

Teacher Talk of Autistic Pre-Service Teachers in ELT Practicum: A FIACS-Based Analysis

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Abstract

Teacher talk plays a vital role in classroom interactions, particularly in English Language Teaching (ELT), where it significantly affects student learning and engagement. However, there is limited research on how autistic pre-service teachers manage communication in inclusive classroom settings. This study addresses this gap by examining teacher-student interactions led by an autistic pre-service English teacher in a seventh-grade inclusive classroom in Surabaya, Indonesia. A descriptive qualitative design was used, with data collected from six audio-recorded classroom sessions, transcribed, and analyzed using Flanders' Interaction Analysis Categories System (FIACS). The findings revealed that the teacher's talk was largely directive and lecture-based, with the most frequent behaviors being "giving directions" (14.85%), "lecturing" (12.73%), and "asking questions" (12.73%). Both indirect talk (28.11%) and direct talk (27.85%) were used in nearly equal proportions, while socio-affective behaviors such as praise (1.86%) and acknowledgment of feelings (3.98%) were less frequent. These findings highlight the challenges and adaptive strategies of autistic pre-service teachers, demonstrating how structured language and facilitative questioning coexist in inclusive ELT practice. This study contributes to inclusive teacher education and applied linguistics, offering insights into the communicative strategies of neurodiverse teacher trainees.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received: 09 September 2025

Revised: 16 April 2026

Accepted: 02 May 2026

KEYWORDS

Autistic Pre-Service Teacher, FIACS, Inclusive Education, Teacher Talk

How to cite this article (APA 7th Edition):

Saputri, T., Anam, S., & Munir, A. (2026). Teacher talk of autistic pre-service teachers in ELT practicum: A FIACS-based analysis. *Language Teaching Research Quarterly*, 54, 240–258. <https://doi.org/10.32038/ltrq.2026.54.10>

Introduction

In contexts such as Learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and Teaching English (ELT), a teacher's language is recognized as one of the most important factors in determining classroom learning opportunities. In addition to providing lesson content, teachers' use of language also contributes to establishing classroom management, building interpersonal relationships, and providing social support to students (Ahmed & Pierre, 2024). In fact, the teacher's language is the main medium of educational transmission, and most languages are considered the main means of communication in the classroom. The impact of teachers' language choice on student engagement, motivation, and learning outcomes has been shown by researchers to increase (Tao & Chen, 2024). Thus, the teacher's speech acts as an intermediary in the social process of knowledge creation and knowledge transfer. When speaking English outside of the classroom, the teacher's speaking style plays a more important role when English skills are limited or not at all. For students, it is often the main or only means of understanding. Indonesian studies have shown that teachers' communication styles stimulate or limit students' opportunities for target language practice and increase passive listening activities (Cahyani & Chotimah, 2023; Maulana et al., 2012; Rahayu & Suharti, 2023).

Similar observations have been made in other non-English-speaking contexts, where the balance between teacher- and student-centered discourse determines the degree to which students develop communicative competence (Wasi'ah, 2016). Internationally, have argued that dialogic teaching where teacher talk is deliberately structured to foster collaborative dialogue enhances not only student participation but also higher-order thinking skills. In addition, he stressed that reflective awareness of discourse in the classroom is fundamental for teaching development and professional growth (Solita et al., 2021). Therefore, analyzing teachers' discourse is not only about assessing school style, but also about understanding how classrooms function as a linguistic and social environment (Walsh, 2013).

The Flemish Interactive Analytical Category System (FIACS) is one of the most systematic and long-term methods for validating educational discourse. Developed in the 1970s, FACIS provides a classification system for language behavior in the classroom. In this study, we divide teacher speech into two main categories, direct and indirect, into multiple subcategories, such as teaching, informing, asking questions, absorbing student ideas, and listening to student comments. Quantifying the proportions of these categories is necessary to provide researchers with a comprehensive interactive profile of the class. FIACS is used in all education systems, from primary schools to universities, and is taught in a wide range of ways, from mathematics to language (Riad, 2023). The adaptability and

continued relevance of FIACS is demonstrated by the recent academic shift in inclusive classrooms and higher education settings. Despite its general use, FIACS has rarely been applied in contexts where teachers are neurodiverse. Most FIACS-based studies have focused on mainstream teachers and students. Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) has been analyzed, for example, in terms of students' learning difficulties, communication challenges and barriers to social relationships (Smith & White, 2020). Autistic students often have difficulty expressing ideas, interpreting nonverbal cues, and engaging in mutual communication (Ahlers et al., 2023). These challenges can influence academic learning and their social participation in the classroom. Therefore, largely in inclusive education research, how teachers can adapt to help autistic learners, using strategies such as simplified guidelines, scaffolding, or visual aids (McDougal et al., 2020).

