

INTERDISCURSIVITY OF PEDAGOGIC DISCOURSE IN THE ESL CLASSROOM IN PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Abstract

The analysis of pedagogic discourses in the classroom can reveal a great deal about teachers' interpretation and implementation of the curriculum. Studies by previous scholars have mainly described pedagogic discourses at the surface level but neglected addressing its relevance to the curriculum. As a result, discourse practices underlying pedagogic discourses are neither identified nor explained at the fundamental level. The study reported here was carried out to identify and interpret the practices of interdiscursivity in pedagogic discourse and to relate these discourse practices to the demands of curriculum implementation. Data comprising six recordings of pedagogical discourse during ESL teaching and learning sessions in four primary schools in the state of Kelantan, Malaysia was analysed using the discursive practice dimension. Results reveal five types of discourse used by teachers in the classroom, namely requirement, argumentation, notification, description, and narration. However, only one type of discourse was used by the students in the classroom that is, responding. Overall, teachers were found to dominate the pedagogic discourse in the classroom. This indicates that the demand of the current curriculum for a student-centred classroom culture does not seem to have been implemented. This study is expected to provide a new dimension in pedagogical discourse analysis, specifically for teachers.

Keywords: Interdiscursivity, Pedagogic Discourse, Instruction, Description, Exposition, Argumentation, Classroom

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The significance of English in the Malaysian education system is evident in the teaching of English in primary and secondary school levels as a second language after the national language¹ (Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia² 2001). The English Language Integrated Curriculum for Primary Schools, commonly known as KBSR³, is intended to enable students to master English at the foundational level. The KBSR has a clear common purpose: to prepare students with basic skills and knowledge of English to communicate in speech and writing, both within and out of the classroom. The main objectives of the KBSR are to ensure that students are able to (a) listen to and understand simple spoken English in certain discourse contexts, (b) ask and answer questions, speak and present themselves to others by using simple English, (c) read in order to understand, enjoy and obtain information from various English texts, (d) write and share ideas in simple English, (e) express an awareness and appreciation of moral values and love towards the nation (Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia 2001). In line with the national education philosophy, the English syllabus was designed with the aim of producing Malaysian citizens who are knowledgeable and competent, who possess high moral standards, and who are responsible and capable of achieving a high level of personal well-being and of contributing to the harmony and betterment of family, society and nation (Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia 2001).

Given that the ESL classroom is unique and complex, and, as Walsh (2006) points out, that classroom discourse is a problematic medium due to the differences in the backgrounds, expectations and perceptions of the language learners, together with the status of the teacher, the KBSR implementation calls for a transformation in pedagogical culture. It requires that students play a more active role than the teachers in the classroom. For example, to enhance students' listening skills, teachers are required by the KBSR to introduce short stories, songs and poetry. Subsequently, students play their part by describing the information they have heard, retelling, and illustrating the details of the story, song or poem without teacher intervention (Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia 2003). This is to train the students to communicate, answer questions, think and ask questions in simple English (Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia 2001). Student-centred pedagogical practices are emphasised in fulfilling the requirements of the KBSR. All teaching related matters, be they teaching methods, discourse or instructional materials, need to be student-centred and appropriate to students' abilities (Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia 2003). The teacher's role is to stimulate students to communicate in English as much as possible. Teachers need to provide more opportunities for students to speak up in class. This may boost students' confidence in communicating in English. Such opportunities include participation in the staging of English drama. These group activities can encourage students to communicate among themselves in English. In addition, teachers should also encourage students to communicate in English with other teachers in the school (Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia 2003).

According to Ellis (2000: 209), "learning arises not *through* interaction, but *in* interaction". The interaction patterns found in classroom discourse are special, and unique, different from those found in content-area subjects. This is because the linguistic forms used are simultaneously the objective of a lesson and the means of achieving those objectives. Therefore, an understanding of classroom discourse is essential for teachers to establish and maintain good communication practices (Walsh 2006).

Research in English language education in Malaysian schools is active and there have been many studies conducted by earlier researchers. However, most previous studies have skimmed only the surface of pedagogic discourse without probing more deeply into its fundamentals. These studies investigate only the superficial aspects of discourse such as discourse structure and discourse strategies. Rajan (2006) and Chong (2006), for example, describe the discourse strategies used in pedagogic discourse, while Noor (2006) describes the external structure of discourse used by teachers. These studies do not probe the association between pedagogic discourse and the current requirements of the KBSR, in particular, the question of how well and to what extent the KBSR has been implemented in English classes.

Other kinds of discourse studies that interested earlier researchers were those categorised as textual analysis of discourse. In this study, pedagogic discourse is viewed as the the result of the realisation of two sets of language choices: the first being a "regulative register, having to do with the goals, purposes and directions of the teaching-learning activity" and the other, an "instructional register, having to do with the 'content' to be taught and learned." (Christie 1995). Pedagogic discourse was not fully explored by earlier researchers to identify the hidden practices behind certain pedagogic discourses. Its association to curriculum was also ignored by such studies. Examples of studies using this approach include those by Varugheese (2005), Salleh (2006) and Rosniah Mustaffa et al. (2009).

Earlier studies also tended to focus on one of the participants in the classroom, either the teacher or the student, so the whole teacher-student interaction in the classroom is not covered. Examples of this type of study include studies by Chong (2006), Noor (2006) and Salleh (2006) who used only the teacher discourse data, whereas studies by Rajan (2006) and Varugheese (2005) used only the student discourse data. In contrast, the study reported here includes data from both parties, which makes it a balanced discourse study. While the study by Rosniah Mustaffa et al. (2009) also used balanced data, it had a different scope and aim.

This study of the pedagogic discourse in the ESL classroom focuses on research questions unexplored by earlier researchers, which aim to identify and interpret interdiscursive practices that exist in teacher-student discourse, and subsequently formulate and explain the relationship between interdiscursive discourse and English KBSR implementation. 'Interdiscursivity' refers to the mixing of discourse types, otherwise known as genre or style or activity type, that are used in the process of producing discourse (Fairclough 1992). The objective of interdiscursivity studies is mostly directed towards identifying the types of discourse used in the production of the discourse being studied. It can also be defined as a description of discourse type, genre, or style within a discourse (Idris 2006). In this study, the interdiscursive processes in pedagogical discourse are examined in relation to the implementation requirements of the current curriculum. Aspects of this discourse practice were analysed for both parties in the discourse, that is, the teacher and the students.

