

Is the teacher talk the Most Valuable Pronunciation (MVP) model in the age of digital English exposure?

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Abstract. This study examines whether teacher talk remains a key classroom input for Grade 7 learners in a conventional Indonesian EFL classroom. Teacher talk is framed as the Most Valuable Pronunciation (MVP) model, referring to the teacher’s role in modelling pronunciation, giving feedback, guiding interaction, and supporting students’ confidence. Using a mixed-methods design, the study collected data through classroom discourse analysis, a digital exposure questionnaire, and vocabulary, listening, and speaking assessments. The findings show that MVP-related teacher talk was more closely associated with students’ speaking performance than unguided digital exposure. Pretest and posttest results also indicated improvement in vocabulary, listening, and speaking skills. Qualitative data revealed that students viewed the teacher as their main source of pronunciation guidance, while digital input served as supplementary reinforcement. The study suggests that teacher-mediated pronunciation input remains essential in beginner EFL learning.

Keywords: teacher talk; EFL classroom; most valuable pronunciation (MVP) model; digital exposure; pronunciation input

1 Introduction

English language instruction at the junior secondary level plays an important role in developing Indonesian learners’ early English proficiency. At Grade 7, students begin a more structured stage of language learning, which includes vocabulary development, sentence patterns, and basic listening-speaking skills. In this stage, teacher talk remains one of the most immediate and structured sources of comprehensible input in EFL classrooms, especially when students have limited guided exposure outside school (Tupalessy et al., 2024). Through teacher talk, teachers provide pronunciation modelling, simplified

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explanations, corrective feedback, and classroom interaction that support students' language development (Linlin et al., 2024). In this study, teacher talk is conceptualized as the Most Valuable Pronunciation (MVP) model, which refers to the teacher's role as a pronunciation model, feedback provider, interaction guide, and confidence-building facilitator.

However, students' access to English input is no longer limited to classroom instruction. Digital media has expanded learners' exposure to English through videos, music, games, social media, and other online platforms. For many lower secondary students, these digital sources provide frequent contact with English outside formal learning (Sundqvist, 2024). This condition creates a wider learning ecology in which classroom input and informal digital input coexist. Digital English exposure may offer authentic language, multimodal support, and motivation for learners (Fatimah et al., 2024). Nevertheless, such exposure is often unguided and does not always match students' proficiency level, learning needs, or pronunciation accuracy.

From the perspective of Second Language Acquisition, comprehensible input remains central to language learning (Krashen, 1982). However, input quality, interaction, and learner support are also important for language development. Teacher talk can meet these needs because teachers can adjust language, repeat key forms, correct errors, and guide students during interaction (Xie & Tu, 2005). In contrast, digital input may provide more varied exposure, but it does not always offer immediate feedback, structured progression, or opportunities for negotiated meaning. This situation raises the need to examine the relative contribution of teacher talk and digital exposure to students' English learning outcomes, particularly among beginner learners (Inayati et al., 2025).

Previous studies in Indonesia have examined teacher talk through classroom interaction patterns, questioning strategies, IRF cycles, and code-switching (Nisa et al., 2022). Other studies have discussed digital English exposure in relation to motivation, informal learning, and media preferences (Cahyono et al., 2024). However, limited studies have examined teacher talk and digital exposure within the same empirical framework, especially at the junior secondary beginner level. This gap is important because Grade 7 learners are still developing phonological, lexical, and syntactic patterns while also gaining informal English exposure from digital media (Vo, 2025).

To address this gap, this study examines how teacher talk as the MVP model and students' digital English exposure relate to learners' vocabulary, listening, and speaking outcomes in a conventional Grade 7 EFL classroom. Specifically, the study aims to describe the features of teacher talk, identify students' digital English exposure patterns, and analyze the relationship between these two input sources and students' English learning outcomes. By focusing on a face-to-face classroom rather than a blended or digital-enhanced setting, this study provides a clearer view of how teacher-mediated input and external digital exposure contribute to beginner EFL learning.