By contrast, little attention has been paid to the number of autistic people entering teacher education programmes and preparing to become teachers. This discount is surprising because initial teacher training must demonstrate people's skills, not only in this area, but also in classroom management and interaction skills (Jellinek et al., 2022). Practical practices, in particular, test these skills, placing students in the real contexts of the classroom, where they must communicate effectively, respond to students' needs and adapt their language in real time. In the case of autistic teachers in training, this stage can be especially challenging due to autism and communicative differences, such as prioritizing structured routines, reducing socio-affective expression, or difficulty interpreting spontaneous responses. People with autism have been brought to the forefront and are particularly strong in the field of education, for example in terms of patience, good memory and attention to detail, which can lead to better learning outcomes. Current international research increasingly highlights the importance of involving adults, including teachers, in inclusive education. It is argued that neuromuscular theory has a role to play in the education system and that it focuses on the shortcomings of people with disabilities. It is argued that inclusive education should not only include students, but also teachers from diverse backgrounds. Wagland et al. (2025) have proposed that neuroscience should be seen as a transformative innovation in education, encouraging institutions to rethink their curricula, training programs and teaching methods. In the field of teacher education, research shows that professional experience of teachers with autism is essential through collaborative, reflective and mentoring experiences.

Applied to teachers with autism in the future, these findings indicate that communication in the workplace is not only a technical skill, but also a key element for identity formation and professional development. This study fills an important research gap in applied linguistics and inclusive education: the lack of empirical research on language use in education by teachers with autism. The language use of teachers with autism in early childhood education has not yet been investigated, but many studies have focused on

teacher-student interactions in regular classrooms and the research needs of students with autism (Holmes, 2022).

This research gap leaves important questions unanswered. Do teachers with autism model specific relationships compared to teachers without autism? Do they use a well-developed combination of leadership and coordination strategies to regulate group interactions? Do we communicate between English language and language learning in communicative practice? To answer this question, previous research on the interaction of English language with autism among 7th grade students was used. The class used the FIACS instrument. This study addresses the following research question: What frameworks and styles do teachers of students with autism use for teaching English, as measured by the FIACS items? The answer to this question has many practical applications. Firstly, this research expands the use of FIACS to a new context and demonstrates that it is possible to study classroom interaction beyond traditional teaching methods. Secondly, it highlights the communicative practices of teachers working with students with autism, a group that has received insufficient attention in applied linguistics and educational research. By identifying gaps and strengths in teacher training related to autism, this research supports the broader goals of inclusive education and neurodiversity acceptance. While there is a large body of literature on the discourse of English teachers with autism, very little research has been conducted from the perspective of students with autism. The current study fills this research gap by providing a framework for collaborative group processes (Villegas et al., 2022). This work not only enriches applied linguistics, but also contributes to the development of inclusive teacher training practices that support the work of teachers with multiple learning disabilities..

Literature Review

Teacher Talk in ELT Classrooms

This course is designed for students who want to participate in their native language (Riad, 2023). This course is designed for students who need to learn English. 70% of the students had good communication with the teachers, and the students discussed the importance of the essays and went beyond their opinions to gain knowledge. Our language helps you coordinate your practice. By participating in educational communication, students sang songs, and teachers sang songs in front of the students in the EFL classroom. Part-time students were part-time learners, while other part-time students were part-time learners who were emotionally involved in the learning process and connected to the school, curriculum, and visual materials (Muluneh & Amogane, 2025). Students in the best schools prefer to engage in various practices in the classroom. In the English course, students interacted directly with the content. In real life, the language of the time is used to introduce students to the language of that time (Hill, 2021; Huriyah & Augustinian, 2018). I was teaching the first three classes of 2025 when the course was disrupted due to the establishment of an English language school, and the problem was not resolved.

Applied linguistics, discussion writing, and language theory (ZSA) were introduced and later taught by me. As students read the book, it became easier to read the language in which the book was written (Long, 1996). Due to our autonomous culture, student volunteers participated in class discussions. The SLA team members presented an interactive and engaging text set in 2026: Argi Wadei Jen Kinua Is Zila Efekt, Ita Part-Appletolic Lingua Eracasten Ari Zila.

