

Arzu Ünel, Meryem Mirioğlu

Syntactical Modifications in Teacher Talk of Native and Non-Native Speakers in EFL Classrooms

Theory and Practice of Second Language Acquisition 1/1, 125-141

2015

Artykuł został opracowany do udostępnienia w internecie przez Muzeum Historii Polski w ramach prac podejmowanych na rzecz zapewnienia otwartego, powszechnego i trwałego dostępu do polskiego dorobku naukowego i kulturalnego. Artykuł jest umieszczony w kolekcji cyfrowej bazhum.muzhp.pl, gromadzącej zawartość polskich czasopism humanistycznych i społecznych.

Tekst jest udostępniony do wykorzystania w ramach dozwolonego użytku.

Arzu Ünel

Toros University, Turkey

Meryem Mirioğlu

Cukurova University, Turkey

Syntactical Modifications in Teacher Talk of Native and Non-Native Speakers in EFL Classrooms

Abstract: Classroom language in EFL classrooms comprises the core of communication between teachers and learners. Teacher talk plays a central role in understanding the nature of classroom language in this respect. According to Krashen's input hypothesis, teacher talk also constitutes an important source of comprehensible input for the language acquisition of the learner (Krashen, 1981). To make the input comprehensible, teachers may make modifications in their vocabulary, syntax, rate of speech or discourse. Accordingly, the aim of this study is to discover whether native speakers of English and non-native speakers of English make any syntactical modifications in their teacher talk at elementary and pre-intermediate levels and to try to find out what kind of syntactical modifications they make if they modify their syntax during their speech. The study was carried out with eight EFL instructors (both NSs and NNSs) at Çağ University in Turkey, using their audio-recordings, a questionnaire, and interviews. Antconc 3.2.1 Program and SPSS 17.0 Program were used to analyze the quantitative data. The findings of the data were incorporated with the results of interviews forming the qualitative part of the study. The results of the data revealed that native speakers of English and non-native speakers of English made syntactical modifications in their teacher talk at elementary and pre-intermediate levels. They ranged from subordinate clauses to the types of sentences. The findings of the study also demonstrated that syntactical modifications in the teacher talk of native speakers and non-native speakers at both levels depended on the proficiency level of the learners although not all of these modifications formed a statistically meaningful difference.

Keywords: English as a foreign language, teacher talk, syntactical modifications, comprehensible input

Introduction

Studies on language learning have made an enormous impact on the study of the classroom environment which facilitates communication and enables different kinds of interaction between teachers and learners. Cullen (1998) elucidates the necessity of distinction between the world outside and the classroom, stating that the classroom is unique on its own with its rules and conventions. When we examine recent studies on classroom conversations, it can be easily seen that studies of some researchers, such as Wright (2005), Ellis and Barkhuizen (2005), and Seedhouse (2004), mainly concentrate on the features of classroom interaction between teachers and learners and the language that teachers use during interaction. Therefore, it is essential to understand the notion of teacher talk in the classroom environment, a significant area for us to study.

While Xu (2010) defines teacher talk as “an instrument of implementing teaching plan” (p. 46), Ellis (1994) focuses on the difference between teacher talk and other kinds of talk, stating “the teacher talk is to address language learners in the classroom differently from the way which addresses other kinds of classroom learners by making modifications in form and function to promote interaction between learner and teacher” (p. 726).

Along with the definition and the function of teacher talk, the features of teacher talk are also very significant. Teacher talk has two main features. While the first feature focuses on the form of teacher talk, such as pauses, speed, repetition and modifications, the second feature stresses the characteristics of the language that teachers use to organize and control classes, the quality and quantity of teacher talk (Xiao-yan, 2006).

Some Theoretical Background

Understanding teacher talk necessitates looking into language acquisition and input. In that sense, the concepts of nature and nurture illustrate the core of second language acquisition. While nature means that learners learn the language innately, nurture presumes that the development of the language is stimulated by the environment while learners are in a process of interaction (Doughty & Long, 2003). Many researchers (Hatch, 1983; Krashen, 1982) have pinpointed that SLA is also built upon learners’ getting comprehensible input. It is obvious that acquisition occurs when learners are exposed to language input that correlates with their level of proficiency. It is beyond doubt that one way of acquiring a second language is through simplified input or speech

adjustments. Gaies (1983) makes a comparison of the classroom language of teachers at different levels and highlights that teacher talk is roughly tuned to the learners' language proficiency.

