

LESSON 5. TEXT-BASED ANALYSIS OF PEDAGOGICAL INTERACTION

The lesson familiarizes with variety of interactional strategies on the basis of films extracts. By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- closely read and analyze written transcripts of teacher–student interaction;
- identify verbal and paralinguistic strategies in film-based and classroom-based texts;
- compare different interactional styles, intentions and effects;
- transform film dialogues into pedagogically appropriate teacher talk for their own lessons.

CONTENT OF THE LESSON:

□ SPARK:

1. Warm-up discussion (5–7 minutes)

1. Think of one teacher (school or university) whose *speech* impressed you most.
 - What exactly do you remember: words, tone, pause, body language?
 - Did they speak more like *Ron Clark* or like a “traditional” teacher?
2. In pairs (or breakout rooms in Zoom) answer:
 - Why is it useful for future teachers to **read** and **analyze texts** of classroom interaction, not only *watch* videos?

Short whole-class feedback.

□ INPUT:

1. Read the text “Interactional Moves in Teacher Talk”

In pedagogical interaction, teacher talk is not only a way to transmit information; it is a powerful tool for shaping relationships, identities and learning opportunities.

Researchers such as Nunan, Walsh and Seedhouse emphasize that teacher utterances can be divided into different *interactional moves as strategies*.

Some common moves (strategies) are:

- **Initiation** – asking a question, giving a task, starting a topic.
- **Response** – learners’ answer, reaction, comment.
- **Feedback** – teacher’s evaluation, reformulation, encouragement, or follow-up question.

This pattern is often called **IRF** (Initiation–Response–Feedback). However, in more interactive classrooms, teachers go beyond simple IRF and use:

- **Probing questions** – follow-up questions that deepen thinking.
- **Revoicing** – teacher repeats or reformulates a student’s idea to highlight it.
- **Uptake** – the teacher takes a student’s idea and builds a new question or activity on it.
- **Affective moves** – empathy, praise, humour, personal comment.

In films about teachers, such as *The Ron Clark Story*, *Dead Poets Society* or *To Sir, with Love*, we can clearly see these strategies in action. By reading and annotating film dialogues as texts, you can become more aware of how language constructs pedagogical interaction.

2. Reading comprehension.

Answer the questions (in writing, in your notebook or LMS):

1. What is the IRF pattern?
2. Give one example of *Initiation* and one example of *Feedback* from a lesson you remember.
3. What is the difference between a simple IRF pattern and more interactive teacher talk?
4. Which interactional move do you personally like most as a student: probing questions, revoicing, uptake, or affective moves? Why?

3. Reading film-based text that combines extracts from *The Ron Clark Story* & *Dead Poets Society*.

Ron Clark: “Listen, I know where you all come from. I know this isn’t easy. But you are capable of more than you think. We all have our struggles, but that doesn’t define us. What defines us is how we respond to those struggles.”

Student: “But Mr. Clark, we don’t have what it takes to make it.”

Ron Clark: “No, you are not just ‘kids from the streets’. You are people with potential. What I see in this room is possibility, not limits.”

John Keating: “Why do I stand up here? Why do I teach? To make you think, to make you question, to make you challenge yourselves. You don’t need to live someone else’s life. You must find your own voice.”

Student: “But what if we fail?”

John Keating: “Failures are not the end. They are lessons. I’m asking you to be the best version of yourselves, not someone else’s idea of success.”

4. Close Reading & Annotation in Google Docs.

1. You should fill in the lines with appropriate moves (strategies) and comments to justify your choice.
 - Initiation_____
 - Affective move / Feedback_____.

Samples of comments:

- “Here Clark is reframing the student’s identity...”
- “Keating uses failure as a positive concept...”

5. Match the line of teacher talk with the interactional function.

Lines (A–F):

- A. “You are capable of more than you think.”
- B. “Why do I stand up here? Why do I teach?”
- C. “What defines us is how we respond to those struggles.”
- D. “Failures are not the end. They are lessons.”
- E. “You don’t need to live someone else’s life.”
- F. “So, tell me, who are you going to be?”

Functions (1–6):

- 1. Reframing failure
- 2. Identity redefinition
- 3. Initiating reflection
- 4. Empowering / boosting confidence
- 5. Challenging social expectations
- 6. Focusing on response, not circumstances

Students match A–F with 1–6, then check in pairs or in LMS quiz.

□ FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES:

1. Comparative Reading: Film Dialogue vs Classroom Transcript

(Google Docs or OneNote Class Notebook)

- 1. You should read two texts:
 - Text A – extract from the films: *Ron Clark* or *To Sir, with Love*).
 - Text B –classroom transcript with traditional IRF patterns, low degree of empathy, order manner.
- 2. Fill in the table.

Aspect	Text A (film)	Text B (traditional classroom)
Teacher’s goal		
Tone & attitude		
Type of questions		
Kind of feedback		
Effect on students		

Then write conclusion or inferences (5–6sentences). See sample:

“Text A is more/less effective because... In my future teaching I would prefer to use ... elements from it.”