FIACS as a Tool for Interaction Analysis

Researchers often use the Flanders Interaction Analysis Categories System (FIACS) to systematically analyze classroom discourse. FIACS categorizes teachers' discourse into direct and indirect influence and includes activities such as lecturing, correcting, asking questions, and praising and criticizing student behavior. FIACS's main strength is that it provides quantitative data on various types of classroom interactions. This helps researchers compare how teacher-centered and student-centered classrooms function in different contexts. FIACS is commonly used in foreign language classrooms and general education (Bolourian et al., 2021; Khusnaini, 2019).

Research in Indonesia has shown that classrooms are often dominated by teacher lectures and corrections, with very little student participation (Martina et al., 2021). Similar results have been found in studies in Morocco and India.

Research published since 2025 has revived interest in FIACS, particularly in examining small changes in teacher behavior that help create a more communicative classroom environment. Recent studies have also shown that FIACS can be adapted to modern educational settings (Järvinen et al., 2025). For example, it has been effectively used in inclusive education classrooms.

Systematic reviews published in early 2026 have identified FIACS as a useful tool for analyzing classroom discourse in diverse and inclusive classrooms (Ha & Nhung, 2026). However, these studies also indicate that the utility of FIACS is limited in neurodiverse classrooms.

Classroom Interaction in Inclusive Settings

Inclusive education is a global movement. There is increasing attention to providing equal education for people with diverse needs, including autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Teachers are expected to understand the communication needs of students and support appropriate teaching and learning (Gómez-Marí et al., 2021). However, classroom interaction is often difficult (Strogilos et al., 2022). An international study published in late 2025 found that teachers' interaction skills are essential for inclusive education, especially when students have language difficulties, such as when they are learning English. Communication difficulties are more common in the classroom. To reduce these problems, students are trained to simplify texts and use different learning strategies

(Kistoro et al., 2021; Nejati et al., 2024). A study published in 2025 also warned that when teachers use too much language in their teaching, students with autism may feel isolated and have fewer opportunities to socialize with other students (Nascimento et al., 2025).

Autistic Teachers in Training

There is little research on autistic individuals in teacher education programs. From a neurodiversity perspective, experts argue that educational institutions need to recognize and value the strengths of autism (Botha & Gillespie-Lynch 2022; Woods, 2019). Policy discussions in 2025 and early 2026 emphasized the need for research on teachers with autism, rather than viewing teachers with autism as simply a problem for students. Teaching practices and internships are essential for the professional development of teachers with autism (Gil-Madrona et al., 2025). A study conducted in early 2026 found that classroom interactions during teaching internships help teachers construct their identities and gain professional recognition, especially for neurodivergent teachers (Sarchet, 2026).

Research Gaps

The research review identified three main gaps. First, teachers' classroom discussions are largely focused on teaching English content, not on improving interaction. Second, while the FIACS is a popular tool for examining classroom interaction, it is rarely used in neurodiverse classrooms. Third, most research on inclusive education does not focus on teachers with autism.

While a large body of research on inclusive education and classroom interaction was published in 2025 and early 2026, very little research has been conducted on classroom interaction among teachers with autism. Because of these differences, we do not have a clear understanding of how autistic teachers use language in the classroom, how they differ from non-autistic teachers, and how this impacts inclusive education and teacher training.

Method

Research Design

The study used descriptive and qualitative case-studying methods combined with a simple statistical analysis. The case study method has been chosen because it helps to study the classroom activities in detail in the context of a real classroom situation. The main goal of the study was to study the communicative behaviour of an autistic English teacher while teaching an hour-long practical class in an inclusive setting. Although the single case study has some limitations, it is very useful for a thorough understanding of the subject. Given the lack of research on autistic teachers in applied linguistics and inclusive education, it was considered appropriate to carry out a specific case study to understand the challenges they face and the strategies they are employing. This research approach has helped capture natural interactions in the classroom, which cannot be easily analyzed through tests or

questionnaires. In addition, it helps ensure that the analysis is clear and robust. The main analytical instrument used was the Flanders Interaction Analysis Category System (FIACS). FIACS helps teachers to classify classroom discussions into direct and indirect categories. This tool is especially useful for research related to the teaching of foreign languages. The FIACS has been used successfully in previous research on foreign language learning, so it has been very suitable for this exam. Simple percentage calculations were used to protect qualitative findings with quantitative ones. This has helped strike a balance between concrete explanations and clear evidence. Future researchers may replicate this approach in similar classes, both in qualitative analysis and in simple quantitative size.

