

## **Discoursal Structure of Class Opening and Closing in EFL Teachers' Talk: A Conversational Analytic Perspective**

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### **Abstract**

Adopting the ecological view of research amalgamated with a combination of Conversation Analysis (CA), Cluster Analysis (CL), and a dynamic and variable approach in analyzing classroom talk, this study investigated the interactional architecture of two discursively occluded interactional moves of EFL classrooms: the opening and the closing. To do so, 60 EFL classrooms at different proficiency levels were selected. Each classroom recording lasted 1.5 hours, totally comprising a 100-hour classroom corpus. From each class, the two phases of the beginning and the end of the session were targeted and the talks of teachers were analyzed. The results revealed that teachers had several interactional microactions which were counted as the submoves of starting a class and terminating moves. To start a class, teachers were observed to have several interactional strategies such as (a) greeting, (b) name calling, (c) asking reason for absences, and (d) checking the assigned homework and for the terminating a class have other interactional moves such as (a) giving assignment, (b) briefing of the next session plan, (c) stating attitude about the session, and (d) saying only farewell. In closing the class move, seven combinations of submoves were discovered as well. It can be concluded that, despite the gap in the literature on classroom discourse vis-à-vis these discoursal moves, the results indicate that both opening and closing the class moves have complex interactional architecture when they are investigated through microanalytic perspectives like CA, CL, and dynamic and variable approach.

**Keywords:** interactional architecture, interactional moves, starting class move, terminating session move, classroom ecology

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## 1. Background

Cazden (1986, p. 432) contends that classroom discourse is a "problematic medium". This statement indicates that making any attempts to examine EFL classroom talk must consider first its uniqueness and in the second place its complexity. Taking a closer look at the EFL classroom context makes this fact translucent that in the rapid classroom interaction flow, understanding what is happening in classroom ecosystem is very cumbersome. It can be said that being conscious of classroom dynamics is, therefore, fundamental for teachers to establish and maintain a balanced and well-formed instructional context. A teacher who is cognizant of the interactional architecture of a typical EFL classroom can understand that during classroom talk teachers and students constantly act upon and affect each other. Having this insight, teachers can plan an effective interactional orchestration which is counted as the most important contribution of classroom discourse research. In tandem, in a statement which shows the importance of teacher talk, Walsh (2002) propounded that what is as consequential as teachers' capability to select a rigorous methodology is their abilities to control the use of language. So, given the importance of classroom talk, it is necessary for it to analyze it microscopically to achieve a clear portrait of what is happening in the classroom discourse.

There are several approaches to investigating L2 classroom interaction. Interaction analysis (IA) approaches can be counted as the oldest ones. Since the 1960s and the 1970s, a sizable number of observation instruments with regard to these approaches have been devised. Then, more systematic and elaborated version of (IA) which has been called system-based approaches (Wallace, 1998) was introduced. In fact, these approaches include a more number of fixed categories that have been predetermined by an extensive number of observations in classroom contexts. Flanders' (1970) Flanders

Interaction Analysis Categories (FIAC), Moskowitz's (1967) Foreign Language Interaction (FLINT), and Spada and Frohlich's (1995) Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching (COLT) can be named among the observational schemes of this category. The next approach to interaction analysis in classrooms is discourse analysis (DA). Discourse-based interaction systems, inspired by Bellack et al. (1966), investigate classroom interaction in terms of interlocking moves that represent larger interactional units of classroom discourse. Fanselow's (1977) Foci for Observing Communication Used in Setting (FOCUS) is one of the discourse-based approaches which resembles system-based approaches in that it also consists of discrete categories but it is different from them given that it presents how these categories integrate into each other to form larger units of discourse.

Nevertheless, these approaches have several shortcomings. The first problem with these approaches is that their samples were very small, sometimes including just one teacher. Second, a holistic picture of an EFL classroom context cannot be inferred from their results of analysis. Besides, no balance can be seen in their exploration of classroom talk between attention paid to the whole picture of interactional organization of classrooms and its microscopic counterpart. It can be argued that most of them try to devise a framework which makes it difficult to focus on classroom talk as a dynamic, emergent, and variable phenomenon because their main goal is to find commonality and not variability. In actuality, they make no attempt to provide an exhaustive account of classroom discourse without resorting to any predetermined categories.

