Types of teacher talk facilitating students' spontaneous L2 utterances

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The purpose of this study is to investigate which kinds of teacher talk can instigate spontaneous L2 utterances from learners. The data for this study consists of transcribed audiotapes of three EFL classes. The participants are university students ranging in age from 18 to 21 years. In order to examine which types of question or negotiation can contribute to facilitating students' spontaneous L2 utterances, teacher talk was divided into two categories: question types and negotiation strategies. Following the taxonomies of Long & Sato (1984) and Barnes (1969, 1976), questions given to learners from teachers were classified into four types: display closed, display open, referential closed, and referential open. As for negotiation strategies, six as described by Ellis (2008) were used: request for clarification, confirmation check, recast, repetition, metalinguistic feedback, elicitation, and explicit correction. All these types of question and negotiation strategies used by teachers were analyzed using multiple regression analysis to reveal their relationship with students' spontaneous L2 utterances. Types of teacher talk which facilitate students' L2 utterances vary greatly among classes. The successful negotiation strategies common to the three classes were elicitation and confirmation check; however, repetition did not instigate learners' utterances, which was a departure from the hypothesis. As for question types, most responses to display types of questions were not spontaneous, while referential types of questions helped learners to produce more spontaneous conversational turns. The data confirms the hypothesis that referential questions make a greater contribution to learners' spontaneous L2 utterances than display types of question. Only a small number of L2 utterances were seen in the class with fewer negotiation strategies. Problems inhibiting L2 utterances of learners as well as other facilitating features of teacher talk will be covered in the presentation.

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