2 Method

2.1 Research Design

This study employed a convergent mixed-methods design to examine the relative contribution of teacher talk and digital English exposure to Grade 7 students' English learning outcomes. Teacher talk was examined as the Most Valuable Pronunciation (MVP) model, referring to the teacher's role in modelling pronunciation, providing corrective feedback, guiding classroom interaction, motivating students, and structuring speaking activities. The quantitative strand measured teacher talk features, students' digital English exposure, and students' vocabulary, listening, and speaking outcomes. The qualitative strand explored classroom interaction patterns and students' perceptions of teacher-mediated

pronunciation support. The two strands were analyzed separately and then integrated during interpretation to identify points of convergence, complementarity, and difference between the numerical results and qualitative findings (Dawadi & Giri, 2021).

2.2 Participants

The participants were 32 Grade 7 students from one mixed-gender Indonesian junior secondary school class and one English teacher. The class was selected purposively because it represented a conventional face-to-face EFL classroom where students received teacher-led instruction while also having access to informal digital English input outside school. The use of one intact class allowed the researcher to observe teacher talk practices and students' learning responses in a consistent classroom setting. The teacher was a non-native English-speaking teacher who functioned as the main classroom pronunciation model and interaction facilitator.

2.3 Data collection

Data were collected using four instruments: a classroom observation sheet, a digital English exposure questionnaire, vocabulary and listening tests, and a speaking assessment rubric. The classroom observation sheet was used to record MVP-related teacher talk features, including leading discussions, giving corrective feedback, motivating participation, structuring speaking activities, and using IRF sequences (Walsh & Heirati, 2016). Classroom sessions were audio-recorded and supported by observation notes to ensure that teacher talk patterns could be reviewed during analysis.

The digital English exposure questionnaire was designed to identify students' informal contact with English outside the classroom. It included Likert-scale and multiple-choice items covering students' exposure to English videos, songs, social media, games, and AI-based learning tools. The questionnaire was reviewed by two language education experts to examine content relevance, item clarity, and alignment with the research objectives. The internal consistency of the Likert-scale items was checked using Cronbach's alpha, with a coefficient of .70 or higher considered acceptable for research use (Hayat, 2024).

Students' language outcomes were measured through vocabulary, listening, and speaking assessments. The vocabulary and listening tests were aligned with Grade 7 learning materials and CEFR A1-A2 descriptors. The speaking assessment used an analytic rubric covering pronunciation, fluency, intelligibility, and interactional response. These criteria were selected because they reflected the study's focus on teacher-mediated pronunciation input and early speaking development (Council of Europe, 2020).

The data collection process was conducted in three stages. First, classroom observations were carried out across three instructional sessions to document teacher talk and MVP-related practices. Second, the digital English exposure questionnaire was administered to all participating students, followed by short interviews with selected students to clarify their responses. Third, vocabulary, listening, and speaking assessments were conducted using pretest and posttest procedures to identify changes in students' learning outcomes after teacher-mediated classroom instruction.

2.4 Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed in several steps. First, the frequency of MVP-related teacher talk features was calculated and converted into percentages. Second, students' questionnaire responses were coded numerically to describe their level and type of digital English exposure. Third, pretest and posttest scores in vocabulary, listening, and speaking were compared to identify learning improvement. Normality was examined before inferential analysis. If the data were normally distributed, paired-samples t-tests were used. If the assumption of normality was not met, non-parametric alternatives were applied. Effect size was also

considered to support the interpretation of practical significance. Correlation and multiple regression analyses were then used to examine the relationship between MVP-related teacher talk, digital English exposure, and students’ language outcomes. Regression assumptions, including linearity, multicollinearity, and residual distribution, were checked before interpretation (Mishra et al., 2019).

