

Case Study of Elementary Comprehensive Course of Chinese as a Foreign Language - Based on FIAS

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Abstract: Flanders Interactive Analysis System (FIAS) is a kind of classroom behaviour analysis system, which is composed of coding system, recording method of classroom observation, interactive analysis matrix and classroom analysis. This paper selects the comprehensive demonstration class of elementary Chinese taught by Hongdan Shen of Beijing Language and Culture University as the object of observation and analysis, and uses FIAS to analyse the language interaction between teachers and students in the classroom.

Keywords: Chinese as a Foreign Language; Elementary Comprehensive Course; Classroom Observation; FIAS

1. Introduction

1.1 Flanders Interactive Analysis System

Flanders Interactive Analysis System (FIAS) consists of the coding system describing the interaction between teachers and students in the classroom, the standard of observing and recording the coding and the transfer matrix displaying the data for analysis [1], which is a relatively mature tool for interactive analysis of classroom speech acts between teachers and students. The coding system for describing classroom teacher-student interaction is shown below.

Table 1: Coding system of FIAS [4]

Classification		Code	Statement
Teacher talk	Indirect influence	1	Acceptance of students' feelings: Acceptance and understanding of students' feelings in a non-threatening manner. The feeling may be positive or negative.
		2	Praise or encouragement: praise or encourage a student's behavior. This includes jokes that ease tension without hurting the other student, nodding affirmations, and agreeing with "MMMM" or "go on."
		3	Accept or adopt the student's point of view: to clarify or elucidate the student's point of view or suggestion. When teachers start to express themselves more, move to category 5.
		4	Question: Ask a question for a student to answer.
	Direct influence	5	Presentation: to present facts or express one's opinion, etc.
		6	Give instructions: Instructions that students are expected to follow.
		7	To criticize or assert authority in order to change student behavior to acceptable behavior; Criticize the students and explain why.
Student talk	8	Student passive response: Students speak in response to the teacher's questions or instructions.	
	9	The students took the initiative to speak.	
Other	10	Silence or confusion: a pause, silence, or lack of clarity.	

Although the above code is simple and clear, we will find that the speech interaction between teachers and students is much more complicated in actual classroom observation, and there will be many situations that are difficult to judge. In view of these situations, Flanders formulated some judgment principles [7]. In addition, on the basis of not violating the principles formulated by Flanders, observers also formulated some judgment principles based on the specific situation of this lesson:

Table 2: Judgment principles

	Statement
1	If there is no change in the verbal interaction category within 3 seconds, repeat the previous category code.
2	If the teacher's speech appears "yes, good, um, ok, ok, you said very well" and other catchphrases, it will be recorded as category 2.
3	When the teacher repeats the correct answer of the student, it can be recorded as category 3.
4	When the teacher calls a student by name, it can be recorded as category 4.
5	Teacher's demonstration, PPT display, explanation of rules, pasting teaching AIDS and other behaviors are counted as 5.
6	"Let's see, now please..." counts as 6.
7	Students who answer the teacher's questions, instructions or prompts (pictures and gestures), or students who read after the teacher, will be classified as category 8.
8	Students' free discussion and opinions are marked as 9, and students' initiative to raise their hands is also marked as 9.
9	The time gap before students go on stage is recorded as category 10, which is conducive to the silence of classroom teaching.
10	If multiple verbal interactions occur within three seconds in a recording unit, the main behavior category occupying most of the time is selected.

1.2 The Background of Observation

1.2.1 Basic Information about the Observed Object

The teaching source of this observation is the teaching video of Beijing Language and Culture University Press, and the class type is primary Comprehensive Chinese course. The class period is 46 minutes and 44 seconds, and the observation period is from 0:15 to 0:25. The teacher is Hongdan Shen from Beijing Language and Culture University. There are 8 students from Europe, America, Asia and Africa, with different mother tongue backgrounds. The students are aged between 18 and 30 years old. They are all adult learners, and their Chinese proficiency is at the primary stage.

1.2.2 Preparation before Class

The dynamic teaching AIDS used in class include PPT courseware, animation and video, while the static teaching AIDS include blackboard, pictures and objects [11]. The observer browsed the teaching plan written by the teacher in advance, and had a better understanding of the teaching objectives, teaching difficulties and other aspects of the lesson.