The latest framework for analyzing classroom discourse has been proposed by Walsh (2006, 2011). This framework which is called Self-evaluation Teacher Talk (SETT) divides classroom discourse into different

microcontexts based on different pedagogical goals that the teachers follow in an ESL context. There are four microcontexts in classroom discourse in SETT. The first is 'managerial' in which teachers have several pedagogical goals such as starting an activity, transition to another activity or referring students to material. In the second, which is called 'materials' microcontext, teachers provide language practice, elicit students' response, and clarify when it is necessary. In the third, 'skills and systems' microcontext, teachers provide correct feedback, enable students to produce correct forms, and give students further practice in different subskills. In the last microcontext, which is called 'classroom context', teachers focus on oral fluency of students. As can be seen, this framework lacks microscopic view on what is happening in classroom talk. Another drawback is that it is only based on 12 hours of observation which is not enough for portraying a pellucid picture of classroom interactional architecture. Furthermore, it is based on an ESL context's data which is not totally generalizable to EFL classroom ecology. As Thoms (2012) stated, most of the studies on classroom discourse analysis have been implemented in ESL contexts and there is a need for further research in EFL context as well.

In response to the need for investigating classroom discourse with more an ethnographic and naturalistic approach, conversational approaches (CA) were suggested (Have, 2007). The underlying philosophy behind CA is that social contexts are not fixed and static but are continually being formed by participants through their use of language in turn-taking, turn-sequencing, and opening and closing turns (Sidnell, 2013; Walsh, 2011). According to CA, interaction in L2 classrooms is context-shaped and context-renewed (Seedhouse, 2004). Therefore, CA aims to investigate patterns of turn-talking, turn-passing, turn-ceding, topic assignment, and topic management in L2 classrooms. This approach has some advantages in contrast with system-

based approaches and DA. First of all, there are no predetermined descriptive categories so that there is no attempt to fit the data into preconceived categories. Second, it gives more autonomy to the observer. Finally, it considers the classroom context as a dynamic phenomenon. In order to use CA in SLA studies, Firth and Wagner (1997, 2007) proposed CA-for-SLA perspective which gives microscopic vigor to researchers to have a turn-by-turn analysis of classroom talk. In consonant with this point, Hall (2010) argued that CA can show "situated jointly constructed discursive practices in classrooms" (p. 609). As Markee and Seo (2009) pointed out, there is a need to consider ethnomethodological re-specification in current SLA studies because most of them have utilized a priori theories of learning in providing explanations about learning behaviors. Additionally, Gardner (2013) held that the turn-by-turn analysis of classroom discourse orchestration can give insights into how different educational goals are achieved.

Despite the analytical rigor of CA, most of the studies (Cazden, 2001; Hall, 1995; Nassaji & Wells, 2000; Nystrand, 1997; Waring, 2009) which used this framework analyzed classroom talk in terms of only one pattern which is called Initiation-Response-Feedback or IRF (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975; Waring, 2009) and sometimes referred to as Initiation-Response-Evaluation or IRE (Donato & Brooks, 2004; Thoms, 2012). It can be argued that by considering the complexity and dynamicity of classroom talk, this simple and short pattern cannot shed light on interactional architecture of EFL classrooms. In line with this point, Ko (2009) stated that IRE can be stretched into potentially complicated and entangled interaction patterns when classroom talk will be analyzed microanalytically. The underlying reason behind this gap in the literature on classroom discourse is that, in spite of its advantages, CA has its own drawbacks in analyzing classroom talk. The significant problem, as Walsh (2011) in line with Drew and Heritage (1992)

pointed out, is that this way of investigating classroom discourse is very selective because it explores features of classroom interaction without taking into consideration their contributions to the discourse as a whole. Hence, there is a need to have a more dynamic and microanalytic perspective on classroom talk. As a matter of fact, CA in isolation is unable to give both macroscopic and microscopic views of classroom discourse, so there is a need to have a more dynamic and variable approach which takes into account the emergence, diversity, and dynamicity in classroom talk. The rationale behind this dynamic and variable approach in classroom discourse analysis is the ecological perspective (van Lier, 2004) which holds that ecological research has this capacity to explore the complexity and interrelated processes in the educational ecology. Utilizing it, researchers can come up with a vivid picture of classroom discourse wherein different components of classroom interactional architecture are manifested.

