

Interactional Competence of Japanese SHS Students: Comparing Two Dyads with Different Proficiency Levels

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Interactional Competence

Interactional competence (IC) is “the ability to use the various interactional resources, such as doing turn-taking or dealing with problems of understanding” (Wong & Waring, 2010, p.7).

Communicative competence refers to “the ability to communicate functionally and interactively” (Wong & Waring, 2010, p.7).

It is important for language learners to develop IC and other components of communicative competence at the same time. IC is made of interactional practices, which are turn-taking practices, sequencing practices, overall structuring practices, and repair practices. (Wong & Waring, 2010)

Background

MEXT (2009): High school English classes should be taught in English to maximize students' exposure to English in class.

My classroom practice:

Pair or group works do not go as planned.

- 1) Tasks turn out to be too demanding to do in English.
- 2) Students do not use English even when they can.

<Things to improve>

- 1) Give tasks that students can manage in English.
- 2) Give students purpose of the activity clearly.

3) Help students to enhance their interaction in English.

HOW!??

Finding-1

Turn-taking practices

Higher-proficiency dyad showed projectability.

- Higher-proficiency students overlapped differently from the other students.

H: High engagement

Backchannels

Positive assessments

Taking the floor

L: Interview style

Backchannels (mostly in Japanese)

- Turn-taking practice: way of constructing a turn and allocating a turn in talk-in-interaction (Wong & Waring, 2010)
- Projectability: an essential feature of the TCU that allows the recipients to determine when they can appropriately start or continue with their own talk. English allows relatively early projectability for its SVO structure. (Wong & Waring, 2010; Markee, 2000)

Finding-2

Communication Strategies (CSs)

Higher-proficiency dyad used richer varieties of CSs more tactfully.

- Both dyads used CSs, but less-proficiency students did not handle CSs as skillfully as the other dyad.

- CSs: “interlocutors’ negotiation behavior for coping with communication breakdowns and their use of communication enhancers.” (Nakatani, 2010, P.118)
- Nakatani (2010) found that the high-scoring students in the speaking test in his research have shown the use of **response for maintenance strategies** (providing active response, shadowing), higher production rate, then signals for negotiation, and the result of the oral pretest scores.

Data Set 1

Higher-proficiency pair talking about food

Excerpt 1

128	A	how taste.like. how does it taste like?
129	B	ah:: ↑everyone says ik everyone explains is like it u::m it taste like
130		okonomiyaki?
131	A	[u::n
132	B	but [I don't think] <<like that>>
133	A	[what's difference]
134	B	because it's so thin?= =>>uh huh<<=
135	A	and like it's not it's not ko okonomiyaki and I don't think it's
136	B	similar [() okonomiyaki because I can't describe how is [it but
137		[u::n [ah::
138	A	u::m. yeah. it has ah:: inside of perayaki?= =>>uh huh<<=
139	B	it also has ah:: tosashimizu food?
140	A	[u::n
141	B	ah:: shimizusaba= =>>shimizusaba<< [ah:: that's cool
142	A	[° ah::° and like katsuobushi? [ah sodabushi?= [>>uh huh<<=
143	B	=>>uh huh<<=
144	A	=from tosashimizu? so in a in perayaki? ah every the dishes were
145	B	from [° tosashimizu.°
146	A	[u::n but unfortunately!:<<don't like fish.>>=
147	B	↑REALLY= =I'm \$\$\$orry yeah [>>but I can eat << tuna,
148	A	[° e°
149	B	only tuna.
150	A	a::nd <<bonito.>>
151	B	[ah::
152	A	[like that or salmon. >>but I cannot<< <<sa::ba::>>>>sorry<< ah
153	B	↑really= =yeah
154	A	“ah maybe you should try more”
155	B	u::n. what food you don't like.
156	A	(1.5) [I don't like I
157	B	[is there any food is there any food you hate? [no?
158	A	[I like every
159	B	fo[od
160	A	[oh:: that's that's nice
161	B	hh
162	A	can you eat piman?
163	B	yes I [can
164	A	[ah:: >>“that's good”<<

Data Set 2

Less-proficiency pair talking about shopping

Excerpt 2

027	A	is there u::m convenience store?
028	B	yes one [convenience store
029	A	[oh
030	A	um
031	B	[hh
032	A	[hh u::n do you have supermarket?
033	B	yes [so small “supermarket?”
034	A	[oh a::h
035	B	but my town has <<big>> u::n “ekittenanteiundakke”
036	A	ah station= =>>station
037	B	un un
038	A	so:: many fresh fruits [>>vegetable fish<< [so it's very popular in
039	B	[hee:: [hee::
040	A	my town? [so
041	B	[fu::n un un
042	A	yes
043	B	

Excerpt 3

075	A	un un (1.5) [hh u::nto
076	B	[hh
077	A	[hh \$unn\$ \$tyottomatte\$
078	B	hh ah
079	A	un
080	B	“naniga”
081	A	=yeah i u::n last year, i like >>i like<< bts? but now i don't listen
082	B	[° to music°
083	B	[u::n why
084	A	↑Ah:: [hh
085	B	[hh
086	A	ah:: ah:::: was ah:: i am not >>interested in.<< them \$now\$ [hh
087	B	[fu::n [ah::
088	A	() yakedo.
089	B	ah::
090	A	yeah
091	B	“ok”
092	A	(2.5) [u::n
093	B	[u::n
094	A	un
095	B	how was your (2.0) class today?
096	A	ah classu?
097	B	yes
098	A	yeah. it was ah (2.0) at one one? first um? hh ee? firsto machigaeta
099	B	mistake mistake
100	B	hh [jiyo
101	A	[ne ah at at class, i >>saw many<< pictures?
102	B	u::n

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