The present study is situated within a theoretical framework of discourse analysis pioneered by Fairclough (1995) which analysed discourse from three dimensions, namely textual, discursive practices and socio-cultural processes. However, in this study, only the dimension of discursive practices was studied. The analysis aims to interpret the process of production, distribution and consumption of discourse (Fairclough 1992). Mainly using the analysis of discourse structure, the analysis focuses on the comprehensive interpretation of the order of discourse and the type of discourse produced. The discourse production process generally results from two main exponents, that is, intertextuality and interdiscursivity. However, to give a clear and intelligible illustration of the study, the focus is on interdiscursivity because the relationship between discourse practice and the demands of the current curriculum is most clearly reflected in the process of interdiscursivity rather than in the intertextuality process.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

The objectives of examining the pedagogical discourse of teachers and students in the classroom are (a) to identify and interpret the interdiscursivity aspects of discourse practices inherent in a teacher-student discourse, and (b) to explain the relevance of interdiscursive discourse practices to the implementation of the KBSR. Pedagogic discourse involves the direct interaction between teachers and students in the classroom. This paper presents data from pedagogic discourses from six classroom sessions of ESL teaching and learning. This is deemed sufficient for a case study aimed at discovering the significance of pedagogic discourse in the classroom to the current curriculum. The object of study is the pedagogic discourse itself and not the number of discourse types involved. Four primary schools in the state of Kelantan were selected, namely Kadok National School, Che Deris National School, Tegayung National School and Lundang National School. The selection of the four schools was made by the Kelantan State Education Department. A total of six teachers and six

classes of level two⁴ primary school students were involved. Although the teachers had different levels of educational qualifications, from merely a Malaysian Certificate of Education (equivalent to O Level), to a Malaysian Higher School Certificate (pre-university), to a Bachelor of Teaching English as a Second Language, their individual teaching experience of 12-21 years each qualified them as suitable respondents. All six teachers were women but gender is irrelevant in this study as the focus of the research was on the pedagogic discourse. Only level two, i.e. year four and year five, primary school students were selected as respondents because they would have had at least four to five years of learning the English language. According to Ibrahim (1982), teaching of English in the real sense of the word starts only at level two.

The process of data collection was carried out in April 2009. The basic and initial step in the process of obtaining research data is the recording of data (Burton 1981). This was done in the classroom during the teaching and learning sessions, from the beginning till the end of the lesson. The researcher did not pause the recording sessions despite interruptions such as public announcements or technical interruptions. This was to avoid obtaining flawed and unnatural discourse data. Teachers conducted their lessons according to their routine without any interference from the researcher who was always present during the recording to observe the actual situation in the classroom in order to facilitate discourse data transcription at a later stage. In addition, the researcher needed to make notes for additional information. This recording method was important in obtaining authentic data and natural speech exchanges between the teacher and students (Marliana 2008: 30). Even though the recording was made openly and with the knowledge of the teacher and students, the data obtained remained natural without any indication of it having been being manipulated or fabricated. In fact, it can be claimed that the researcher's presence did not directly affect the validity of the data since the researcher was completely ignored by the respondents (especially the students who did not consider the presence of the researcher as a form of interference) and the teaching and learning sessions proceeded as usual.

After the data recording process, the data was transcribed. Each transcribed utterance was numbered to facilitate data analysis. The next step was to analyse the data according to the teacher - student discourse structure as proposed by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975).

The discourse data from the sessions were separately labelled as Discourse 1 to Discourse 6 (D1-D6). However, before proceeding with the analysis, the researcher analysed the data according to the sequence of each uttered sentence in the discourse based on the Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) framework as shown in *Figure 1*. This hierarchical concept shows the interaction of smaller units in the formation of larger units and vice versa. This scale explains that each discourse is made up of the smallest element/unit, groups of which develop into larger discourse units. A discourse structure is formed by a number of units. A lesson is formed from a number of teacher-student 'transactions', which are made up of several units of 'exchange' in the discourse. An exchange, in turn, is made up of several units of 'moves'. A move is made up of different types of 'acts', namely initiation, response and feedback. McCarthy (1991) described Sinclair and Coulthard's concept of pedagogic discourse structure in the classroom as very useful in discussing classroom discourses. An analysis of the teacher-student discourse structure according to exchanges, moves and acts as proposed by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) can be explicated through the data excerpt from D1 in table 1.

Table 1 Analysis of Teacher-Student Discourse based on Sinclair & Coulthard (1975) and Idris (2005)

Excerpt of Data D1		: Kadok National School, Kota Bharu, Kelantan			
Year		: 5 (5/4/09 – 9.00 – 9.30 am)			
Exchange	Speaker	Act	Move	Utterance	Interdiscursivity
20	T	Command	[087]	: Spell lamb.	} Requirement - Command
	S	Answer	[088]	: L.A.M.B	
	T	Comment	[089]	: L.A.M.B.	

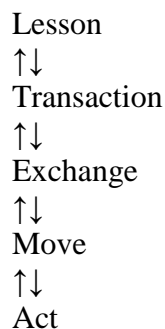


Figure 1. Sinclair & Coulthard’s Hierarchy of Teacher-Student Discourse (cf. McCarthy 1991)

The identification of the interdiscursive element in pedagogic discourse is based on the exchange unit. An exchange is viewed as the most appropriate unit for the basis of calculation as it supports smaller units that play significant roles in pedagogic discourses, namely moves which in turn support acts. An exchange in a pedagogic discourse can be regarded as the beginning of a new topic that the teacher wants to discuss. The taxonomy of communicative illocutionary acts by Bach & Harnish (1979) is used as guideline to identify the instances of interdiscursivity. Through these steps, the interdiscursivity practices by teachers can then be described. After analysing all the data according to exchanges, the number of exchanges was then counted and totalled. Then, the number of each element in every discourse was summed up and given a percentage value based on the total utterances of the teacher.