## **2. Purpose of the Study**

This study is part of a large-scale study which investigated EFL classrooms' interactional architecture to find different teachers' interactional moves in its different phases. In this study, the discourse of two main moves of EFL classroom discourse, the beginning and the end, were analyzed by using a dynamic and variable approach. Following the ecological perspective, this study, rather than trying to understand processes which take place in the head of students, considered learning in terms of the interactions between learners and teachers. In line with this, it aimed to have a microscopic view of what is happening at the beginning and at the end of EFL classrooms, which is overlooked in the current line of research on classroom discourse analysis. In sum, using a combined approach in classroom discourse analysis, teachers' interactional strategies were explored to fathom out how they set out and

terminate a session of language teaching. To do so, two research questions were formulated:

1. What are the submoves and their frequencies in opening an EFL class session?
2. What are the submoves, their variations, and their frequencies in closing an EFL class session?

### **3. Method**

#### **3.1 Participants**

Sixty EFL teachers participated in this study, 23 male and 37 female. Teachers were teaching at different levels in conversation classes of a language institute with different years of teaching experience. Twelve teachers had average two years of teaching experience teaching starter and elementary levels, 34 of them had average five years of teaching experience teaching preintermediate, intermediate, and high-intermediate levels, and 14 of them had 10 years or more educational experience teaching high-intermediate and advanced levels. They were selected through purposive sampling (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). This type of selection of participants is in line with the idea of qualitative research which holds that purposeful selection of the participants or sites would best aid the researchers in understanding the issue under the research (Cresswell, 2009). It should be noted that the researchers in this study could not control the ratio of the male to the female participants. In addition, because the focus of this study was on analyzing the mechanics of how teachers and students work in different speech exchange systems in language classrooms, the language proficiency levels of the recorded classes were not controlled as well. With regard to students, it should be pointed out that they were from different levels of proficiency and different ages ranging from 18 to 65 and were learning English in the mixed-gender classrooms.

### **3.2 Data Collection**

Naturalistic inquiry was exploited to investigate teachers talk at the beginning and at the end of a session of their classrooms in this study. In tandem, observation data related to teachers' interactional moves in beginning and terminating a session of EFL classroom were gathered by audio recording. Qualitative observation enables researchers to have first-hand experience with the participants and sites (Cresswell, 2009). According to Cresswell (2009), this nonparticipant observation type has the capacity to gather live data in different social interactions without any imposition on participants. In this study, data collection was implemented by the audio recording of 60 EFL classes. One session of each class was observed and each session lasted 90 minutes; therefore, recordings were predicted to last totally 90 hours. All the recordings were in the form of duration type (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007) because each observation session took one instructional session wherein the recorder was placed in front of the teacher and students. Regarding the role of the observer, he was an outsider in this study in order to achieve maximum naturalness in data, so the audio recorder was only in the class. After recordings, ethical considerations were regarded by telling the participants what the recording was used for, how it was used, and how their anonymity was ensured.

### **3.3 Data Analysis**

After all the observation recordings were transcribed, the transcribed data were analyzed by means of a combined approach which is grounded in two main approaches to investigating classroom discourse, namely conversational analysis (CA) and the dynamic and variable approach. This approach which is based on the ethnomethodology is more flexible by considering different contexts and by acknowledging the relationship between language use and pedagogical aims (Seedhouse, 2004; Walsh, 2002, 2006, 2011). This



approach has the capacity, according to van Lier (2000), to consider classroom environment as an ecology which is constantly shifting wherein different interactional processes are happening. As Walsh and Li (2013) stated, an ecological view of learning emphasizes its emergent nature and attempts to explain learning in terms of the verbal and nonverbal processes in which learners engage. Following a combined approach in analyzing the data, CA and cluster analysis (CL) were exploited concurrently as well. As Walsh and O'Keeffe (2007) pointed out, CL can be exploited to analyze how words combined into chunks enable researcher to better understand the interactional organization of classrooms by finding recurrent patterns of talk. By utilizing this combined CACL perspective, the researchers in this study benefited from both the CA's rigor in providing detailed, up-close view of interaction and CL's capacity in portraying general trends and patterns of language use.

#### 4. Results

##### 4.1 Opening the Class Move

The first research question was aimed at investigating the submoves in starting the class move. As the first main move in the classes, this move included six main submoves. The submoves along with their frequencies are shown in Table 1. Moreover, Figure 1 displays the submoves graphically in which the two constant submoves are represented with dotted lines. It should be noted that no integrations of these submoves could be devised at the time of microanalysis.