Participants and Background

The participant in this study was a teacher of English as a foreign language with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). She completed her teaching internship in an inclusive seventh-grade classroom at a public secondary school in Surabaya, Indonesia. The internship was a mandatory part of the teacher training program and lasted approximately six weeks. The classroom consisted of 25 students, including both general and special education students. The students were aged 12 to 13 years old and were studying English as a foreign language according to the school curriculum. They had two English classes per week, each lasting 45 minutes.

This research was not focused on student academic performance. Rather, it focused on classroom communication techniques and the interaction between teachers and students. Participants were selected on the basis of their limited research on inclusive education for teachers with autism and English-speaking learners. The communication techniques used by teachers with autism and the difficulties they face are both revealed in this case-by-case analysis. In order to see if this study can be applied or improved in a comparable educational setting, the basic data are provided to other researchers.

Data Collection

Data were collected in six sessions of six classrooms. Each session lasted about 45 minutes. In total, about 270 minutes were recorded in the classroom. The main source of data was audio recordings of classroom interactions, along with observation notes. A digital audio recorder was installed in the classroom to clearly record all interactions between teachers and students.

The researcher acted only as an observer and did not participate in classroom activities. The researcher also looked at classroom conditions, such as seating arrangements, gestures, and other wordless actions. After each session, field notes were written to record classroom situations and observations that could not be clearly obtained in the audio recordings. These observations were written after each class to capture factors that may influence classroom interactions. The combination of audio recordings,

observations, and field notes contributed to improving the accuracy and reliability of the data.

Tools

The tool used for the analysis was the Flanders Interaction Analysis Category System (FIACS). The FIACS classifies teacher debates into seven categories, divided into types of direct and indirect communication (Nasir et al., 2019). The FIACS coding sheet was somehow adapted to be compatible with Indonesia's English Language Classroom (EFL). However, the original FIACS categories were retained to maintain consistency and importance.

Coder training and pilot testing

Two programmers trained in applied linguistics participated in the coding process. They received adequate training on the definitions of the FIACS categories. The training included guidance and hands-on rehearsals, using short audio samples, to resolve inconsistencies and improve accuracy. This helped to ensure a consistent understanding of the interaction categories.

A pilot test was carried out with 10-minute data that did not enter the original exam. This helped to strengthen the coding process and contributed to the adaptation of the FIACS categories to better reflect autistic communication styles. To test reliability, two programmers independently coded 20% of the transcriptions. Reliability was calculated using Cohen's kappa among the raters, i.e., 0.84. That showed a high degree of consensus. The discrepancies were discussed until an agreement was reached. This ensured that the coding process was reliable and suitable for this exam.

Data Analysis

Data analysis included transcription, segmentation, coding, surveying, and interpretation. First, all audio recordings were converted into written texts, clearly identifying the speaker and the sequence of interactions. The interaction units are coded using the FIACS categories. The cross-cutting discussion included acceptance, praise and questions, as well as direct debate, reporting and criticism.

The frequency of each category was calculated and percentages were calculated using the formula $P = f/N \text{ of } 100 \times$.

This formula is clearly expressed so that other researchers can repeat the analysis. The results are presented in tables that show the distribution of the different types of teachers' discourses. The examples of the selected classroom have been qualitatively analyzed. This combination of numbers and examples helped to increase clarity and depth.

Methodological Rigor

A number of measures have been taken to ensure the quality of research. Credibility was achieved using multiple data sources and with consensus among programmers. The transfer was certified by providing detailed information about the participant and the classroom context. Reliability was ensured by keeping coding records and analysis decisions clear. In addition, it takes into account the potential tendency of documented researchers and researchers. These steps follow the standards approved for qualitative research and enhance the credibility of the study.

Researcher Reflection

The researcher's background was carefully analyzed. The principal investigator is an autistic linguist with professional experience. Although he was trained in discourse analysis, the researcher realized the risk of applying a purely medical point of view to autistic communication. To avoid this, constant self-reflection was carried out throughout the study. After each observation and coding session, notes were written to record conclusions and reflections. The opinions of autism education experts were also used to refine interpretations. This vision contributed to maintaining ethical responsibility and balanced analysis.