3.0 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Pedagogic discourse is the teacher-student discourse used during the teaching and learning process in the classroom. It differs in form and function from other discourses used in other situations based on the social roles of students, teachers and activities carried out in the classroom (Richards et al. 1992). According to the Integrated Curriculum for Primary Schools (KBSR), students should be given the opportunity to speak as much as possible in order to increase their confidence in using English. The opportunity to speak may be offered by teachers in many ways; one is by staging a drama in the classroom and having students become actors. Apart from engaging in classroom activities, students would also be encouraged to communicate with one another using English during group activities. Students should also be encouraged to communicate with teachers and other students in English outside the classroom (Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia 2003).

The results of this study, however, indicate that the opposite of this desired outcome has occurred. The teacher clearly appeared dominant in the pedagogic discourse and students had fewer opportunities to speak than the teacher. Based on the analysis of interdiscursive elements examined in this pedagogic discourse, it was found that both the teacher and students were either not practising or only partially practising the principles of KBSR as proposed by the Ministry of Education of Malaysia. Teaching and learning did not seem to be student-centred; instead, the teacher was seen to play the dominant role. This was evident from the observation of the teacher as being more inclined to speak, answering her own questions and preferring to concentrate on completing the lesson plan, thereby missing out on the opportunities available to involve students in teaching and learning in the classroom. Further evidence of the dominance of the teacher in the classroom will be shown in the following discussions, beginning with that on the interdiscursivity of teacher discourse, followed by the interdiscursivity of student discourse, and the relevance of pedagogic discourse to the KBSR.

Table 2 Interdiscursivity in Teacher and Student Pedagogic Discourses

Texts	Interdiscursivity of Teacher Discourse - Utterances						Interdiscursivity of Student Discourse - Utterances			
	Total Exch.	Req.	Arg.	Des.	Not.	Nar.	Total Utter.	Direct Resp.	No Resp.	Late Resp.
D1	176 (20)	50 (60)	30 (36)	0 (0)	4 (5)	0 (0)	84 (48)	151 (86)	23 (13)	2 (1)
D2	155 (18)	26 (35)	35 (47)	0 (0)	14 (19)	0 (0)	75 (480)	116 (75)	28 (18)	11 (7)
D3	143 (16)	43 (55)	19 (24)	8 (10)	8 (10)	0 (0)	78 (55)	69 (48)	68 (48)	6 (4)
D4	119 (13)	36 (58)	19 (31)	3 (50)	4 (6)	0 (0)	62 (52)	50 (42)	49 (41)	20 (17)
D5	159 (18)	58 (64)	10 (11)	2 (2)	20 (22)	0 (0)	90 (57)	105 (66)	44 (28)	10 (6)
D6	133 (15)	16 (40)	17 (43)	3 (8)	3 (8)	1 (3)	40 (30)	114 (86)	17 (13)	2 (1)
Total	885 (100)	229 (53)	130 (30)	16 (4)	53 (12)	1 (1)	429 (48)	605 (68)	229 (26)	51 (6)

Legend

D1 – D6	=	Discourse 1 – 6	Nar.	=	Narration
Total Exch.	=	Total Exchanges	Direct Resp.	=	Direct Response
Total Utter.	=	Total Utterances	No Resp.	=	No Response
Req.	=	Requirement	Late Resp.	=	Late Response
Des.	=	Description	Percentage Value shown in brackets (%)		
Arg.	=	Argumentation	Not.	=	Notification

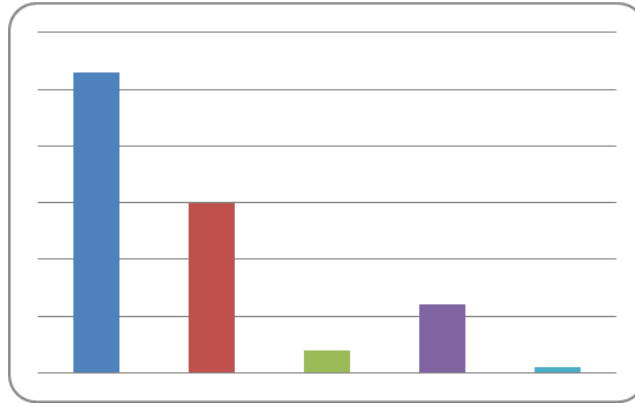


Figure 2. Interdiscursivity of teacher's discourse

3.1 Interdiscursivity of Teacher Discourse

In order to achieve the learning objectives, teachers are expected to try their best to make students understand the essence of all the topics being taught. Various methods may be utilised to maximise students' understanding of the topics. This would have a huge impact on the discourse used by teachers. Teachers were found to utilise several discourse types in the production of pedagogic discourse in the classroom, namely requirement, argumentation, notification, description, and narration. Representation of the main discourses used by teachers is shown in table 2 and *figure 2*. The overall number for each interdiscursive element is given a percentage value to facilitate the description of the findings.

Table 2 shows the exchanges that occur in each discourse, the total being 885 exchanges. Discourse 1 (D1) shows the highest percentage at 20%, while Discourse 4 (D4) has the lowest number with 13%. Table 2 also shows that the percentage for 'requirement', about 53%, is higher than that for other types of discourses. This is followed by 'argumentation', at 30%, with a total of 130 exchanges. Representing 12% of the total exchange, 'notification' ranks as third most frequent of all types of discourses. 'Description' is only 4% of the overall discourse while 'narration' is the least used by teachers in the classroom at only 1% usage.

The discussion continues with the types of interdiscursivity in teacher discourse, and how teachers established each type, together with examples from analysed data.

Requirement

A requirement is expressed when a teacher conveys her wish and directs the students to accomplish the goal. Asmah (1984) states that there are many ways to express requirement, for example by using commands (instruction, offer, invitation, prohibition, etc.) and also by using sentences that begin with, "I want ...", "I ask ..." and so on. With the use of this tool, the teacher plays the role as the controller in a language act, and uses the language as a tool for a purpose. Such discourse used by teachers also seeks to direct students to do things as either training in the classroom or application in their daily lives. Requirement is the most frequently used compared to other types of discourses. This is evident in Table 2 which shows that 53% of total exchanges is made up of requirement discourses. However, this is not necessarily the case with all the teachers. Only D1, D3, D4 and D5 show high percentages of usage of the requirement discourse at 60%, 55%, 58% and 64% respectively. Overall, the

study shows that teachers use three main techniques to express requirement, namely, a) command, b) instruction, and c) request. All three are further discussed through data samples.