Krashen (1981) highlights teacher talk as an important source of comprehensible input for the language acquisition of the learner. He (1982) emphasizes that learning takes place by means of the learner's access to comprehensible input. He (1982) also states that comprehensible input involves "a language that contains structures that are 'a little beyond' our current level of competence ($i + 1$), but which is comprehensible through our use of context, our knowledge of the world, and other extra linguistic cues directed to us" (p. 21). When the " $i + 1$ " structure is examined, " i " stands for learners' current linguistic competence and " 1 " represents the items that learners intend to learn. The Input theory also has two corollaries (Krashen, 1985):

Corollary 1: Speaking is a result of acquisition, not its cause; it emerges as a result of building competence via comprehensible input.

Corollary 2: If input is understood and there is enough of it, the necessary grammar is automatically provided. The language teacher need not attempt deliberately to teach the next structure along the natural order—it will be provided in just right quantities and will automatically review a sufficient amount of comprehensible input (p. 2).

Once and for all, in order to understand the central role of modified input in second language acquisition to a high degree, it is necessary to know what modifications native and non-native speakers of English typically make when communicating with non-native learners.

Previous Studies on Syntactic Features of Teacher Talk

Besides the lexical, phonological, and discourse features of teacher talk, syntactic features also play an important role in understanding the modifications in teacher talk. In that sense, the proportion and the frequency of subordination in TT are significant in terms of showing complexity in syntax. The analysis of the frequency of the subordinate clauses in Henzl's study (1973; 1979) illustrates teachers' tendency to use fewer subordinate clauses to non-native learners. Gaies (1976) emphasizes a similar trend regarding the increasing rate of different kinds of subordinations (noun, adjective, and adverb clauses) in correlation with the proficiency level of the learners while Chaudron (1979) proposes this variation just for relative clauses.

Pica and Long (1986) and Wesche and Ready (1985) examine syntactic subordination in teacher talk by taking the number of clauses per T unit into account. In these studies, they have noted no important differences in the degree of subordination in teacher talk directed to L2 learners in comparison with NS-NS communication. On the other hand, Chaudron (1979) emphasizes significantly less complexity in TT to low and high beginners in contrast with greater complexity in teacher talk towards advanced learners. Besides, some studies (Gaies, 1977; Ishiguro, 1986) have found significantly less complex teacher talk addressing non-native learners.

The Study: Overview

This current study attempts to focus on lexical and syntactical modifications in teacher talk of native and non-native speakers of English in classrooms where the target language is English. Due to the scarcity of studies on such kind of modifications of teacher talk, it is hoped that this study may fill a gap and provide some insights into efficacious English teaching practices.

Methods

The study has a mixed research design in which qualitative and quantitative methods were integrated. The data used in this research design has been obtained from audio-recordings of eight EFL instructors (both NSs and NNSs) at Çağ University in Turkey, a questionnaire aiming at obtaining participants' background information and an interview regarding their views on the modifications in teacher talk.

Participants. The participants of the study were eight EFL instructors from the Preparatory School at Çağ University, the first foundation university in the southern part of Turkey. Convenience Sampling in which participants were chosen randomly was used during the selection of participants. Four instructors who participated in this research are native speakers of English, three of whom are females. Their ages vary between 28 and 36. While one of the instructors holds a degree in mass communications, three instructors graduated from a department directly related to the English language. Among these three instructors, one of them holds both master's and doctorate degrees and one

participant is presently doing her master's degree. The teaching experience of these participants ranges from 4 to 15 years.

As for the non-native speakers of English, their ages vary between 29 and 57. Among the four non-native instructors, two of them are graduates of ELT, and the other two hold Bachelor of Arts degrees in English Language and Literature and American Culture and Literature. While two of them are master's degree students, the other two do not hold any postgraduate degrees. Their teaching experience varies between seven and 37 years.

Tools. Three types of instruments were utilized: audio-recordings, a questionnaire on the background of the participants, and an interview regarding participants' opinions on the modifications in TT.

Data Collection Procedure

To obtain the data, participants' speaking lessons were chosen. The total number of learners in each class ranged from 15 to 19 at the elementary and pre-intermediate levels.