Results

This section discusses the distribution of the different types of teacher lectures used by an autistic English teacher, English Teaching (ELT) into six sessions in an inclusive classroom. The data are presented in a descriptive manner, accompanying the frequencies, percentages and comparisons between sessions, accompanied by statistical tests of reliability and stability throughout the sessions. To enrich the quantitative findings, illustrative transcription passages are given to set an example and explain each category of FIACS. Passages are presented in English from the original classroom to capture the natural flow of interaction. Tables and images are introduced to summarize, where appropriate, the divisions. Interpretative comments are intentionally rejected and discussed in the discussion section.

Coding Reliability

The reliability of the coding was ensured by double analysis. Two programmers independently analyzed 20% of the transcripts using the FIACS space. The agreement between coding was 94%, calculating Cohen's kappa $\kappa = 0.87$, which indicates high reliability and a consistent application of the categories. Disagreements, particularly over the separation of "speech" and "giving orders", are resolved through discussion until agreement is reached. This level of conformity meets the standards reported in the pre-FIACS studies and confirms the robustness of the dataset.

Overall Distribution of Teacher Talk Categories

In the six sessions, the conference movements of a total of 211 professors were codified. Table 1 presents the distribution of frequencies and percentages, along with short excerpts exemplifying each category.

Table 1*Frequency and Percentage of Teacher Talk Categories (N = 211)*

Category	Frequency	Percentage	Illustrative Excerpt
Accepts feelings	15	3.98%	T: "Okay, before we close our lesson by reciting alhamdulillah together. Thank you very much." (Session 2)
Praise/encouragement	7	1.86%	T: "Good job." (Sessions 2, 4, 5)
Accepts/uses student ideas	36	9.54%	S: "More expensive." — T: "Excellent, okay." (Session 5)
Asking questions	48	12.73%	T: "The sender of the message is Isabel, Charlie, Isabella, or Christopher?" (Session 3)
Lecturing	48	12.73%	T: "Simple past tense is used to refer to completed actions in the past." (Sessions 1, 4)
Giving directions	56	14.85%	T: "Exercise number two, create a sentence using simple past tense, then read it aloud." (Session 4)
Criticizing/justifying authority	1	0.27%	T: "No, that answer is not correct. Try again." (Session 6)

The most frequent categories were giving directions (14.85%), asking questions (12.73%), and lecturing (12.73%). Together, these three accounted for over 40 percent of all teacher talk. Moderately frequent was accepting/using student ideas (9.54%), while categories associated with affective or evaluative communication were used infrequently: accepts feelings (3.98%), praise/encouragement (1.86%), and criticizing/justifying authority (0.27%).

Direct vs. Indirect Talk

The seven FIACS categories were collapsed into two overarching groups: indirect talk (accepts feelings, praise/encouragement, accepting/using student ideas, asking questions) and direct talk (lecturing, giving directions, criticizing/justifying authority).

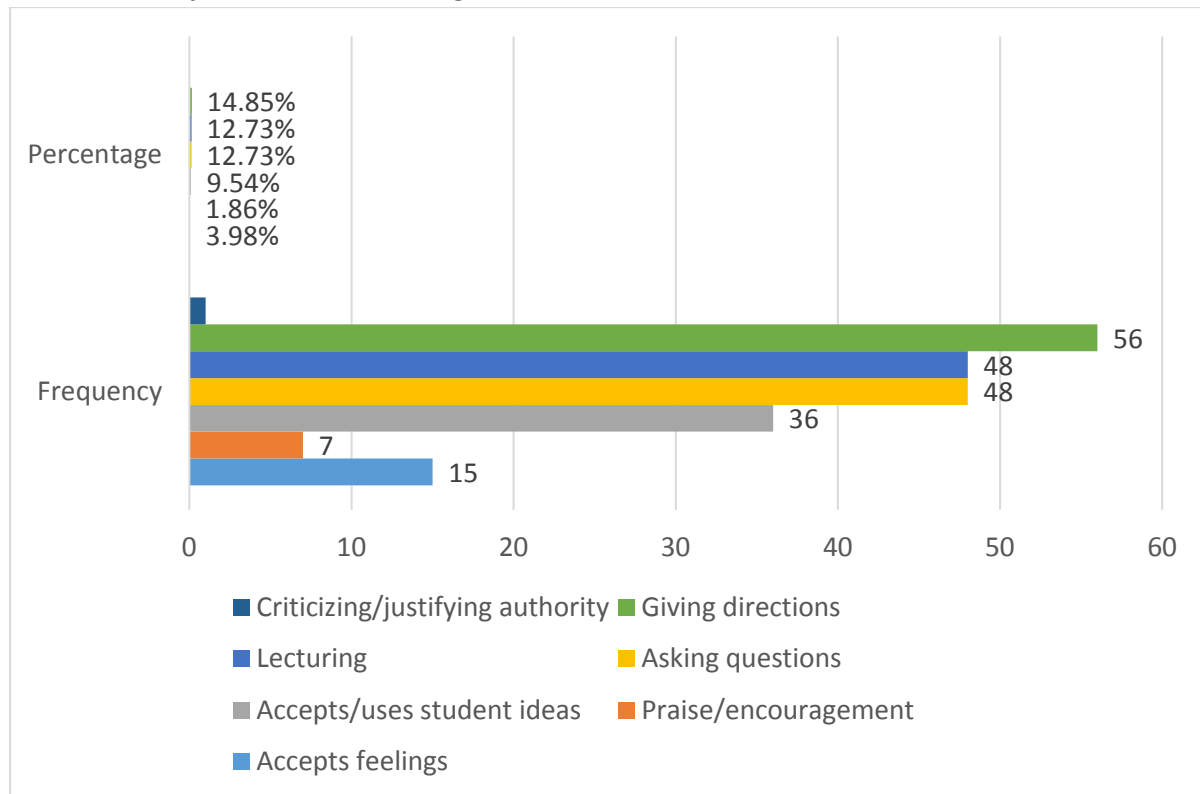
Table 2*Proportion of Direct and Indirect Teacher Talk*