Command: In issuing a command, teachers used explicit language, which means that teachers gave commands clearly without the need for students to think about the meaning of the utterance. In short, the language is unambiguous, does not cause confusion to students and is easily understood. Teachers used this technique directly to inform the students that the teacher’s request was obligatory in nature and had to be carried out.

In the excerpt (1) from D4, the teacher instructs the students to carry out discussion in groups formed by the teacher. At the beginning of the exchange in move [547], the teacher uses the verb ‘discuss’ to instruct the students to discuss in their groups. In move [548], the teacher reiterates that she does not want the students to work alone or individually. As a result of the command in [547], the students respond by discussing in groups in move [549]. The teacher once again instructs the students to discuss in move [550] by repeating the lexical item ‘discuss’ twice. The students respond in [552] by continuing their discussion. Note the use of the verb ‘discuss’ by the teacher. It is clear that there is no implicit information hidden behind the instruction. Furthermore, it reduces the work of processing semantic information by the students and enables them to act on the instruction. Through this type of instruction technique, the teacher is seen as a ‘monitor’ of communication in the classroom. This is because the teacher is perceived as an authority figure in the classroom; she states her needs/requirements in a firm manner, and unequivocally indicates her expectation to be obeyed.

Based on the researcher’s analysis of all the discourses, the use of this command technique was successful in obtaining the students’ compliance.

(1) Command (imperative) - Excerpt from D4

Exchange	Speaker	Act	Move	Utterance	Interdiscursivity
97	T	Command	[547]	: Discuss among your group.	} Requirement - Command
	T	Statement	[548]	: Not you alone.	
	S	Response	[549]	: (buzzing-discussion)	
	T	Command	[550]	:Discuss! Discuss!	
	T	Agreement	[551]	:Aaa, ok.	
	S	Response	[552]	:(buzzing-discussion in dialect)	
	S	Answer	[553]	:Kaberatar (?)	

Instruction: In contrast to the command, in the instruction technique, the teacher tends to use a modal rather than a main verb to deliver instructions to the students. The teacher does not directly give the instruction but uses a softer approach where the level of compulsion to comply is reduced as compared to a command. In (2) of D5, the teacher uses the modal ‘can’ when giving an instruction to the students. In moves [416] - [417], the teacher uses ‘can’ with the main verbs ‘discuss’ in move [416] and ‘ask’ in move [417] respectively. In move [419], the teacher repeats the same instruction as move [417] by telling the students they could ask their friends if they wanted to. Although in move [420] the teacher gives a command-like

instruction, in this exchange, the use of the modal makes it an instruction rather than a firm command.

(2) Instruction – Excerpt from D5

Exchange	Speaker	Act	Move	Utterance	Interdiscursivity
89	T	Instruction	[416]	: You can discuss with your friend.	} Requirement - Instruction
	T	Instruction	[417]	: You can ask your friend.	
	T	Question	[418]	: Ok?	
	T	Instruction	[419]	: You can ask your friend.	
	T	Command	[420]	: Discuss.	
	S	Answer	[421]	: <i>(in local dialect)</i>	

Exchange 91 in move [522] shows that the teacher instructs the students to write three sentences out of ten sentences in the exercise book. This was because the lesson was coming to an end. In [523] and [524], the teacher once again insists on only three sentences. In [525], the teacher repeats the instruction to the students to quickly complete their work. Clearly in [522], the teacher's instruction sounds more lenient or compromising. This means that although the instruction has to be carried out, it need not be done hurriedly or swiftly. By using the phrase, 'I want ...,' the teacher conveys her desire to the students with the main clause coming only after the subordinate clause. This shows that the level of compliance with the instruction is lower than a command.

(3) Instruction – Excerpt from D4

Exchange	Speaker	Act	Move	Utterance	Interdiscursivity
91	T	Instruction	[522]	: Ok, all right, since there is time constraint, I want you to just write three sentences out of 10.	} Requirement - Instruction
	T	Statement	[523]	: Ok, three only.	
	T	Statement	[524]	: I want three.	
	T	Instruction	[525]	: Come on, faster.	

Request: A request is used by teachers to get students to do something for the achievement of teaching and learning goals. Through the request technique, teachers are more open and not so insistent that students do as they are asked. In short, through this kind of discourse, the teacher throws the question at the class and any student can answer it. The results of the analysis showed that teachers tended to use the question mode to make a request. In contrast to command and instruction techniques, requests were often used by teachers to 'sell' the request to any student who could answer the question. In throwing open a question, the teacher is requesting answers from any of the students but there is no compulsion as it seems to be expected that the students might not be willing or able to answer the question.

Exchange 109 in D3 shows the teacher instructing the students to assist their friend who has made a mistake while performing a task. In move [652], the teacher openly asks the students to help their friend. In move [653], the teacher repeats her instruction. However, in move [654], when the teacher repeats the request in the form of a question to students to help

their friend, , a student who responds by volunteering to help in move [655] is acknowledged by the teacher calling out his name, Mazri. Subsequently, in moves [656] and [657], the teacher commends Mazri for volunteering to help.

(4) Request – Excerpt from D3

Exchange	Speaker	Act	Move	Utterance	Interdiscursivity
109	T	Question	[652]	: Ok, can someone help him?	Requirement - Request
	T	Instruction	[653]	: Someone help him.	
	T	Question	[654]	: Can someone help him?	
	T	Question	[655]	:Yes, Mazri?	
	T	Comment	[656]	:Good.	
	T	Instruction	[657]	:Give him a clap.	

(5) Request – Excerpt from D5

Exchange	Speaker	Act	Move	Utterance	Interdiscursivity
72	T	Question	[319]	: Ok, how do you spell 'varieties'?	Requirement - Request
	S (1)	Answer	[320]	: V.E...	
	T	Question	[321]	: Are there any volunteers?	
	T	Instruction	[322]	:Can put up your hands.	
	T	Question	[323]	:Any volunteer?	
	T	Question	[324]	:Who can spell 'varieties'?	
	T	Question	[325]	:Yes, Norhafizah?	
	S(Fizah)	Answer	[326]	:V.A.R.I.E.T.I.E.S. Varieties!	
	T	Comment	[327]	:Ok, good.	