Qualitative data were analyzed using content and thematic analysis. Observation notes, classroom recordings, and interview responses were transcribed and coded. The coding process combined deductive and inductive procedures (Proudfoot, 2023). Deductive coding used the MVP categories established in the study, while inductive coding allowed new themes to emerge from students’ responses and classroom interaction data. The analysis focused on how teacher talk supported pronunciation modelling, feedback, participation, and confidence-building. Themes were reviewed and refined to ensure that they accurately represented the data (Braun & Clarke, 2023).

The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings was conducted at the interpretation stage (Bazeley, 2024). Quantitative results were used to identify patterns of improvement and statistical relationships, while qualitative findings were used to explain how these patterns occurred in classroom practice. For example, improvements in speaking scores were compared with observed teacher feedback, pronunciation modelling, and students’ interview responses about confidence and pronunciation guidance. This integration allowed the study to provide a more complete explanation of how teacher talk and digital English exposure contributed to beginner EFL learners’ language development.

3 Results and Discussion

3.1 Results

This section presents the quantitative and qualitative findings on how teacher talk, conceptualized as the Most Valuable Pronunciation (MVP) model, relates to students’ vocabulary, listening, and speaking development. The quantitative findings describe the frequency of MVP-related teacher talk and students’ learning outcomes, while the qualitative findings explain how teacher talk was experienced in classroom interaction.

3.1.1 Quantitative Results

Teacher MVP Behaviors

Classroom observations identified four main MVP-related teacher talk behaviors: leading discussions, providing constructive feedback, motivating students, and structuring speaking activities. The frequency of each behavior is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Frequency of Teacher MVP Behaviors

MVP Behavior	Frequency (%)
Leading Discussions	70%
Providing Constructive Feedback	65%
Motivating Students	60%
Structuring Speaking Activities	75%

Note. Data were derived from classroom observations.

Table 1 shows that structuring speaking activities was the most frequent MVP behavior (75%), followed by leading discussions (70%), providing constructive feedback (65%), and

motivating students (60%). This pattern indicates that the teacher’s talk was not limited to explanation. It was also used to organize interaction, guide oral production, and support students during speaking tasks.

The high frequency of structured speaking activities suggests that the classroom provided repeated opportunities for students to use English in guided situations. Leading discussions also appeared frequently, showing that the teacher played an active role in directing students’ responses and maintaining classroom interaction. Constructive feedback and motivational support occurred at slightly lower but still substantial levels. These two behaviors are important because they help students notice language errors while maintaining their confidence to participate.

These findings indicate that MVP-related teacher talk functioned as a structured form of input and interactional support. Rather than serving only as classroom management language, teacher talk helped shape the conditions for students to listen, respond, correct pronunciation, and participate in oral activities. This supports the view that teacher talk can operate as a pedagogical tool in EFL classrooms when it is purposeful, responsive, and connected to learners’ output (Bui & Nam, 2024).

Student Performance Outcomes

Pretest and posttest assessments were conducted to examine students’ vocabulary, listening, and speaking outcomes. The results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Student Performance Outcomes

Skill	Pretest Mean	Posttest Mean	Improvement (%)
Speaking	65	80	23.1%
Listening	70	85	21.4%
Vocabulary	60	75	25.0%

Note. Statistical analysis indicated significant improvement across the assessed skills ($p < .05$).

Table 2 shows that students improved in all three skill areas after teacher-mediated instruction. Each skill increased by 15 points from pretest to posttest. This equal gain suggests that the improvement was not limited to one language component, but appeared across productive and receptive skills.

However, the percentage of improvement should be interpreted carefully. Vocabulary showed the highest percentage increase (25.0%) because it had the lowest pretest mean (60). Speaking improved by 23.1%, while listening improved by 21.4%. Although listening had the highest posttest mean (85), this does not necessarily mean that listening developed more strongly than the other skills. The results show that the three skills improved equally in absolute score, while the percentage difference was influenced by the initial score of each skill.