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Indirect talk	106	28.11%
Direct talk	105	27.85%

As Table 2 indicates, 28.11% of the teachers' statements were indirect, and 27.85% were direct. A chi-square test revealed that the difference was not statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 0.02, p > 0.05$), confirming that the autistic teachers used both styles in equal proportions.

Complementing this data, Figure 1 shows the relative frequency of each FIACS category, highlighting the predominance of instructional categories such as "teaching," "lecturing," and "asking questions," and the relative rarity of affective categories such as praise and acceptance of feelings.

Figure 1
Distribution of Teacher Talk Categories in FIACS



Sessional Patterns

To test whether the models vary over time, the distribution of the lecture of professors was analyzed separately for each of the six sessions. Table 3 shows the distribution of the program.

Table 3
Teacher Talk by Session (Frequencies)

Category	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	Total
Accepts feelings	2	3	2	3	2	3	15
Praise/encouragement	1	1	1	1	2	1	7
Accepts/uses student ideas	5	6	5	7	6	7	36
Asking questions	7	8	7	9	8	9	48
Lecturing	8	8	7	9	8	8	48
Giving directions	9	10	9	10	9	9	56
Criticizing/authority	0	0	0	1	0	0	1

The analysis of the session shows consistency: the three main categories were used repeatedly in all subjects. A test of independence indicated that the distribution of the

categories did not vary significantly between sessions ($\chi^2 = 12.7$, $df = 30$, $p > 0.05$). Thus, the teacher's interactional profile remained stable over time.

Illustrative Excerpts by FIACS Category

While percentages provide a broad overview, excerpts demonstrate how teacher talk manifested in practice. Each category is illustrated below with examples from the transcripts.

Accepts Feelings

This category occurred 15 times, typically in closing routines.

- T: "Okay, before we close our lesson by reciting alhamdulillah together. Thank you very much." (S2)
- T: "Good afternoon, everyone. I appreciate your focus today." (S5)

Praise/Encouragement

Praise was rare, occurring only seven times.

- T: "Good job." (S2, S4, S5)
- T: "That's correct, well done." (S6)

Accepts/Uses Student Ideas

This occurred 36 times and often involved affirming correct answers.

- S: "More expensive." — T: "Excellent, okay." (S5)
- S: "It is taller." — T: "Yes, that's right. Good." (S3)

Asking Questions

Questions were frequent (48 instances), used to check understanding or elicit recall.

- T: "The sender of the message is Isabel, Charlie, Isabella, or Christopher?" (S3)
- T: "What is the past tense of go?" — S: "Went." (S4)

Lecturing

Lectures occurred 48 times, typically to provide explanations.

- T: "Simple past tense is used to refer to completed actions in the past." (S1)
- T: "Comparative degree is formed by adding '-er' or using 'more.'" (S5)

Giving Directions

This was the most frequent category (56 instances), used for classroom tasks.

- T: "Exercise number two, create a sentence using simple past tense, then read it aloud." (S4)
- T: "Open your book to page 37 and complete the dialogue." (S2)

Criticizing/Justifying Authority

This was the rarest category (one instance).