Table 1

*The submoves of opening the class move in the EFL classroom*

Submove	Frequency
Greeting	Constant
Name calling	Constant
Asking reason for the absences	37
Checking the assigned homework	24
Checking last session topics + Reviewing	47
Giving brief explanations about the current session plan	27

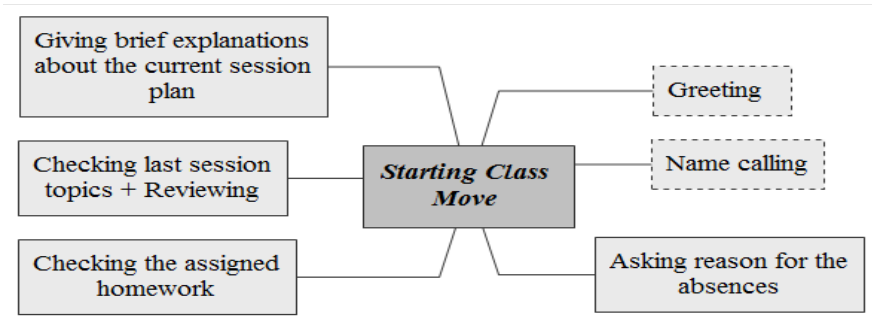


Figure 1. Submoves of opening the class move

The 'opening the class' move, as shown in Table 1, has several submoves. Some of these submoves recurrently occurred in all of the classes and some of them occur occasionally. The frequencies presented in Table 1 show the number of the classes in which those submoves were present. 'Greeting' and 'Name calling' are two submoves that were extant in all EFL classes. One of the realizations of 'greeting' is shown below (see Appendix for transcription conventions):

*T: OK, how is everybody? Great?*

*S1: awful!!!!*

*T: awful? Why?*

*S2: really tried*

*T: on the scale from 1 to 100... what is your degree of your tiredness?*

*S1: 100*

*T: hehehehee!!! 100??... OK you can leave now....*

This is the most frequent submove in the first primary move of the classes. As it can be seen, the teacher here started the class through a real-life question-and-answer procedure. 'Name calling' is the second submove coming immediately after the greeting, as manifested below:

*T: Sameneh is absent, Maryam is here, Afsaneh is here, Parastoo here, Lalaeh here.....OK, except samaneh we have all of you. Good....*

Sometimes the teacher, after calling the names of the students who were not present in the class in the former session, asked why they did not come to class. This move, which happened sporadically after 'name calling,' is called

'asking reason for the absences.' In another manifestation, the teacher asked other students the reasons for the absence of their friends. Both "name calling" and "asking reason for the absences" can be considered in the managerial mode of Walsh's (2011) framework of L2 classroom modes. One realization of this submove can be depicted as below:

*T: first of all, Mahsa??*

*Ss: absent..... [together]*

*T: do you know why?*

*SI: we do not know....*

*T: OK...Arezoo??? ahan here [looking at her].... everything is OK?*

*Ohmmm. Zeinab?? Here??*

*S2: present..... teacher...*

*T: why were you absent last session Zeinab??? Any problems???*

*S2: I had exam teacher*

*T: AHAN... how was it???*

*S2: difficult*

*T: hooommm OK!!! Good*

The next submove of opening the class move is 'checking the assigned homework'. In this submove, teachers checked whether the assigned homework was considered by the students. Another possibility was that the teacher checked the homework and had it rechecked by the students themselves. In the excerpt below, first, the teachers asked for the assigned part and then implemented the rechecking.

*T: OK guys did you do your homework?*

*Ss: yes*

*T: which part I said to do? Elnaz?*

*Ss: teacher.... I think part 2*

*T: OK please read this part Elnaz.....*

*SI: [Reading the answer] She all the times talk in the class because... because she because... she is talkative??*

*T: because she is talkative, she talks too much. Next one Ali....*

The most frequent submove in the first move of the classrooms ecology after 'name calling' and 'asking reason for the absences' submoves is 'checking last session topics + reviewing.' It happened in 47 out of 60 classes analyzed in this study. As it is shown in the next excerpt, in this microaction

the teacher made an inquiry about the topics and achievements of the last session. Then, if necessary, the teacher, in collaboration with the other students or individually, partially reviewed the last session materials. In the excerpt below, the students did the reviewing part. According to Walsh (2011), this microcontext can be classified as the managerial mode because there is a long extended turn by the teacher.