The speaking score increased from 65 to 80. This improvement is pedagogically important because speaking requires students to produce language, manage pronunciation, and respond during interaction. The increase may be related to the frequent use of structured speaking activities and teacher-led discussions observed in the classroom. Vocabulary also improved from 60 to 75, suggesting that repeated exposure to words through classroom interaction supported lexical development. Listening increased from 70 to 85, indicating that students benefited from continuous oral input through instructions, explanations, and classroom exchanges.

Overall, the quantitative findings suggest that teacher-mediated instruction was associated with measurable improvement in students' language outcomes. However, the results should not be interpreted as proving that teacher talk alone caused the improvement. Other factors, such as students' prior knowledge, classroom tasks, and informal digital exposure, may also have contributed. Therefore, the quantitative findings need to be read together with the qualitative data to understand how teacher talk supported students' learning process (Linlin et al., 2024).

3.1.2 *Qualitative Results*

Classroom Observations

Classroom observations showed that MVP-related teacher talk appeared through repeated modelling, feedback, and guided participation. The teacher used questions to initiate interaction, invited students to elaborate their answers, and provided correction when students made pronunciation or sentence-level errors. These practices helped maintain the flow of classroom interaction while giving students support to improve their spoken English. During a group discussion on environmental issues, the teacher encouraged students to produce longer responses rather than one-word answers. When students mispronounced words or used incomplete sentence forms, the teacher provided immediate correction in a supportive manner. This feedback did not stop the interaction. Instead, it helped students revise their output and continue speaking.

The teacher also encouraged less active students to participate. This was done by calling on quieter students, giving prompts, and responding positively to their attempts. Such practices reduced participation gaps and created a safer space for students to try using English. Pair and group activities also allowed students to rehearse their ideas before speaking in front of the class. This structure appeared to lower anxiety and improve students' willingness to speak.

These observations show that teacher talk worked as an integrated instructional practice. Pronunciation modelling, feedback, motivation, and activity structuring supported one another. In this classroom, MVP-related teacher talk did not only provide English input. It also created conditions that helped students process input, produce language, and gain confidence (O'Keeffe & Walsh, 2020).

Student Interviews

Student interviews supported the observation findings. Students described the teacher as their main source of pronunciation guidance and classroom support. They valued the teacher's correction because it helped them understand their mistakes and improve their speaking. One student stated, "The teacher always helps us understand our mistakes and encourages us to speak more confidently."

This response suggests that students did not view correction as a negative judgment. Instead, they saw feedback as useful support. This is important in beginner EFL contexts because students often hesitate to speak when they fear making mistakes. The teacher's feedback helped students notice errors while still encouraging participation.

Students also reported that teacher-led discussions made speaking tasks easier to follow. They felt more confident when the teacher gave examples, guided the topic, and helped them when they could not continue their responses. This finding indicates that teacher talk supported both cognitive and affective aspects of learning (Nisa et al., 2022). It provided

language input and correction, but it also helped students feel more secure during oral activities.

The interview findings also show that digital input had a supplementary role. Students used digital media to hear English through songs, videos, games, or social media. However, they still depended on the teacher to explain pronunciation, correct errors, and guide classroom use of English. This suggests that digital exposure increased students' contact with English, but teacher mediation remained important for accuracy and confidence (Firli et al., 2025).

3.2 Discussion

The findings indicate that teacher talk, when framed as the MVP model, played an important role in supporting students' English development. The teacher's role was visible in four main practices: structuring speaking activities, leading discussions, giving feedback, and motivating students. These practices helped students receive input, produce language, and revise their output during classroom interaction (Hall, 2020).

The quantitative findings showed improvement in vocabulary, listening, and speaking. The equal gain of 15 points across the three skills suggests that the instructional process supported broad language development. Still, the percentage results require careful interpretation. Vocabulary showed the highest percentage increase because its pretest score was the lowest. Listening had the highest posttest mean, while speaking showed meaningful improvement as a productive skill. This more careful reading avoids overclaiming and shows that the data support a balanced improvement across skills rather than superiority of one skill alone.