2. Padlet: “Power Sentences” (Reading → Rewriting)

Enter the rubric “Teacher Sentences that Change Students’ Thinking” in Padlet.

Choose and post one of the strength sentence according to the given points:

- Original sentence (from Ron Clark / Keating / Thackeray etc.)
- Its function (motivation / identity / challenge / support)
- Rewritten version adapting it to your specific aims (teaching at university, IELTS preparation, pedagogical practice at schools).

The other students write comments in two sentences. See sample:

- “I like this line because...”
- “I would also add...”

3. Reading-to-Writing Transformation (Mini-Dialogue)

Individual written task (hybrid):

1. Choose 2–3 interactional functions which you like:

- motivating discouraged students
- reframing identity
- normalizing failure
- encouraging critical thinking

2. Write **mini-dialogue** (8–10 replicas):

- Teacher: ...
- Student: ...
- Teacher: ...

(at least 3 feedback/affective moves inside)

3. Put the paralinguistic symbols as in example:

- ↑ / ↓, (.), **stress**

Teacher: “I know grammar seems hard right now, but **this does not define you**.↑ (.)

What defines you is how you keep trying.↑”

4. Read the text Read the text “*Pedagogical Interaction Through Teacher Talk: A Discourse Perspective*” (taken from Walsh, 2011, pp. 28–45).

Pedagogical interaction represents a dynamic process in which teachers and learners co-construct meaning, negotiate understanding and shape classroom identities.

Contemporary researchers such as **Walsh (2011)**, **Nunan (1991)** and **Seedhouse (2004)** argue that teacher talk plays a decisive role in determining the quality of classroom communication. Teacher talk is not simply a vehicle for delivering content; it is a complex discursive system that can either facilitate or hinder meaningful learning.

One of the most influential frameworks used to analyse teacher–student interaction is the **IRF model** (Initiation–Response–Feedback). Although originally a simple structural pattern, IRF provides an important foundation for understanding how teachers manage interactional space. In traditional classrooms, IRF is often used

rigidly: the teacher asks a display question, a student responds, and the teacher evaluates the answer. In such cases, IRF may limit students' opportunities for extended discourse.

However, in more interactive and learner-centred environments, teachers expand IRF into a more flexible model. This includes **probing questions**, which push learners toward deeper reasoning, and **uptake moves**, where the teacher uses a student's response to generate a new question or activity. Another essential component is **revoicing**, a move in which the teacher restates or reformulates a learner's idea in a more precise or academically appropriate manner. Through revoicing, students feel validated and encouraged to participate further.

Equally important are **affective moves**, which involve the use of empathy, encouragement and positive reinforcement. Such features are visible in inspirational teaching films—"The Ron Clark Story," "Dead Poets Society," and "To Sir, with Love." In these films, teachers construct relationships not merely through instruction but through language that empowers, motivates and reshapes student identity. These teachers frequently use phrases that normalize failure, invite reflection, and foreground students' potential. Their discourse is characterised by supportive tone, strategic pauses and motivational narratives.

From a hybrid-learning perspective, the analysis of such interactional moves becomes even more relevant. Online platforms require teachers to be especially intentional with their linguistic choices because nonverbal cues may be limited. Therefore, understanding teacher talk through a discourse-analytical lens equips future educators with the tools needed to build rapport, manage classrooms, provide emotional support and maintain student engagement in both offline and online modalities.

Comprehension Questions.

1. What is the primary purpose of teacher talk according to Walsh, Nunan and Seedhouse?
2. Why can the IRF pattern be limiting in traditional classrooms?
3. Explain the functions of probing questions, uptake and revoicing.
4. What are affective moves, and why are they significant?
5. Why is the study of teacher talk especially important in hybrid environments?

6. Read the text “*Identity, Emotion and Persuasion in Inspirational Teacher Films: A Discourse Analysis*” (adapted from Farrell, 2019; Walsh, 2011; O’Connor & Michaels, 1993).

Inspirational teacher films provide rich material for analysing pedagogical interaction because they portray teachers who intentionally construct meaning, emotion and identity through language. In *The Ron Clark Story* (2006), Ron Clark consistently reframes his students’ self-perception by replacing deficit-based labels with empowering narratives. His discourse frequently includes positive identity markers such as “you are capable,” “I see possibility,” and “you can shape your environment.” These phrases demonstrate the teacher’s use of **identity reconstruction strategies**, where language serves to challenge students’ internalised limitations.

Similarly, John Keating in *Dead Poets Society* (1989) employs discourse that foregrounds autonomy, intellectual freedom and creative thinking. His teacher talk often includes rhetorical questions (“Why do I teach?” “What is your voice?”) which function as **initiating moves**, encouraging learners to reflect beyond academic boundaries. Keating’s discourse demonstrates a unique combination of emotional intensity and philosophical persuasion. He supports his verbal strategies with paralinguistic features such as slow pacing, increased volume during key emotional lines, and symbolic gestures like standing on the desk, all of which deepen the communicative effect.