*T: OK... do you remember the last session....it was about..... [Waiting for students to respond]*

*Ss: it was about the present perfect*

*T: ahan... what else????*

*S1: we had a reading about the problems of the teenage children....*

*S2: pronunciation part about /h/ and /y/... I think and the usage of them in the sentences.*

*T: ahan good.... I think we did a lot....*

The last submove in this section is called "giving brief explanations about the current session plan." In this microcontext, the teachers gave an overview of what they wanted to cover in the current session. This falls within the managerial mode of the classroom ecology because one can see a long teacher's turn in the form of an elaborated explanation as the most salient interactional feature (Walsh, 2011).

*T: in this session, we are going to work on page 9, 10 and 11... OK...?... we read about the different foods in Jamaica... then we have a listening on page 10.... about a conversation... in the restaurant then there is a grammar part about too and.....*

#### **4.2 Closing the Class Move**

Closing the class move was analyzed by finding its submoves and their variations. This is the last main move in the classroom ecology. This move functions to close the session of a class. The teacher has the dominant role in this move, and students are passive. In this study, there were 10 submoves/microactions through which the teachers managed this move. These submoves are presented in Table 2 in

frequency order. In addition, they are graphically illustrated in Figure 2.

Table 2  
*The Submoves of Closing the Class Move in the EFL Classroom*

Submove	Frequency
Giving the assignments	28
Reminding students to do the assignments	12
Appreciation of the students' presence	15
Teachers' briefing of the next session plan	30
Teachers' confirmation of students' having questions no problems or questions	6
Teachers' stating attitude about the session	6
Eliciting students' opinion about the session	7
Saying only farewell	9
Teachers' explanation on what has been done in the session	7

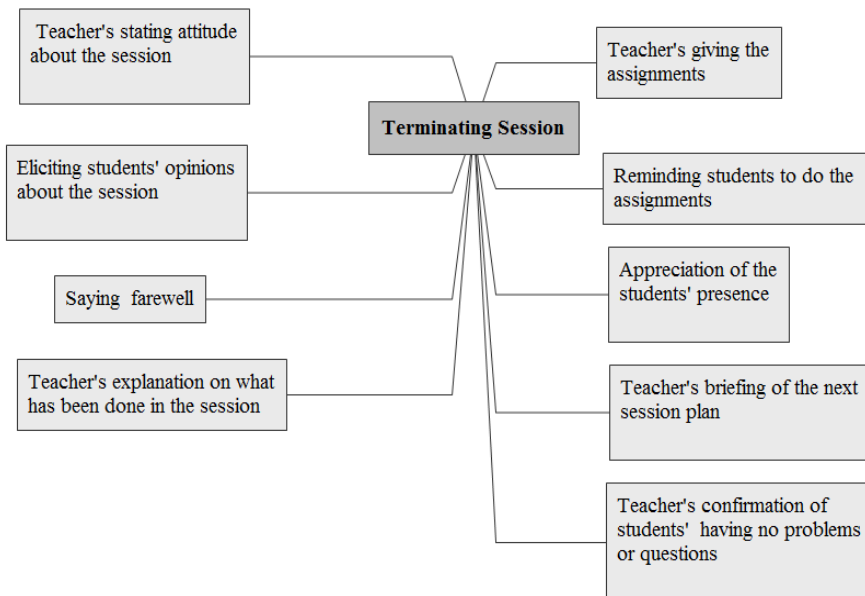


Figure 2. Submoves of closing the class move

The first and the most frequent submove in this move is 'giving the assignments.' As the name suggests, in this submove, the teacher assigned homework to the students. This happened 28 times in the classroom ecology. In some situations, after assigning the homework, the teacher reminded the students of not forgetting doing the homework, which occurred 12 times as the next submove in closing the class move. The next submove is the teacher's appreciation of the students' presence in the current session with the frequency of 15. Briefing on the next session plan is another submove, which recurred 30 times. In this submove, the teacher gave a summary of what would be covered in the next session. In the subsequent submove, the teacher asked the students whether they had questions or problems regarding the current session or not. This occurred 6 times, which is counted as the least frequent microaction in this part. The teacher's stating his/her attitude about the session is the next least frequent submove with the frequency of 6. In this phase, the teacher voiced his/her opinion about different issues in the class such as students' learning, their progresses, and the class progress. Similar to the former submove, in another submove with the frequency of 7, the teacher elicited students' ideas about the current lesson, the difficulty level of tasks or materials, and their learning. In "saying only farewell," which happened 9 times in classrooms, the teacher only said a simple goodbye or similar statements at the end of the session. "Teachers' explanation of what has been done in the session" is the final submove with the frequency of 7. In this submove, the teacher gave a brief summary of what happened in that session.