- T: "No, that answer is not correct. Try again." (S6)

Summary of Findings

In total, 211 teacher talk moves were identified across six lessons. The teacher relied most heavily on instructional categories giving directions, lecturing, and asking questions which together comprised more than 40 percent of total talk. Acknowledging student ideas appeared moderately often, while socio-affective categories such as praise, accepting feelings, and criticism were rare, accounting for less than 6 percent combined. When collapsed into direct versus indirect categories, proportions were nearly equal, with no statistically significant difference. Session-level analysis revealed consistency across time, with stable use of categories from lesson to lesson. These descriptive findings provide a detailed empirical profile of the teacher's interactional style, forming the basis for interpretation in the Discussion.

Discussion

The study findings show that inexperienced teachers with autism rely mainly on oral classroom instruction, especially lectures and instruction, and that cross-functional interaction strategies, such as asking questions and accepting students' ideas, are also present to a significant extent. This interaction model proposes an instructional method that emphasises clarity and structure, while taking into account the opportunities for student involvement. The results deliberately show the balance of people, institutions, and cultural influences, rather than just the teacher-centred view.

One possible explanation for the preponderance of teaching is that it is a practical response to the demands of classroom management and the communication priorities associated with autism. Differences, when framed in clear language and procedures, remove uncertainty and provide consistent indications of interactions. According to previous research, autistic people often prefer routines, explicit expectations, and controlled interactions, especially in social contexts as complex as a classroom. In this analysis, the conference serves as a stable platform for content delivery and contributes to completing the flow and tasks of the classroom. These findings are consistent with previous work and suggest that structured strategies for structured language teaching may be adaptable and not a deficit indicator, particularly for teachers with autism, who are navigating interaction profiles in real time.

At the same time, the presence of transversal language, especially the asking of questions and the recognition of the ideas of the students, reflects more than the rigid adherence to the lectures directed. Although many of the questions observed were closed-ended, they created openings for interaction that required student participation and oral responses. This finding is significant because it casts doubt on whether teachers with autism do not have flexibility of interaction. Instead, the data suggest that teachers selectively use questions as a controlled form of student engagement, while maintaining predictability of interaction. These practices are consistent with sociocultural and interactionist

perspectives on access to the second language, which can also contribute to the development of the language through limited types of discourses.

One of the most striking findings was the low use of socio-affective discourse, which includes praise of students' emotions and explicit recognition. Although socio-affective strategies are related to motivation and relationship building, their limited presence in this study may reflect challenges related to emotional expression and interpretation, rather than a lack of pedagogical concern. Studies on autism have consistently found differences in socio-affective communication, especially in spontaneous emotional responses (Conti et al., 2019). In this context, the low frequency of praise does not necessarily indicate remoteness, but may signal an alternative communicative profile in which help is provided through clarity, coherence and task-oriented orientation. However, the lack of socio-affective dialogue raises important questions about how students perceive encouragement and emotional support in classrooms led by teachers with autism (Hartas & Kuscuoglu, 2020).

Compared to previous studies, the results coincide and are disseminated with existing studies. A study similar to that of research conducted in the EFL contexts of Indonesia, which confirms the preponderance of teacher-led discourse. However, the rather high proportion of cross-cutting dialogue observed here suggests a more subtle shift towards more accessible interaction, which may be due to teacher education reforms that emphasize communicative language teaching. Unlike studies conducted in Western contexts, in which socio-emotional categories predominate, the interaction profiles documented in this study highlight the cultural and contextual variants of teachers' language use, as well as the different communicative strategies used by teachers with autism. The observed interaction patterns can be explained through the meeting point between individual, institutional and cultural factors. At the individual level, communicative characteristics of autism, such as structural priority, reduced spontaneous emotional expression, and reliance on routines, can influence teachers' discourse priorities. Institutionally, the practice environment frequently emphasizes control, effectiveness, and adherence to subject plans, reinforcing the use of didactic discourse. Culturally, Indonesian classrooms have traditionally placed teachers as authoritarian figures, structuring interaction more and legitimizing interactions more. Together, these factors help explain why didactic discourse has become the protagonist, while transversal strategies have been implemented in a more controlled way.