1.2.3 Observation Methods and Tools

The main observation method used in this class observation is statistical analysis, combining quantitative analysis with qualitative analysis. Based on the FIAS, the observers digitally coded the behaviors of teachers and students in class, forming a coding matrix, and then quantitatively analyzed the behaviors of teachers and students in class [2]. In addition, the observers made a quantitative analysis of the classroom teaching based on the professional knowledge of TCSOL and their own experience.

1.2.4 Purpose and Significance of Observation

The purpose of this classroom observation is to analyze the demonstration class teaching, draw lessons from the advantages of classroom teaching, find the problems in classroom teaching, and put forward the corresponding suggestions and strategies for the problems in classroom teaching.

2. Process and Result of Observation

Firstly, the observers repeatedly watched the teaching videos and qualitatively coded the classroom behaviors every 3 seconds according to the categories of Flanders interaction analysis system, which was recorded into a Flanders classroom observation record sheet [6].

Table 3: Flanders classroom observation record sheet

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
1	4	8	4	5	5	8	6	4	8	5	8	5	8	4	8	8	5	8	8	6
2	8	8	5	8	6	8	8	5	8	4	8	8	8	5	8	8	8	5	8	5
3	8	5	8	5	5	4	9	6	5	5	4	9	9	9	9	4	8	8	5	8
4	8	3	3	8	3	8	8	6	4	8	8	8	8	5	8	8	5	8	5	5
5	9	4	8	9	3	5	9	4	8	5	4	8	8	5	8	8	5	8	8	8
6	8	8	4	9	8	5	4	4	10	10	9	9	8	8	8	2	6	4	10	9
7	9	9	8	9	9	9	8	8	9	5	5	9	2	6	5	5	5	5	9	9
8	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	4	8	8	8	4	8	8	3	2	6	8	8
9	4	8	4	3	4	8	6	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
10	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5

After the formation of the table above, the observer pairs these codes, calculates and statistics the number of sequence pairs to form a quantitative matrix graph.

Table 4: Quantization matrix diagram

Classification	Teacher talk							Student talk		Total	
	Indirect influence				Direct influence						
Code	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
1											0
2						3					3
3		1	1	1	1			2			6
4			1	1	1			13	3	2	21
5				4	40			14	4		62
6				3	3			3			9
7											0
8		1	3	7	17	5		30	3		66
9		1	1	4	1	1		4	17		29
10									2	1	3
Total	0	3	6	20	63	9	0	66	29	3	199

Statement: From left to right, and from top to bottom, the light gray areas are E, I, G, H, A and C, and the dark gray areas are F, J, B and D. The bold part represents the steady state areas.

Finally, the observer conducts matrix analysis. Through a series of analyses, the observer can summarize the characteristics of classroom teaching, analyze the advantages, point out the disadvantages, and make corresponding suggestions.

3. Analysis of Observation Results

3.1 Matrix Analysis

3.1.1 Area A, B, C and D

The four areas of the quantization matrix A, B, C and D represent the sum of the values of the corresponding columns, which can present the number of various behaviors of teachers and students in classroom teaching. It can be calculated that the number of teachers' speech is 101, and the main speech acts are explanation and questioning, which number is 63 and 20 respectively. There were also relatively more instructions and acceptance or adoption of students' opinions (9 and 6, respectively), and praise or encouragement (3). There were no sequence pairs expressing acceptance of students' feelings, criticism or maintenance of authority. The number of students' speech is 95, and the main speech act is passive response (66). The number of active response is 29, which also accounts for a large proportion, while silence or confusion is relatively small (3).

Based on the above data, we can preliminarily draw the following conclusions: The proportion of teachers' speech in this class is similar to the number of students' speech. Both teachers and students are the protagonists of the class, and the class is neither a "one-man show" by teachers, nor a "Free style of students" without teachers' explanation and guidance.

3.1.2 The Steady State Areas

The data of the individual cells on the diagonal of the matrix, indicating that some behavior is continuous for more than 3 seconds [8]. These cells are called "steady state areas", indicating that the teacher or student is doing something continuously. By observing the quantization matrix, it can be seen that there are the largest number of 5-5 (40 cases), 8-8 (30 cases) and 9-9 (17 cases) steady state areas in this class, indicating that the continuous explanation time of teachers, the continuous passive

response time of students and the continuous active response time of students are relatively long.

