

Multimodality as a Resource for Interaction in a Group Oral Proficiency Test

Jaeuk Park, Joe Fowler & Spencer Hazel
Newcastle University

Outline

- Background of the current study
- Motivation and research point of the study
- Methodology
- Data presentation
- Comments and feedback

Background

- Interactional Competence (IC) has been widely discussed in the context of the L2 classroom (Hall, 1999; Young, 2003, 2009; Markee, 2008; Hall et al., 2011)
- Developing interactional competence (IC) depends on how well learners co-construct meanings with their interlocutors (Markee, 2008)
- Increasing interest in IC in the field of SLA oral proficiency testing (paired tests and small group tests) (Sandlund et al., 2016)

Background

- Vast majority of studies showing how speech produced between examiners and examinees affects interactional competence (IC) (Greer and Potter, 2008; Gan et al, 2009)
- Co-construction has been shown to have the potential to elicit various interactional competencies, including topic management, clarification request, and turn taking (Taylor, 2001; Brooks, 2009; Nakatsuhara, 2009)

Findings suggest what should be included in test construction and rating scales with regard to interactional abilities.

Background

- Turn taking has been widely researched in oral speaking test context from a CA perspective, (Lazaraton, 2002; Galaczi, 2008; Gan et al., 2009; May, 2009; Nakatsuhara, 2009; Gan, 2010; Moore, 2011; Seedhouse, 2013)
- Offering insightful findings about the co-construction of interaction between participants
- Turn-taking practices should be taken into consideration as an indicator of IC (Green and Potter, 2008)

Speaking Criteria

- Task Fulfilment and Interaction
 - Fulfils the task in every respect.
 - Contributions are consistently both highly appropriate & effective.
 - Justifies & fully elaborates on all points, where appropriate.
 - Manages all initiation & **turn-taking** naturally & extremely skilfully.
 - Does not dominate the discussion

Speaking Criteria

- Task Fulfilment and Interaction

%	TASK FULFILMENT & INTERACTION
>80 CEF C2 IELTS 8+	Manages all initiation & turn-taking naturally & extremely skilfully
70-79 CEF C1 IELTS 7 -7.5	Manages all initiation & turn-taking very skilfully
60-69 CEFB2.2 IELTS 6-6.5	Manages most initiation & turn-taking skilfully
50-59 CEF B1.2-2.1 IELTS 5-5.5	Manages initiation & turn-taking skilfully

Methodology

- Tasks

: Actual test of 25-minute video-taped small group tasks

- a. topic discussion
- b. main discussion on one of three options
- c. preparing notes on three options and discussing
- d. questions and answers

Episodes where examinees' speakership changes were chosen.

Methodology

- Participants
 - Out of 64 test-takers, 12 were chosen.
 - Lower and upper-intermediate levels were used to ensure that they represent the middle of the proficiency level.
 - Adult students in mixed gender.
 - Two examiners were interviewed.

Methodology

- Data Analysis
 - Conversation Analysis (CA)
 - Stimulated Recall (SR)













Interviews

Do you recognise that test takers often use multimodality in their interaction?

- It's actually quite an **important part** of the speaking test, using non-verbal communication to emphasise probably, things like turn-taking, interrupting, agreeing, and all things along those lines, so it does support what a student says an opinion. (Ivan)
- we expect it and we teach it explicitly. Even though it's not explicitly defined in the criteria it's part of their interaction tools. (Sonia)

Interviews

Do you think that the aspect of this multimodality should be more taken into consideration in your marking criteria?

- **Not necessarily** because although it's an interactive tool and it facilitates all of that communication, we are actually testing their language skills. (Sonia)
- so I'm not sure that it should be more explicit. But to test that explicitly would be kind of **weird** to me, and **beyond our remit really as language teachers** (Sonia)
- I think it is taken into consideration as **part of 'interaction and turn-taking'** but to have it as separate criteria that we would then scale somehow I don't think it's necessary because we teach English for Academic Purposes, **not communication or interaction** (Sonia)

At the moment

- Analysing data
- Coming up with findings
- Hoping to include multivariate nature of interactional ability
- Thinking about planning how to conduct future research using quantitative data

Thank you!

Any comments would be
appreciated

References

- ❖ Brooks, L. (2009) 'Interacting in pairs in a test of oral proficiency: Co-constructing a better performance', *Language Testing*, 26, pp. 341–366.
- ❖ Galaczi, E.D. (2008) 'Peer-peer interaction in a speaking test: The case of the first certificate in English examination', *Language Assessment Quarterly*, 5(2), pp. 89–119.
- ❖ Gan, Z. (2010) 'Interaction in group oral assessment: a case study of higher- and lower-scoring students', *Language Testing* 27, pp. 585-602.
- ❖ Gan, Z., Davison, C. and Hamp-Lyons, L. (2009) 'Topic negotiation in peer group oral assessment situations: a conversation analytic approach', *Applied Linguistics*, 30, pp. 315–44.
- ❖ Greer, T. and Potter, H. (2008) 'Turn-taking practices in multi-party EFL oral proficiency tests', *Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 5, pp. 297–320.
- ❖ Hall, J.K. (1999) 'A prosaics of interaction: The development of interactional competence in another language', in Hinkel, E. (ed.) *Culture in second language teaching and learning*. New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 137-151.
- ❖ Hall, J.K., Hellermann, J. and Pekarek Doehler, S. (2011) *L2 interactional competence and development*. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- ❖ Kääntä, L. (2012) 'Teachers' embodied allocations in instructional interaction', *Classroom Discourse*, 3(2), pp. 166-186.
- ❖ Markee, N. (2008) 'Toward a Learning Behavior Tracking Methodology for CA-for-SLA', *Applied Linguistics*, 29(3), pp. 404-427.
- ❖ Sandlund, E., Sundqvist, P. and Nyroos, L. (2016) 'Testing L2 Talk: A Review of Empirical Studies on Second-Language Oral Proficiency Testing', *Language and Linguistics Compass*, 10(1), pp. 14-29.