From a theoretical point of view, the discovery calls into question the simple dichotomy between teacher-centered teaching and student-centered teaching. The almost identical use of direct and indirect speech demonstrates that the autistic teacher can create a mixed style of communication. This style combines clear control with selective comfort. In inclusive education, these results recognize that we should move away from deficit-based perspectives of autistic teachers. Instead, their strengths, such as clarity, logical

flow, and systematic teaching, should be recognized and respected. From the point of view of second language learning, the use of consultation demonstrates that autistic teachers can make a strong contribution to the input-output process of language learning.

However, the study also has limitations. The focus on only one teaching context reduces its wider application. The use of FIACS helps identify interaction patterns, but it does not explain teacher intention or student experience. Future research should use comparative and long-term studies. It should include qualitative interviews, reflective practices, and analysis of teacher development over time and across settings. Expanding research beyond one cultural context will help us better understand how institutional and cultural factors influence neurodivergent teaching. Consequently, this research demonstrates that teachers with autism can successfully navigate inclusive classrooms through the combination of structured language teaching and selective teaching strategies. Despite limited oral communication, despite its great impact on social interactions, teachers showed adaptive practices that prioritize clarity, predictability, and controlled participation. These findings highlight the special challenges and contributions of teachers with autism and reinforce the need for inclusive educational models of teachers who recognize and accept their neurodivergent professional identities. Therefore, this research provides an important contribution to the global discourse on the evolved nature of inclusive teaching and ELT teacher training.

Conclusion

This study shows in the classroom the strengths and challenges of dialogue, which an autistic English teacher represents in the practice of TL in an inclusive environment. The teacher's confidence in direction and discourse preferred clarity and structured communication, and the use of questions and the occasional acceptance of students' ideas reflected the efforts. At the same time, he highlighted the limited use of socio-affective conversations, such as sentiment recognition or sentitional recognition, the numerous communication barriers around autism. Together, these models show a characteristic interaction profile that combines structure and thematic ease, which helps to understand how neurodiversity teachers relate to students.


The importance of these findings is a consequence of the dissemination of the field of applied linguistics and inclusive education research. By applying the FiACS to an autistic teacher in training, this research opens a dialogue of student-centered perspectives from the perspective of the autism research teacher. It shows that autistic educators bring valuable strengths, such as soundness, explanation, and bias, and that they require specific support to develop socio-active strategies to improve the learning climate.


Future research should build on these perspectives in three main ways. First, comparative studies should be carried out with teachers without autism and non-autistic to highlight the similarities and differences in communication styles. Second, longitudinal


designs are necessary to analyze how autistic teachers' interaction strategies with experience, confidence, and professional mentoring evolve. Third, mixed-methods approaches, which combine FIACS coding with interviews, journal reflections, and student perspectives, would give a richer and more holistic understanding of autistic teachers' discourse.

In short, this study contributes to increasing the recognition of the neurodiversity of ELT teachers. Supporting autistic teachers through inclusive training, mentoring and policies can not only improve their effectiveness, but also strengthen the diversity and resilience of teacher education around the world.

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Acknowledgements

The author acknowledges the participant and the institutional program for their cooperation and support in facilitating this study.

Funding

This research received no external funding.

CRedit Authorship Contribution Statement

Tiyas Saputri: Conceptualization, Methodology, Investigation, Data Curation, Writing – Original Draft, Writing – Review & Editing, Visualization, Project Administration

Syafiul Anam: Conceptualization, Methodology, Formal Analysis, Validation, Writing – Review & Editing, Supervision

Ahmad Munir: Conceptualization, Methodology, Formal Analysis, Validation, Supervision; Writing – Review & Editing, Resources

Generative AI Use Disclosure Statement

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools were used solely for language editing and clarity improvement. AI tools were not used for data generation, data analysis, or interpretation. All conceptualization, analysis, and final decisions are the sole responsibility of the author.

Ethics Declarations

World Medical Association (WMA) Declaration of Helsinki–Ethical Principles for Medical Research Involving Human Participants

Ethical approval for this study was obtained from the appropriate institutional authority prior to data collection. Written informed consent was obtained from the participant and all relevant institutional stakeholders before the recording of synchronous online practicum sessions. Participants were informed of the study's purpose, procedures, and their rights, including the right to withdraw at any stage without consequence. All data were anonymized at the point of transcription, and no personally identifiable information is reported in this study.

Competing Interests

The author declares that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this article.

Data Availability

The data underlying this study consist of recorded and transcribed classroom interactions. Due to ethical restrictions and participant confidentiality, these data are not publicly available. Data may be made available by the author upon reasonable request and subject to institutional ethical approval.

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