5-5: It is important to note that teaching behaviors such as playing teaching videos are also included in the category of 5. During the observation period, more than a minute is used for the animation to introduce the text teaching, and thus form the occurrences of 5 has been greatly increased. It definitely affects the analysis result, so we should have a special discussion. After excluding the time of playing the animation of the text, we found that the teacher still continued to explain for a long time. Through the observation of the teaching videos, the observer found that the teachers paid attention to the demonstration of sentences and the explanation of rules, which was in line with the teaching needs of the primary Comprehensive Chinese course. It was conducive to the students to follow the pace of the teachers on the basis of understanding, and also conducive to the students to lay a good language foundation.

8-8 and 9-9: A large number of these two steady-state cases indicated that students kept answering for a long time. Observing the class, we can see that teachers arranged more communicative activities, including personal demonstration and interactive discussion among students, indicating that teachers provided students with more communicative situations for students to practice the language points they learned.

3.1.3 Area E

Area E indicates that teachers praise students continuously or elaborate on students' opinions, indicating that there is a good interaction situation between teachers and students [10]. Observing the quantization matrix, it can be found that the number of sequence pairs in this class is small, only 2.

However, we cannot directly draw the conclusion that the interaction situation between teachers and students in this lesson is poor. By observing the class, we can find that teachers always smile and accept students' feelings or opinions. Praise and encouragement run through the whole teaching process. The reason why there are fewer numbers in this area is that teachers usually give positive feedback such as "good" immediately after students answer. Because the time is relatively small, it is not well reflected in the quantitative matrix.

3.1.4 Area F

F area indicates that teachers make demands, criticize or maintain authority [5]. It can be found that there are no figures in this area, indicating that teachers do not always control or manage students' behavior, but give students proper guidance.

3.1.5 Area G and H

The value of both regions is 6, indicating that students stop talking and teachers start talking. Region G indicates that when students stop talking, teachers immediately give feedback to students in indirect ways [9]. For example, acceptance or adoption of students' ideas, which is an effective teaching method. The two grids of 8-6 and 9-6 in the data in area H indicate that the teacher gives instructions immediately after the students give answers. The above two areas show that teachers are experienced and have a tight grasp of classroom rhythm.

3.1.6 Area I

It can be found that the proportion of 4-8 (13 questions) and 5-8 (14 questions) is higher than that of 4-9 (3 questions) and 5-9 (4 questions), indicating that the main answer form of students in this class is passive answer.

It should be noted that a high proportion of passive responses does not mean that students have less freedom and participation in this class. Since this class is a comprehensive primary Chinese class, teachers still need to provide more guidance in class and use leading language and questions to build a "framework" for students in class. In addition, since this observation included the interactive discussion among students in the category of 9, it can also indicate that the teacher arranged communication activities within the scope of students' ability that can play the role of language practice, providing a stage for students to display their skills.

3.1.7 Area J

In this class, the number of 8-8 and 9-9 is mostly 30 and 17, respectively, indicating that students continue to answer questions actively or passively for a long time [3]. There are many overlaps between the analysis and region I, which will not be described here.

4. Conclusion

From the above analysis, it can be seen that the overall interaction between teachers and students in this class is good. The teacher is still the controller of classroom teaching, but she does not always control or manage students' behavior. Instead, she gives students proper guidance and truly takes students as the center. In addition, teachers paid attention to sentence demonstration and rule explanation, and arranged many social activities for students, including personal demonstration and interactive discussion among students. This keeps students engaged.

Nevertheless, the main form of answer in this class is passive answer, which is usually expressed under the instruction or question of the teacher. Considering the particularity of the comprehensive primary Chinese class and the actual Chinese level of students, a high proportion of passive responses does not mean that students have less freedom and participation in this class. That's because the teacher still need to provide more guidance in class and build a classroom "framework" for students by using leading words and questions.

In addition, the number of codes indicating good interaction situation in this lesson is small (e.g. 1, 2, 3), but we cannot directly draw the conclusion that the interaction situation between teachers and students in this lesson is poor. In combination with teaching practice, it can be found that teachers' encouragement and acceptance run through the whole teaching process and can usually give positive feedback immediately after students' answers.

All in all, the lesson of Ms. Shen can provide an excellent example for the majority of Chinese teachers. Her mastery of classroom rhythm, arrangement of classroom content and design of classroom interaction are all worthy of our careful study.

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