In *To Sir, with Love* (1967), Mark Thackeray’s interaction with students illustrates how teacher authority can be built not through strict discipline, but through consistent respect, careful tone management and affective empathy. His talk emphasises dignity and self-worth, often using declarative structures (“You are individuals,” “Your future is what you make of it”) that position learners as responsible agents. Moreover, Thackeray frequently uses pauses and lowered pitch to signal seriousness, which enhances the emotional resonance of his message.

Across these films, a common pattern emerges: teachers rely heavily on a combination of **verbal persuasion, nonverbal reinforcement** and **interactional scaffolding**. Their language aims not only to transmit knowledge but to transform learners’ emotional and psychological states. This highlights the broader function of pedagogical interaction: shaping the learner’s worldview, not merely their academic performance.

Comprehension Questions.

1. How does Ron Clark reconstruct student identity through verbal strategies?
2. What rhetorical devices does John Keating use to expand student thinking?
3. How do paralinguistic features strengthen Keating’s message?
4. In what ways does Mark Thackeray use tone and pauses to create authority?
5. Identify common discourse strategies shared by all three film teachers.

□ASSESSMENT ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Format: Text-based analysis + short reflection (individual, written; can be submitted in LMS / Google Classroom)

1. The teacher transcribe of a film-dialogue.
2. The students write in the following manners:
 - a) Identify three interactional strategies (Initiation / Feedback / Affective move / Probing question / Revoicing).
 - b) For each strategy:
 - Give a quote
 - Explain its function (What is the teacher trying to do?);
 - How might a student feel or react?
 - c) The last paragraph reflection:
“What did I learn from this text-based analysis about my own future teacher talk? Which film teacher (Ron Clark / Keating / Thackeray / Watson / Tolson) is closest to my desired teacher identity and why?”

Criteria for evaluation (max. 1.5 scores):

Rationality (0.5) – identification and explanation of the used strategies appropriately.

Accessibility (0.5) – ideas comprehension and meaning or function opening.

Relevance & clarity (0.5) – language accuracy and direction to professional talk.

2. Fill in the SAC.

Nº	Key points	Know	Not well	Don't know
1				
2				
3				
4				

Glossary

text-based analysis – analysing interaction through written text (transcripts/dialogues), focusing on language choices and functions.

transcript – a written record of spoken interaction (often with pauses, stress, overlaps, intonation marks).

close reading – careful, line-by-line reading to notice meaning, strategy, intention, and effect.

annotation – adding comments, labels, and notes to a text (e.g., identifying moves like Initiation/Feedback).

teacher talk – the language used by the teacher to manage learning, relationships, and interaction. ([Taylor & Francis](#))

classroom discourse – language and interaction patterns in classroom communication. ([Taylor & Francis](#))

interactional move – a functional action in talk (initiating, responding, evaluating, probing, etc.). ([Amazon Web Services, Inc.](#))

IRF pattern (Initiation–Response–Feedback) – a common classroom interaction structure. ([Taylor & Francis](#))

Initiation – teacher starts a sequence (question, task, topic, instruction).

Response – learner reply (answer, comment, reaction).

Feedback – teacher’s response to learner contribution (evaluation, encouragement, reformulation, follow-up).

display question – a question where the teacher already knows the answer (often leads to short responses).

referential question – a genuine question where the answer is not known in advance (often increases extended talk).

probing question – follow-up question that deepens thinking (e.g., “Why?”, “Can you justify?”).

uptake – teacher uses a student’s contribution to build the next move/question/activity (i.e., “takes up” the idea). ([files.eric.ed.gov](#))

learner uptake – student response that follows teacher feedback (in feedback literature). ([Cambridge University Press & Assessment](#))

revoicing – teacher repeats/rephrases a student’s idea to highlight it, clarify it, or position it academically. ([jstor.org](#))

recast – teacher reformulates a learner’s incorrect utterance into correct form without explicit correction (common feedback type). ([Cambridge University Press & Assessment](#))

repair – strategies to fix trouble in interaction (self-repair/other-repair; correction moves).

affective move – empathy/praise/humour/personal comment that supports motivation and emotional climate.

stance – teacher’s expressed attitude/position (supportive, authoritative, ironic, etc.) through language.

identity construction – shaping learner/teacher identity through talk (e.g., “You are capable”, “You have potential”).

For Reading / Viewing

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9. Walsh, S. (2011). Sample PDF (selected chapters/tasks). ([Amazon Web Services, Inc.](#))
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11. Nunan, D. (1991). *Language Teaching Methodology: A Textbook for Teachers*. (Google Books record). ([Google Книги](#))
12. Nunan, D. (1991). PDF record (Archive mirror) – for access if your institution permits. ([ia800209.us.archive.org](#))
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15. Lyster, R., & Ranta, L. (1997). "Corrective Feedback and Learner Uptake." *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*. Cambridge page. ([Cambridge University Press & Assessment](#))
10. Lyster & Ranta (1997) full PDF (institutional mirror). ([escholarship.mcgill.ca](#))
"Teaching Style Portrayed in Dead Poets' Society Film" (article record). ([ResearchGate](#))
11. Witte (2008). "A semiotic analysis..." including *The Ron Clark Story* (PDF). ([core.ac.uk](#))