, which ended up to the fact that the time spent on interactive conversation between the students in the control group was overshadowed by the teacher's monolog. According to the results of the analyses of the interview, the learners in the control group did not feel so much free in expressing themselves in class in a process of active interaction.

Elsewhere, the teachers in the experimental group used technological facilities more than those in the control group, which was so attractive for the students as it was clear in their reflection of the class. Also in the experimental group, the students were more encouraged to get involved in active listening compared to that of the control group. This caused the learners in those classes to form an important concept in language learning which states that communication is not just about speaking, but also about listening. This principle is fundamental to interactive language learning. According to the students in the treatment classes, group reflection on the content of the reading passages was always followed by the teacher and the students which was reinforced by further critical thinking.

However, in the control group, there was not enough active involvement by all group members for the receptive skills including listening comprehension. Based on what was found from the focus group interview, the teacher offered the students many opportunities for group presentations and assignments, which was not as colorful in the control group. According to the results of the interview from the participants of the control group, the teacher most of the times gave the answer to the challenges in the reading or in any content of the lesson leaving not much room for collective class participation.

Based on the reflections made by all participants in both the control and experimental group, team-building exercises could help students sharpen both oral and written communication skills providing the students the chance to work in small groups while presenting them the chance to debate their opinions, take turns, and work together to achieve a shared target.

Also, according to comments made by participants in the experimental group, the classes were much more oriented towards the tasks and activities that fostered critical thinking while the classes in the control group mostly lacked such kind of orientation. According to the results of the focus group interview, the students in the experimental group were offered many opportunities for reflective learning in which the learners criticized their peers' performance in class tasks and activities as well as reflecting on the quality of their own learning. This could give rise to giving and receiving constructive criticism which is by nature an active feature of the interactive environment.

In general, we can state that the status of interaction in language skills development is so significant that this concept can be looked through from the perspective of both the teacher's role and students' role in the classroom environment. As for as classroom observation is concerned, a comprehensive analysis of the teachers' actions in class along with the students' reactions and vice versa need to be analyzed carefully in order to provide necessary external feedback from the institution or from those who are involved in action research.

A broader and more comprehensive and conclusive look at the result of the participants' responses to the questionnaire developed upon the framework shows that the teacher and the students are influenced by monitoring (here, observation) from an external side (here, the observer). The presence of the observer as an external factor has led to the realization of an interactive environment by both the teacher and the students. It has called on the teacher to be reactive towards the students' expression of themselves in L2 as a necessary condition of a sound, authentic interaction. It also shows that the teacher and the students are more encouraged to express themselves in communicative interaction when they are conscious of being monitored from outside or when they know that their performance is being evaluated.

Meanwhile, the results of the experiment show that classroom observation encourages a state of awareness in the teacher of the significance of creating an interactive milieu in the class where the students feel free to communicate naturally in a non-threatening environment. Also, classroom observation forces the teacher to quit a dominant controlling role characterized by only limiting himself and the process of language teaching to a providing monologue which does not usually end in the growth of students as active participants in the very act of communication. In addition, classroom observation makes the teacher conscious of the possibility of external judgments from

outside which can have executive and professional consequences to the effect that it may put him at probable risk of losing his face or even his job. Such a condition (here, the classroom observation and the observer) leads the teacher to avoid a traditional attitude towards teaching language and update himself with the requirements of interactive learning and teaching. Of course in many cases, the teachers know the basic features of interactive language class but may unconsciously lose track of those features because implementing them in an efficient way is a rather demanding task.

The role of the teacher as an interactor in the learning process can be better understood in the context of social perspective. According to Olsen & Kagan (1992), language learning happens as a cooperative activity which can be defined as group learning activities organized so that learning is dependent on the socially structured exchange of information between learners in groups where the learner and also the teacher are held accountable for learning and are motivated to increase the learning of others. In such a situation, which particular forms of interaction among people are expected to occur, which in turn would trigger learning mechanisms, but there is no guarantee that the expected interactions will actually occur. The present research shows that an external judgment (here, class observation) can increase the probability of the expected interactions to occur.

Classroom observation motivates the second language teachers to be primarily concerned about student achievement. When the teacher becomes more conscious of his class performance due to class observation, he tries to look for changes in the class to develop different kinds of interactions among the students which can help peers to perform the tasks and help each other in the process of communication. By principle, the phenomenon of a learning task is based on reciprocal interdependence among the members of the group and calls for mutual help. The students and teachers are involved in dynamic cooperation whereby they can construct a social atmosphere where personal development can happen more easily. This can be further explained in the context of Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which is defined as the difference between what a learner can do without receiving any help and what he can do after receiving help. In an interactive environment, the learners and also the teacher assist each other to fill the gap of ZPD through an interactive process. In other words, language development is more a matter of participation rather than acquisition.

Class observation makes the participants of the interaction process (class environment and its participants, i.e. the learners and the teacher) focus on their self-image and beware of their identity. By definition, identity is a socially constructed reality, it is relational, constructed and altered by how I see others and how they see me in our shared experiences and negotiated interactions (Pica, 1994). Meanwhile, class observation relates teacher identity to a socially constructed and on-going reality. Each person has a different personality profile and will, therefore, act on his or her environment. This comes along with the fact learners construct their knowledge on their own by associating new with prior information. The significance of the learner's interaction with his/her social and physical environment is here of great importance; the learner is at the center of the learning process while the tutor is seen as a facilitator, a guide.

8. CONCLUSION

Language learning is a co-construction through interactions rather than merely a cognitive

process to acquire linguistic rules or knowledge. Such a perspective brings a social turn by emphasizing the social nature of learning and investigating the complexity and dynamic social interaction involved in language learning processes where the emphasis is both on the social context as well as individual personal choices. The present investigation showed that classroom observation encourages the spirit within the team along with a feeling of responsibility for one's performance both as the learner and the teacher. By making both the learners and the teacher responsible for the task of learning, classroom observation activity can optimally serve as a means for professional development if it is looked through a positive constructive perspective.

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