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Task completion or opportunity to talk more? Developing student interactional skills

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Some teachers may have the experience of students terminating their L2 speech immediately after an allocated speaking task has been completed in minimal fashion and teachers have struggled to increase the amount of student talk beyond these minimized turns. Numerous learning-motivation studies have demonstrated that the factors behind minimized talk are language anxiety towards syntactic, lexical, or phonological accuracy. However, those studies are based on students'self-evaluation through questionnaire or interview. In other words, the approach does not focus on how they actually interact in classroom. This presentation will outline ways students can be encouraged to expand their talk. Firstly, the presenter will detail how students manipulate L1/L2 language choice and speech acts in classroom oral activities and how students attend to their limited L2 proficiency. Second, the language use will be categorized based on topic, learning task, interactant(s) and peripheral participants such as overhearer and eavesdropper. The findings suggest that students produce the least voluntary L2 speech when they are working on information-gap tasks. Furthermore, participant variation does not affect their speech rate. That is, even direct teacher observation does not affect the amount of talk. Additionally, frequency of their embodiment gesture use increases proportional to their L2 speech amount. Finally, some teaching tips to facilitate more expanded turns will be widely demonstrated based on the findings. An awareness of those interactional issues can help both students and their teachers orientate themselves to an interactional view of language with concomitant consequences for teaching and learning.

Primary author: OGAWA, Yosuke (Kobe University) **Session Classification:** Presentations C

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