All the aforementioned submoves have been integrated differently into each other and formed seven variations of 'closing the class' move. Contrasting the uncovered submoves and their combinations with Walsh's (2011) SETT makes clear that no pedagogical goals or interactional features

can be found in relation to closing the class move in in that framework. The variations along with their frequencies are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

*The Variations of Closing the Class Submoves in the EFL Classroom*

Closing the Class Submove Variations	Frequency
Variation 1	
1. Teacher's giving the assignments	
2. Teacher's briefing of the next session plan	
3. Reminding students to do assignments	18
4. Appreciation of students' presence	
Variation 2	
1. Teacher's giving the assignments	
2. Teacher's briefing of the next session plan	14
Variation 3	
1. Teacher's giving the assignments	
2. Teacher's confirmation of students' having no problems or questions	6
Variation 4	
1. Teacher's briefing of the next session plan	
2. Teacher's stating attitude about the session	6
Variation 5	
1. saying farewell	5
Variation 6	
1. Saying farewell	
2. Reminding students to do the assignments	4
Variation 7	
1. Teacher's explanation of what has been done in the session	
2. Eliciting students' opinions about the session	7
3. Appreciation of students' presence	

## 5. Discussion

The first main move in each class has been called 'opening the class'. Teachers in this move follow several pedagogical goals such as checking the students' presence, investigating the absences, checking the homework, reviewing what they taught before, and drawing a plan for the current session. These submoves can have both disciplining and instructional aims. Most of the studies regarding the teacher disciplining aims have investigated the coercive and sensitive nature of this strategy (Bakermans-Kranenburg, Van IJzendoorn, & Juffer 2003; Mainhard, Brekelmans, & Wubbels, 2011a, 2011b; Patterson, 1982). Moreover, this study illustrates that managerial and instructional themes can be added to teachers' disciplining aims. It can be argued that greeting, name calling, checking the last session topics + reviewing, and asking reasons for absences are the four most frequent

submoves of teachers in EFL classes for the starting the class as it is shown in Table 4. Moreover, because this phase of classroom discourse is architecturally the simplest one, no patterns of combination were uncovered for it.

Table 4

*The Most Frequent Submoves Used by Teachers to Start the Class*

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1. Greeting
  2. Name calling
  3. Checking last session topics + reviewing
  4. Asking reason for absences
- 

In view of SETT, it can be argued that no microcontext can be specified in this framework which is explicitly related to closing the class move. In the managerial mode of SETT, it was pointed out that teachers do some actions in order to terminate one part of the class but it is not specified where and how it takes place. Following an ecological perspective to grasp the complexity of the classroom context, this study found that all the classes were closed within a specific interactional microcontext in which the teachers do some actions to finalize the session. In line with this point, it can be said that two elements of classroom ecology (i.e. process and structure), imply that actions in every ecosystem such as a classroom take place in a directed order (van Lier, 2004). Therefore, if there is an initiation move at the beginning of the class, there should be a termination as well. No clear picture can be seen in the former studies related to classroom discourse about what teachers exactly do to terminate a class. In this study, the move-by-move analysis of classroom ecology revealed that closing the class move has been found to consist of nine submoves and seven submove variations. Further analysis has shown that giving assignment is the most frequent submove in this part. It can be stated that many teachers select this strategy to wrap up the sessions. Moreover, there are four other microactions which have approximately similar frequency in classroom ecosystem: (a) reminding students to do the assignments, (b)



briefing of the next session plan, (c) saying only farewell, and (d) confirmation of students' having no problems or questions. When giving assignment is the most frequent submove in classrooms, it can be expected that reminding the students not to forget to do it should be present too. The teachers sometimes give a brief report on what they want to do in the next session or aim to ensure that the students do not have any questions or problems. However, there are some occasions in which the teachers do nothing except saying a simple farewell to terminate the class. One interesting point about this microcontext is teachers' attention to students' affection in this phase. This is manifested in eliciting students' opinion about the session. In this submove, the teachers request the students to express their impressions about the session. In sum, Table 5 illustrates the most frequent submoves in closing the class move.