While there were two classes at the elementary level, there were also two classes at the pre-intermediate level. Each class at the elementary and pre-intermediate levels was taught by one NS and one NNS. Because there were two classes at the elementary level, there were in all four lessons to be recorded.

Four other classes were taught in the same fashion at the pre-intermediate level. Each session of recordings lasted for 50 minutes in parallel with the duration of each single class. The researcher and a native speaker of English conducted transcriptions of eight sessions of recordings over a span of four months. They transcribed 235 pages in total. These transcriptions were also double-checked by both the researcher and a native speaker of English.

To collect the data, permission of both the director of the Preparatory School and eight EFL instructors was asked in advance prior to in-class recordings. The researcher did not attend the classes in order not to disrupt the natural flow of the lessons. Before each class started, the voice recorder was placed in an inconspicuous place in the class so as to minimize the negative effect of the device on the learners while simultaneously increasing the quality of natural data. In addition, the researcher waited outside while the instructor was audio recording the lesson. To obtain the data as natural as possible, instructors were not given information about the main focus of the research.

As for the implementation of the questionnaire, it was filled out by the instructors individually. However, during the questionnaire phase, one of the

participants at the elementary level was pregnant. Therefore, the researcher sent the questionnaire to the researcher via e-mail. The participant filled the questionnaire and sent it back to the researcher to be examined.

As the last phase of the data collection, an interview was conducted with each participant. Appointments were made to talk with the instructors one by one. Then, the researcher met the instructors to interview them on the appointed day.

Data Analysis

Data analysis of the study is based on the analyses of teachers' speech at the elementary and pre-intermediate levels regarding syntactical modifications. Besides the analysis of the quantitative data, a questionnaire was filled out and an interview was conducted.

As for the analysis of teachers' speech in relation to syntactical modifications, words and sentences in the teacher talk of NSs and NNSs at the elementary and pre-intermediate levels were counted by both the researcher and a native speaker of English. The obtained data from each instructor's lesson were entered into SPSS Statistics 17.0. Chi square (X^2) statistics was utilized.

Additionally, types of verbs (transitive, intransitive, and linking verbs), verb moods (indicatives, imperatives and subjunctives), voice of verbs (active and passive voice), the verb "be," subordinate clauses (noun clauses, adjective clauses, and adverb clauses) and types of sentences (compound, complex, and complex compound sentences) were determined and checked by both the researcher and a native speaker of English. The number of types of verbs, verb moods, voice of verbs, the verb "be," subordinate clauses and types of sentences were calculated one by one. It was examined whether any significant differences existed in the uses of these syntactical structures uttered by NSs and NNSs at the elementary and pre-intermediate levels according to Chi squared distribution in SPSS Statistics 17.0.

Regarding the analysis of the questionnaire that comprised the qualitative part of the study, it was beneficial to get background information on the participants and to illustrate this information (their age, gender, education, and work experience).

An interview was also conducted so as to get instructors' ideas about whether the language of the teacher in an EFL classroom should be modified according to the proficiency level of the non-native learners. The researcher took notes and asked what kinds of modifications needed to be made when the instructors mentioned the necessity of the modifications towards learners. For

the analysis of the interview, the researcher examined the responses regarding the types of modifications that instructors preferred to make towards non-native learners.

Results

Table 1

Differences in the use of subordinate clauses in teacher talk of NSs and NNSs at the elementary level

Subordinate clauses	NSs	NNSs	χ^2	Sd	P
Noun clause	39	22	4.738	1	0.030
Adjective clause	14	14	0.000	1	1.000
Adverb clause	48	24	8.000	1	0.005

In Table 1, when subordinate clauses that NSs and NNSs used at the elementary level were examined, it was seen that NNSs used 22 noun clauses in their speech, NSs uttered 39 noun clauses. In parallel with the results, a meaningful difference in the use of noun clause between teacher talk of NSs and NNSs was noticed ($p < 0.05$). This meaningful difference between the speech of NSs and NNSs at the elementary level was also present for the use of adverb clauses ($p \leq 0.05$). Adverb clauses were used more by NSs rather than NNSs. The number of adverb clauses in teacher talk of NSs was two times as great as the number of adverb clauses in the speech of NNSs. NSs employed 48 adverb clauses whereas NNSs used 24 adverb clauses.