In exchange 72, move [319] of D5, the teacher asks the students to spell the word 'varieties' and draws a response from one student in move [320]. However, the teacher keeps trying to 'sell' the request in moves [321], [323], [324] and [325] until she nominates Norhafizah. In move [326], Norhafizah correctly spells 'varieties' and is commended by the teacher in move [327]. In this case, although the request is in the form of a question, it could also be classified as encouragement to the students to respond instead of providing the answer herself. In the examples in D3 and D5, the teacher did not help the students by giving the answers. This encouraged the students to think and act according to the request.

Argumentation

Argumentation occurs when the teacher argues in response to an answer given by the students which she reviews. The results of the data analysis indicate that the teacher was more likely to respond by repeating the student's answer in the form of a question. Although not all data showed a similar pattern, the majority of teacher utterances indicated that this was how the teacher usually responded to thinking skill questions. The teacher would pose questions to prod the students to reconsider their responses until a consensus was reached on the correct answer. The establishment of argumentation as a whole depends on the answer/response

given by the students to the question/issue raised by the teacher. The teacher would then review the answers given by the students to derive a consensus on the most accurate answer. Table 2 shows that 30% of the entire exchanges in the discourse used argumentation. This places it as the second most popular type of interdiscursivity used by teachers in the teaching and learning process. Based on the overall percentage of these exchanges, D2 had the highest percentage at 47%, whereas D5 had the lowest percentage at 11%.

The interdiscursivity of argumentation is achieved through two main techniques. Firstly, the teacher poses a question to the students regarding a certain issue/conflict/problem that arises during discussion, the students respond and then the teacher reviews the students' answers by giving comments to explain the cause/effect/factor leading to the outcome. Secondly, the teacher asks for the students' opinions, the students respond and the teacher then reviews the answer given by the students by asking for clarification from the students before agreeing with the given answer.

Teacher Review: This occurs when the teacher reviews the answers given by the students by presenting arguments on the matter discussed. The teacher responds with questions regarding the answers provided by the students and then repeatedly asks them for answers until a satisfactory answer is given. The teacher's questions aim to elicit a variety of possible answers from the students. This encourages students to think further. In (6), the excerpt from D5 is a data sample of the interdiscursivity of argumentation.

The teacher has been discussing the answer to one of the questions in the text book. The question revolves around the things that make Malaysia an exciting country to visit. The teacher asks the students to answer by reading out the distractors provided to the multiple choice question. In move [666], the teacher asks the students for the answer to question one and subsequently obtains a response from a student in move [667]. Nevertheless, the teacher continues to ask the same question to elicit answers from the students in move [668]. Again the students give the same answer, 'The food!' in move [669]. The following moves from [670] to [673] show that the teacher tries to argue by presenting other appropriate and more accurate answers. The teacher then repeats the same question, as if to suggest that they might be wrong, and allowing them to think of a more appropriate answer. However, in move [675], the students repeat the answer as, 'The food!', their previous answer in moves [667] and [669]. In [676], the teacher tries to obtain verification of the answer given by the students, and then finally agrees with the answer in move [679]. In moves [680] - [682], the teacher reviews the students' answer after an agreement has been reached by repeating the answer but now in the form of an affirmative statement.

(6) Teacher review – Excerpt from D5

Exchange	Speaker	Act	Move	Utterance	Interdiscursivity
134	T	Question	[665]	: Ok.	Argumentation - Review
	T	Question	[666]	: What is the answer for number 1?	
	S	Answer	[667]	: The food!	
	T	Question	[668]	:What do you think?	
	T	Answer	[669]	:The food!	
	T	Question	[670]	:Aa... they give you the food,	

T	Statement	[671]	:the races,
T	Statement	[672]	:the people,
T	Statement	[673]	:and the ethnic groups.
T	Statement	[674]	:Which is the most suitable answer for number 1?
S	Answer	[675]	:The food!
T	Question	[676]	:The?
S	Answer	[677]	:Food!
S	Answer	[678]	:The food!
T	Agreement	[679]	:Aaa, the food.
T	Statement	[680]	:Ok.
T	Statement	[681]	:Aaa the food make Malaysia is an exciting...
T	Statement	[682]	:...place.

Teacher review of students' responses by giving argumentative comments can also be seen in the data (7) in utterances [722] - [735]. This excerpt is from the teaching and learning session on how to communicate using mobile phones. In these utterances [732] - [733], the teacher clearly accepts the students' responses and agrees with them on the problem that arose. Consequently, in moves [734] - [735], the teacher gives a review explaining the answers given by the students. The students name a function of the mobile phone, which is the subject of inquiry by the teacher. The teacher agrees with the answers given by students through [732] - [733], and reviews the answers with commentary sentences in [734] - [735] to enhance the students' comprehension. This is because the students have given only a short answer, 'Calling' in move [729].

(7) Teacher review – Except from D3

Exchange	Speaker	Act	Move	Utterance	Interdiscursivity
120	T	Question	[722]	: Yes? Hanim? Athirah?	} Argumentation - Review
	T	Question	[723]	: Sorry	
	T	Question	[724]	: Yes?	
	T	Question	[728]	: What?	
	S	Answer	[729]	: Calling!	
	T	Question	[730]	: Calling?	
	T	Question	[731]	: Calling?	
	T	Agreement	[732]	: Ok.	
	T	Agreement	[733]	: Calling.	
	T	Comment	[734]	: Aa that means you can make a call.	
	T	Comment	[735]	:Can make a call.	

Teacher Asks for Verification: The second technique used by teachers in the interdiscursivity of argumentation is by asking students to confirm their responses. Data analysis results show that the teacher uses the phrase 'can or not' and 'yes or no' when using this type of discourse. These arguments prompt the students to give only one answer:

yes/no or can/cannot. Following the students' response, the teacher agrees with the students' answer and accordingly makes a review. Data (8) from D5 shows that the teacher uses close-ended questions that do not encourage students to give more than one answer. The teacher provides a hint through the use of 'can/cannot'.