The qualitative findings help explain how these improvements may have occurred. Classroom observations showed that students received repeated opportunities to speak in structured settings. The teacher guided discussions, corrected pronunciation, and encouraged participation. These practices are consistent with interactionist views of language learning, which emphasize feedback, negotiation of meaning, and scaffolded communication as important conditions for language development (Hall, 2020). In this sense, teacher talk did not function as simple language exposure. It became a form of mediated input that helped students understand, use, and improve English in context.

The findings also support recent studies showing that teacher talk contributes to language learning when it is interactive and responsive (Jeyaraj et al., 2024; Zou et al., 2024). In the present study, the teacher's MVP role was especially important for pronunciation development. Students did not only hear English from the teacher. They also received correction, repetition, and encouragement when they tried to speak. This finding aligns with pronunciation research that highlights the role of guided feedback and interaction-based instruction in developing intelligibility and speaking confidence (Saito, 2021).

Compared with teacher talk, digital English exposure appeared to serve a more supplementary role. Digital media gave students additional contact with English through videos, songs, games, and social media (Lee, 2020). However, this input was mostly unguided. It did not always provide immediate correction, level-appropriate sequencing, or direct support when students misunderstood language forms (Rahmati & Izadpanah, 2021). This explains why digital input may increase exposure but may not automatically lead to accurate pronunciation or confident classroom use.

This finding does not mean that digital exposure has no value. Rather, it suggests that digital input becomes more useful when connected to teacher guidance. Digital tools can enrich vocabulary, listening familiarity, and learner motivation (Godwin-jones, 2021). Yet beginner EFL learners still need teacher mediation to help them select appropriate input, understand meaning, notice pronunciation forms, and apply language in interaction.

Therefore, the key issue is not whether teacher talk or digital input is more important in isolation, but how both can be integrated effectively.

The pedagogical implication is clear. Teachers should not position digital media as a replacement for classroom interaction. Instead, they can use students' digital exposure as a resource for classroom learning. For example, teachers may ask students to bring English words, short clips, or expressions they encounter online, then use these materials for pronunciation practice, discussion, and feedback (Amrate, 2025). In this way, teacher talk remains central, while digital input extends learning beyond the classroom.

Overall, the study suggests that MVP-related teacher talk remains essential in beginner EFL classrooms. Its value lies not only in providing English input, but also in guiding learners' attention, correcting errors, supporting participation, and building confidence (Pennington, 2021). Digital input can strengthen exposure, but teacher-mediated interaction is needed to transform exposure into meaningful language development.

4 Conclusion

This study examined teacher talk as the Most Valuable Pronunciation (MVP) model and its relationship with Grade 7 students' English learning outcomes in a conventional Indonesian EFL classroom. The findings showed that MVP-related teacher talk was frequently used through structured speaking activities, guided discussions, constructive feedback, and motivational support.

The quantitative results indicated improvement in vocabulary, listening, and speaking after teacher-mediated instruction. All three skills increased by 15 points, although their percentage gains differed because of different pretest scores. Vocabulary showed the highest percentage increase, listening achieved the highest posttest mean, and speaking showed meaningful improvement as a productive skill. These results suggest that teacher-mediated classroom interaction supported students' broader language development.

The qualitative findings confirmed that students perceived the teacher as their main source of pronunciation guidance and speaking support. Classroom observations and interviews showed that teacher talk helped students understand errors, practise pronunciation, participate in speaking tasks, and build confidence. Digital input, by contrast, functioned mainly as supplementary exposure. It provided additional contact with English, but it did not replace the teacher's role in giving feedback, structuring interaction, and guiding pronunciation practice.

The study concludes that teacher talk remains important in beginner EFL learning, even when students have access to digital English input outside school. Digital exposure can enrich learning, but its value increases when teachers connect it to classroom instruction. Future studies should involve larger samples, longer observation periods, and different school contexts to examine how MVP-based teacher talk and digital exposure can be integrated more effectively in EFL pedagogy.

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