Pattern analysis sheds light on details of what is happening in closing a phase of classroom ecology. In spite of the paucity of former research studies related to what is happening in the terminating phase of EFL classrooms, results of this study showed several patterns of teachers' interactional submoves in this specific interactional microcontext. As it is shown in Table 6, variations 2, 3, and 5 were the most recurrent ones. In variation 2, the most frequent variation, the teachers gave assignment followed by an overview of the next session plan. It should be noted that this variation is the shortest one as well. This illustrates that most of the teachers want to have a short closing phase for the classes. This pattern can also be seen in variation 3, i.e. the second most recurrent variation, in which teachers give an assignment and inquire whether students have any problems or questions. In addition, the maximum brevity can be observed in variation 5 wherein teachers do not have any microactions to close the session and only say goodbye. It should be noted that students' affection is considered important in variation 7, in which

teachers elicit students' attitudes toward the session after giving a short report on what they have done in the current session.

Table 5

*The Most Frequent Submoves Used by Teachers in Closing the Class Move*

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1. Giving the assignments
2. Reminding students to do the assignments
3. Briefing of the next session plan
4. Saying only farewell
5. Confirmation of students' having no problems or questions

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Table 6

*The Most Frequent Variations of Submoves in Closing the Class Move*

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1. Variation 2
2. Variation 3
3. Variation 5

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## 6. Conclusion

The microscopic analysis of data gathered at the two stages of classroom discourse, i.e. the beginning and the end, shows that classroom interactional architecture is vast and entangled. Even the superficially straightforward stage like the beginning of classroom talk has its own interactional microactions. It further shows that, in this microcontext, teachers follow several goals in spite of the fact that they are not always conscious of them. Looking at the classroom discourse from a holistic perspective, one cannot grasp the complexity of the fingerprint of talk in the two stages of classroom discourse analyzed in this study. The up-close ecological perspective, which is a by-product of utilizing a combined approach in this study, enables the teachers to see that several interactional strategies can be used to start and to finish a class. The wide range of different talk strategies such as name calling, checking homework, briefing of the current session plan, and asking reasons of absences for opening up a class indicates that in addition to analyzing classroom discourse to find out how interaction affects acquisition,

L2 classroom interaction studies need to consider how social relationships in the classrooms orchestrate what is made available for learning and how this learning is done. With regard to the closing of the class stage of classroom discourse, teachers follow managerial, instructional, and affective agendas in this phase of the classroom. Microactions such as eliciting students' attitude toward the session and appreciating students' presence show that teachers pay attention to students' feelings at the end of the session.

The set of interactional moves of the beginning and the end of classroom talk can be a practical action plan for teacher educators to focus on in teacher training courses, especially at their beginning. In actuality, these microactions inform pre-service and in-service teachers of the richness, diversity, depth, and emergence of what is happening in an EFL classroom ecology. For example, they can see the multitude of the ways through them a class can start or finish. Besides, analyzing these microactions in different workshops and post-observation sessions, collaboratively with teachers, helps teacher educators foster reflection about language and language teaching in teachers and stimulate critical discussion in them. In line with Orland-Barak and Yinon (2007) and Sharpe (2008), this "semiotic unraveling" of classroom discourse can develop reflective practices in teachers and guide them in their logical line of thinking about teaching. Future studies should pay much more attention on what is going on when the class starts or when it is about to be finished. As the results of the analysis of starting and terminating session moves indicate, these phases of classroom interactional architecture are intertwined, which implies that more microanalytic studies are needed to investigate classroom discourse.

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**Appendix: Transcription conventions**

- T It stands for teacher.
- S It stands for a student and a number beside it shows the student's sequence in turn taking. For example, S1 means student number one in turn sequence.
- Ss It stands for students as a whole.
- .... It shows a short pause which is less than 3 seconds.
- ( ) The length of pause which takes more than 3 seconds is shown by a number in parentheses.
- [] The explanation of speaker's action during the talk is given between brackets.
- CAPS Capital letters show that a portion of utterance is in a higher volume than the speaker's normal volume.
- ? A question mark conveys that there is a slightly higher intonation.
- hehe It shows the speaker laughter.
- eeee It is an onomatopoeic representation of speaker hesitation in saying an utterance.