(8) Teacher Asking for Verification – Excerpt from D5

Exchange	Speaker	Act	Move	Utterance	Interdiscursivity
94	T	Question	[442]	: Ok, how many types of <i>nasi</i> , isn't it?	Argumentation – Asking for Verification
	T	Question	[443]	: Can you write the answer?	
	T	Question	[444]	: Can or cannot?	
	S	Answer	[445]	: Can!	
	T	Question	[446]	: Can or cannot?	
	S	Answer	[447]	: Can!	
	T	Question	[448]	: Can or cannot?	
	S	Answer	[449]	: Can!	
	T	Agreement	[450]	: Can.	

A similar situation occurs in D6 exchange 94 where in move [515] the teacher uses close-ended questions to obtain verification of responses from the students. The teacher gives only 'yes or no' as answer options. This type of question is similar to spoon-feeding where the answer is provided and the students only have to answer yes or no. Having obtained a valid answer, 'yes', in moves [514] and [516], the teacher reviews/comments with the reasons / consequences of using 'were' which indicates past tense in the passage as a replacement for 'are', which is the present tense.

(9) Teacher Asking for Verification – Extract from D6

Exchange	Speaker	Act	Move	Utterance	Interdiscursivity
94	T	Question	[510]	: Were?	Argument - Verification
	S	Answer	[511]	: Are.	
	T	Question	[512]	: Here?	
	S	Answer	[513]	:No.	
	S	Answer	[514]	:Yes.	
	T	Question	[515]	:Yes or no?	
	S	Answer	[516]	:Yes.	
	T	Agreement	[517]	:Ok, because we used were for more than?	
	T	Comment	[518]	:One.	
	S	Agreement	[519]	:One.	

Notification

Notification occurs when the teacher informs the students of a particular fact. The teacher conveys factual information to enhance students' understanding of the topic or shares different aspects of the information as deemed appropriate/relevant to the topic under

discussion. However, this information must be substantiated. This type of discourse covers 12% of total exchanges studied. It is the third most popular after the instruction and argumentation types. Table 2 shows that all the discourse data is interdiscursive with these types of discourse.

(10) Excerpt from D3

Exchange	Speaker	Act	Move	Utterance	Interdiscursivity
125	T	Question	[768]	: All right, this is the very aa up-to-date handphone.	} Notification
	T	Question	[769]	: You can aa surf aaa an internet.	
	T	Answer	[770]	: Yes.	
	T	Statement	[771]	:This is very expensive handphone.	
	T	Statement	[772]	:And it's a very up-to-date handphone.	
	T	Statement	[773]	:But I don't have that.	
	T	Statement	[774]	:I have a very cheap handphone here.	

In (10) of D3, the teacher discusses mobile phones with the students. In exchange 125 from moves [768] - [774], the teacher provides information/facts about mobile phones. In move [768], the teacher describes the latest sophisticated model of a mobile phone. This is supported by move [769] that the mobile phone can be used to access the Internet. In move [771], the teacher informs the students that a sophisticated mobile phone is expensive because it has functions other than merely making phone calls. In move [772], the teacher reiterates that such a phone is state-of-the-art in the market. Moves [773] - [774] support a previously stated fact that the teacher did not have a sophisticated phone but only a cheap phone. Clearly, moves [768] - [772] prove that the discourse used by the teacher was an informing type of discourse.

In (11), the teacher discusses with the students how to lead a healthy life. The teacher advises the students to have a balanced diet and to follow a regular exercise routine. In moves [892] - [893], the teacher conveys the information in the form of questions. Although no response/answer is obtained from the students and the teacher answers her own question in move [894], she proceeds to give more information on leading a healthy lifestyle. This is evident when the teacher attempts to tell the students how to lead a healthy life by asking questions. However, there is a difference because the teacher uses code mixing in the discourse. In move [896], the teacher uses both Malay and English in a question. However, a lack of response from the students once again prompts the teacher to answer her own question in [899]. There is some interaction among the students in moves [895] and [900], although it is not for the purpose of answering the question but rather to communicate with one another, and ignoring the information given by the teacher.

(11) Excerpt from D2

Exchange	Speaker	Act	Move	Utterance	Interdiscursivity
149	T	Question	[892]	: Ok, you have aa to stay healthy, you must to?	} Notification
	T	Question	[893]	: More exercise, and eat balanced?	
	T	Answer	[894]	: Diet.	
	S	Statement	[895]	: <i>Tak rehat lagi</i>	
	T	Question	[896]	: <i>Untuk dapat tubuh sihat, you have to eat?</i>	
	T	Question	[897]	: <i>Gapo dio?</i>	
	T	Question	[898]	: We have to eat balanced diet and do regular?	
	T	Answer	[899]	: Exercise.	
	S	Statement	[900]	: (talking to themselves at the back in local dialect)	

Description

Description is one of the interdiscursive discourses in pedagogic discourse. It can be characterised as a discourse to describe something. A descriptive discourse is a series of utterances describing an event on the basis of the speaker's experience or knowledge. This type of discourse describes to the students a particular circumstance. The teacher uses a chronological order to describe events to enable the students to understand and imagine them. Overall, descriptive discourse had the fourth highest percentage at 4%. Only data from D3, D4, D5 and D6 contained this type of discourse. This may have been due to the different classroom activities conducted by the teacher.

For example, in (12), the teacher uses descriptive discourse in exchange 48 when describing to the students how to state information accurately. In the exchange, the teacher describes the location of Mustaqim's house in Kota Bharu district. The moves involving descriptive discourse start in [234] when the teacher asks the students where they live. The students give short answers in move [240] as the teacher has given part of the answer in move [239]. Subsequently, in move [242], the teacher describes Kota Bharu as a district/a large and extensive place. In using this move, the teacher hopes that the students would understand that in conveying information, they have to be detailed and specific to avoid confusion. The teacher again explains that Mustaqim's house is in Lundang in [244] and [247]. She also describes the location of Mustaqim's house as being behind the mosque in move [249]. The teacher first describes the location of Mustaqim's house in the district of Kota Bharu, then pinpoints the *mukim* of Lundang before giving a more precise location, that is, behind the mosque. The descriptive technique helped students better visualise the location of Mustaqim's house.