In contrast with the use of noun clauses and adverb clauses, adjective clauses were used in the same number by both NSs and NNSs (14 adjective clauses in both speeches). Therefore, in this respect no important difference was observed between the teacher talk of NSs and NNSs at the elementary level.

Table 2

Differences in the use of subordinate clauses in teacher talk of NSs and NNSs at the pre-intermediate level

Subordinate clauses	NSs	NNSs	χ^2	Sd	P
Noun clause	71	39	9.309	1	0.002
Adjective clause	25	16	1.976	1	0.160
Adverb clause	54	43	1.247	1	0.264

As emphasized in Table 2, NSs used more noun clauses than NNSs did at the pre-intermediate level. There were 71 noun clauses in the speech of NSs while there were 39 noun clauses in the teacher talk of NNSs. Therefore, it is obvious to say that there was a remarkable difference in the use of noun clauses between the speech of NSs and NNSs ($p < 0.05$).

However, significant discrepancies were not seen in the use of adjective and adverb clauses between the teacher talk of NSs and NNSs at this level although NSs used more adjective and adverb clauses than NNSs did (25 adjective clauses in the teacher talk of NSs, 16 adjective clauses in the teacher talk of NNSs, 54 adverb clauses in the speech of NSs and 43 adverb clauses in the speech of NNSs).

Table 3

Differences in the use of subordinate clauses between teacher talk of NSs at the elementary level and teacher talk of NSs at the pre-intermediate level

Subordinate clauses	Elementary level	Pre-intermediate level	χ^2	Sd	P
	NSs	NSs			
Noun clause	39	71	9.309	1	0.002
Adjective clause	14	25	3.103	1	0.078
Adverb clause	48	54	0.353	1	0.552

Table 3 illustrates an increasing pattern in the use of noun clauses, adjective clauses, and adverb clauses in the teacher talk of NSs at the pre-intermediate level. To specify the data, NSs at the pre-intermediate level used more noun and adjective clauses rather than NSs did at the elementary level although there was a marked difference in just noun clauses ($p < 0.05$). Regarding adverb clauses, NSs used more adverb clauses at the pre-intermediate level surpassing NSs in their speech at the elementary level but that does not form a great difference ($p < 0.05$).

Table 4

Differences in the use of subordinate clauses between teacher talk of NNSs at the elementary level and teacher talk of NNSs at the pre-intermediate level

Clauses	Elementary level	Pre-intermediate level	χ^2	Sd	P
	NNSs	NNSs			
Noun clause	22	39	4.738	1	0.030
Adjective clause	14	16	0.133	1	0.715
Adverb clause	24	43	5.388	1	0.020

Table 4 shows that NNSs at the pre-intermediate level used more noun, adjective, and adverb clauses than NNSs did at the elementary level. Despite the high rate of subordinate clauses in the teacher talk of NNSs at the pre-intermediate level, there was an observable difference only in use of noun and adverb clauses between the teacher talk of NNSs at the elementary and pre-intermediate levels ($p < 0.05$ for noun clauses, $p < 0.05$ for adverb clauses).

Table 5

Differences in the use of sentences in teacher talk of NSs and NNSs at the elementary level

Sentences	NSs	NNSs	χ^2	Sd	P
Compound sentence	26	26	0.000	1	1.000
Complex sentence	74	48	5.541	1	0.019
Complex-compound sentence	14	6	3.200	1	0.074

As observed in Table 5, the number of compound sentences used by NSs was the same as the number in the teacher talk of NNSs. Both NSs and NNSs used 26 compound sentences. In addition, NSs used 14 complex-compound sentences. However, NNSs uttered only 6 complex-compound sentences. According to statistical calculations, no significant discrepancies were observed between NSs and NNSs in the uses of compound and complex-compound sentences at the elementary level ($p > 0.05$ for compound sentences, $p > 0.05$ for complex-compound sentences) although the use of complex sentences shows a meaningful difference between teacher talk of NSs and NNSs at the same level ($p < 0.05$).