(12) Excerpt from D6

Exchange	Speaker	Act	Move	Utterance	Interdiscursivity
48	T	Statement	[234]	:For example, for example.	}
	T	Question	[235]	:The answer is?	
	T	Statement	[236]	:A.	
	T	Question	[237]	:Right?	
	T	Question	[238]	:Where do you live?	
	T	Question	[239]	:I live in Kota?	
	S	Answer	[240]	:Bharu.	
	T	Agreement	[241]	:Kota Bharu.	
	T	Comment	[242]	:So, we have to go around Kota Bharu searching for Mustaqims' house?	
	T	Comment	[243]	:So, must be specific where.	
	T	Comment	[244]	:In Lundang.	
	T	Question	[245]	:Where?	
	T	Question	[246]	:Where?	
	T	Answer	[247]	:In Lundang.	
	T	Question	[248]	:Where is the place?	
	T	Question	[249]	:Belakang Masjid?	
	T	Statement	[250]	:Lundang for example.	
	T	Question	[251]	: Must be?	
	T	Question	[252]	: Speci-?	
	S	Answer	[253]	: Specific.	

In exchange 69 of (13), the teacher describes to the students how to pronounce words. In this case, it looks as if the teacher's idea was to teach the students that words in the English language are pronounced according to the way they are spelt. The teacher explains to the students in moves [305] - [309] that if they knew how to spell a word, then they should know the correct way to pronounce the word, which is not true.

(13) Excerpt from D5

Exchange	Speaker	Act	Move	Utterance	Interdiscursivity
69	T	Statement	[305]	: Ok, if you know how to spell the words,	}
	T	Statement	[306]	: that means, you know how to read the word.	
	T	Question	[307]	: Isn't it?	
	T	Statement	[308]	: If you don't know the spelling,	
	T	Question	[309]	: that means you, you don't know how to?	
	T	Answer	[310]	: Say the word.	
	T	Answer	[311]	: How to read the word.	

Narration

Narration is a discourse type that involves storytelling by the teacher on a particular subject in the classroom. The teacher uses this discourse to narrate events that occur in everyday life or in the classroom. The narrative discourse embedded in the pedagogic discourse fulfils the what, who, when and how of the situation. Narrative discourse was the least used by teachers during the teaching and learning process. Of all the discourses studied, only D6 had a narrative discourse. Comprising only 1% of total discourse exchanges in D6, the narrative discourse was clearly not widely used by teachers.

Based on the findings of the sample data, it can be concluded that the teachers mixed various types of discourses in the pedagogic discourse in the classroom. The mixing of discourse types, namely requirement, argumentation, notification, description and narration, was done through a variety of techniques and individual ways.

3.2 Interdiscursivity of Student Discourse

Aside from the teacher, the students also play a role in the pedagogic discourse. During the course of the researcher's observation of the classroom discourse, there seemed to be only one type of interdiscursive discourse by the students, that is, responding. In Table 2, the students gave a) a direct response/no response at all, and b) a slow response, after much persuasion and repeated instruction. Student utterance did not occur without teacher utterance, which played the primary role in the classroom. This was because the responsive discourse was apparent only when there was teacher discourse. Overall, the findings in Table 2 show that students tended to respond directly to whatever was said by the teacher. This is evident in the high percentage of direct response, 68% of total exchanges being student discourse in direct response to the teacher. However, instances in student discourse that were not direct responses to the teacher comprised 229 exchanges, or 26% of total exchanges. Finally, delayed responses to the teacher were only about 6%, or 51 exchanges of the total 885 exchanges.

Direct Responses from Students

Direct responses mean that students respond directly to what the teacher has said and upon being asked to respond. The analysis of data shows that students tended to give apparent answers such as reading from the text, repeating the same response, and giving the answer provided by the teacher. Direct response represented the most popular type of student discourse in D1 at 86% as compared to D4 at 42%, which had the lowest incidence of this type of discourse. However, Table 2 shows that this kind of discourse occurred at the highest frequency as compared to other types of responsive discourses. It could be said that students were responsive when the teacher was teaching in the classroom. However, these responses should be analysed as students actually tended to give the same answer given by the teacher, read from the text, repeat the teacher's answers or converse among themselves in the classroom.

In (14), the teacher instructs the students to read out their answers in groups. They have been asked earlier to discuss their answers in groups. In moves [620], [622], [624] and [626], the students respond directly to the teacher's instruction. They are merely reading from the text rather than responding spontaneously. This clearly shows students giving direct responses to the teacher's request/instruction.

(14) Direct Response – Excerpt from D4

Exchange	Speaker	Act	Move	Utterance	Interdiscursivity
113	T	Command	[619]	: All right, 1, 2, go.	} Responsive
	S	Answer	[620]	: A boy is a swimming a pool.	
	T	Comment	[621]	: A boy is	
	S	Answer	[622]	: A boy is catching a butterfly.	
	T	Comment	[623]	: All right.	
	S	Answer	[624]	: A boy is watering a flower.	
	T	Comment	[625]	: Ok.	
	S	Answer	[626]	: A boy is fishing a fish.	
T	Comment	[627]	: All right.		

Data (15) shows the teacher asking a question related to the topic but requiring the students to think outside of the context of the topic. The students answer directly in [276] and repeat the answer in move [278]. This proves that the students are able to respond directly to questions by the teacher without the need for initial feedback. However, the responses given by students are dependent on the questions posed by the teacher. A closed question such as in the example merely requires a direct response as it does not require thinking. Students tend to give a 'yes/no' or 'can/cannot' answer when asked by the teacher.

(15) Direct Response – Excerpt from D6

Exchange	Speaker	Act	Move	Utterance	Interdiscursivity
52	T	Question	[275]	: Do you think, do you think that 6 year old boy....doesn't know how to use a phone?	} Responsive
	S	Answer	[276]	: No! No!	
	T	Question	[277]	: Hah?	
	S	Answer	[278]	: No!	

However, the situation was different if it was a *wh*- kind of question. The students did not respond to the teacher so the teacher was forced to repeat the question several times. This is seen in (16). The teacher poses the question to the students in the form of a request but fails to elicit a response from the students. This may have been due to the students being too passive, or the teacher not knowing how to extract the answer from the students, or the students not knowing how to answer or being afraid of making a mistake in their answer. Note the move [266] in (16) where the teacher asks the students how they memorise their fathers' mobile phone number. Failure to get a response indirectly leads to the next question in moves [268] and [269] in which the teacher tries to give the students options. However, still no response is forthcoming. In [270], the teacher tries to elicit an answer from the students or at least reach a consensus, but still the students do not respond. This shows that the students do not respond to the teacher at all even when options are offered. An open-ended type of question may have made the students unsure of how to answer or respond. By using a *wh*- question, namely 'how', the teacher tried to get the students to think before answering but it failed to obtain any response.

(16) No Response – Excerpt from D3

Exchange	Speaker	Act	Move	Utterance	Interdiscursivity
39	T	Question	[265]	: Then?	} Responsive
	T	Question	[266]	: How do you remember your father's phone number?	
	T	Question	[268]	: In a book?	
	T	Question	[269]	: In a notebook?	
	T	Question	[270]	: No?	

Slow Response from Students

Teachers play a significant role in helping students respond to questions. A handful of the students require feedback from the teacher before being able to provide answers, so the teacher repeats the question, tries to provide clues to the answer and waits until the students respond to the question posed. Data (17) shows the role played by the teacher in helping students to answer/respond to questions. The teacher repeats the same question four times in moves [764], [766], [770] and [773] to assist students in their response. Although the students finally provide a response in [769] and [771], the teacher refuses to accept the answers because the students have used the local dialect when answering the question. The teacher also tries to hint at the answer in moves [768], [774] and [777]. With the teacher offering hints and repeating the question, the students are encouraged to respond in English. Clearly, some support from teacher discourses is required to elicit student response.

(17) Slow Response – Excerpt from D1

Exchange	Speaker	Act	Move	Utterance	Interdiscursivity
143	T	Question	[764]	: Mukmin, how many cats do you have?	} Responsive
	S (1)	Answer	[765]	: (<i>in dialect</i>)	
	T	Question	[766]	: How many?	
	Mukmin	Answer	[767]	:Erm... mm...	
	T	Question	[768]	:More than one?	
	Mukmin	Answer	[769]	:(<i>answer in dialect</i>)	
	T	Question	[770]	:How many?	
	Mukmin	Answer	[771]	:(<i>answer in dialect</i>)	
	S	Answer	[772]	:(<i>A few of them laughing and help Mukmin to answer in dialect</i>)	
	T	Question	[773]	:How many, Mukmin?	
	T	Question	[774]	:Around 10?	
	S (1)	Answer	[775]	:Aa..10, 10 la Mukmin.	
	Mukmin	Answer	[776]	:6, 7, 8.	
	T	Question	[777]	:8?	
	Mukmin	Answer	[778]	:Mm.	
	T	Question	[779]	:8 cats?	

4.0 IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The results of the analysis indicate that the requirements of the KBSR have not been implemented and practised by the teachers and students. The teacher was seen to dominate the whole discourse through the mobilization of interdiscursivity. Interdiscursivity in teachers' and students' discourse was unbalanced. Teachers did not practise student-centred learning in the classroom as teacher discourse was more prevalent than student discourse. The KBSR requires that students be given more opportunities to communicate in the classroom and to answer questions spontaneously, whether from their texts or using their own ideas. According to the KBSR Curriculum Specifications for Year 5 (Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia 2003: 14), teachers should provide opportunities for students to speak or communicate with the teacher about the discourse that has been read or learned. Teachers need only ask *what*, *why* and so on and the students should answer based on their understanding of the discourse, rather than wait for feedback from the teachers.

The discussion of interdiscursivity reveals teacher-centred practices in all the discourses studied. Teachers were more likely to answer their own questions, pose close-ended questions, control communication in the classroom and give instructions that did not require students to answer/speak. The KBSR implementation demands the opposite: rather than being active only by themselves, the teachers are expected to motivate the students to communicate actively in the classroom. The interdiscursive elements of teachers, namely requirement, argumentation, notification, description, and narration, clearly show that teachers were in control of the entire pedagogic discourse. The students had only one interdiscursive element, that is, responding, in the pedagogic discourse.

In student discourse, the interdiscursive element shows that the students were more responsive only when closed-ended questions were posed or when they were not required to think for themselves. Students were also more likely to communicate in the classroom when the teacher asked them to repeat/read what was written in the discourse. However, when an open-ended *wh*- question was asked, the students did not respond at all. According to the Year 5 KBSR (Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia 2003: 16), students should know how to answer *wh*- questions, so that they themselves would be able to ask such questions to obtain information on their own as a learning outcome. However, this did not happen.

There is, however, some evidence of the recommended KBSR practice being applied in the teacher discourse in the classroom. Even though this was not done in totality, the interdiscursive element of argumentation, for example, was applied in an attempt to generate discussion through questions. This is consistent with the requirements of Year 5 and Year 4 KBSR (Kementerian Pelajaran Malaysia 2003: 14) in which teachers are required to initiate discussion by asking students *wh*- questions. It indirectly encourages students to think critically and creatively before responding.

5.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the analysis of actual pedagogic discourse in this study shows that teachers had greater control of discourse in the classroom, and that they played a more prominent role than the students. Five types of teacher interdiscursive elements were identified, namely requirement, argumentation, notification, description, and narration. The students, on the

other hand, had only one element, namely responding, which involved merely responding to the teacher's questions in the classroom. In addition, it can be said that teachers did not practise the KBSR requirements in the classroom in a comprehensive manner as they dominated the discourse without providing opportunities for the students to communicate in the classroom. This kind of pedagogic culture is contrary to the aim of student-centred learning requirement of the KBSR.

NOTES

¹ This includes the teaching of science and mathematics in English. Abdullah Ahmad Badawi (2003), former Prime Minister of Malaysia, acknowledged this in a speech saying that the teaching of mathematics and science in English was the most effective measure taken by the government to improve English proficiency among students.

² Ministry of Education.

³ KBSR is abbreviation for Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Rendah.

⁴ Primary school is divided into two stages: lower primary covers year one to year three, and upper primary covers year four to year six (Ibrahim 1982: 11).

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