Table 6

Differences in the use of sentences in teacher talk of NSs and NNSs at the pre-intermediate level

Sentences	NSs	NNSs	χ^2	Sd	P
Compound sentence	34	23	2.123	1	0.145
Complex sentence	83	76	0.308	1	0.579
Complex compound sentence	29	11	8.100	1	0.004

In Table 6, NSs used more compound, complex, and complex-compound sentences than NNSs did at the pre-intermediate level. Despite this, the number of compound and complex sentences used by NSs and NNSs at the pre-intermediate level did not reflect any important differences ($p > 0.05$ for compound sentences, $p > 0.05$ for complex sentences) while the number of complex-compound sentences used by NSs and NNSs at this level formed a meaningful difference ($p < 0.05$).

Table 7

Differences in the use of sentences between teacher talk of NSs at the elementary level and teacher talk of NSs at the pre-intermediate level

Sentences	Elementary level	Pre-intermediate level	χ^2	Sd	P
	NSs	NSs			
Compound sentence	26	34	1.067	1	0.302
Complex sentence	74	83	0.516	1	0.473
Complex-compound sentence	14	29	5.233	1	0.022

As pinpointed in Table 7, compound, complex, and complex-compound sentences were made more in the speech of NSs at the pre-intermediate level rather than in the teacher talk of NSs at the elementary level. Despite the increasing trend in the number of subordinate clauses at the pre-intermediate level, the only notable difference was seen in the number of complex-compound sentences ($p < 0.05$) while the numbers of compound and complex sentences in the teacher talk of NSs at the elementary and pre-intermediate levels were close to each other. NSs at the pre-intermediate level made 14 complex-compound sentences. On the other hand, NSs at the pre-intermediate level constructed 29 complex-compound sentences.

Table 8

Differences in the use of sentences between teacher talk of NNSs at the elementary level and teacher talk of NNSs at the pre-intermediate level

Sentences	Elementary level	Pre-intermediate level	χ^2	Sd	P
	NNSs	NNSs			
Compound sentence	26	23	0.184	1	0.668
Complex sentence	48	76	6.323	1	0.012
Complex-compound sentence	6	11	1.471	1	0.225

Table 8 shows that NNSs at the pre-intermediate level made more complex and complex-compound sentences compared with NNSs at the elementary level. However, the only significant difference was seen in the use of complex sentences ($p < 0.05$). There were 48 complex sentences in teacher talk of NNSs at the elementary level while there were 76 complex sentences in the speech of NNSs at the pre-intermediate level. As for compound sentences, NNSs at the elementary level formed more compound sentences than did NNSs at the pre-intermediate level. However, it was not possible to see any meaningful differences between these levels because the number of compound sentences

at the elementary level was so close to the number of compound sentences at the pre-intermediate level ($p > 0.05$).

Data Obtained from the Questionnaire and Interview. Apart from the tables related to the syntactical structures used in teacher talk of NSs and NNSs at the elementary and pre-intermediate levels, there was a questionnaire in the study that was designed for getting background information including the age, the first language, educational life, and working experience of the participants (see Appendix 1). However, these findings were not taken into consideration for analysis.

Also, an interview was conducted (see Appendix 2). Participants were first asked a question regarding whether the language that the teacher uses should change according to the proficiency level of the learners. When the participants answered this question “yes,” they were asked how they could change their language according to the level of the students. They were also asked whether they would simplify or elaborate their classroom language or how they would make some modifications.

When the answers of NSs were compared with those of NNSs at the elementary level, it was clearly seen that both NSs and NNSs stated that they would modify their talk according to the proficiency level of the learners. They also pinpointed that each proficiency level necessitated certain types of grammar structures. Therefore, they put forward that they needed to teach and interact with the learners by taking their language level into account. One of NNSs at the elementary level stated, “As each level contains certain structures, teachers should use language according to level of students to make interaction with them easier.”

On the other hand, based on the comparison of the answers given by NSs and NNSs at the pre-intermediate level, it was clearly noticed that NSs and NNSs at the pre-intermediate level believed that using complex structures at beginner or elementary level could cause learners to lose their motivation during the process of language learning. One of the NNSs at the pre-intermediate level said, “How can you use complex sentences when teaching beginners? Firstly, they will lose motivation. Then, they will lose their interest in the lesson.” They mainly thought that teachers needed to modify their classroom language so that learners could feel confidence in their ability to understand. However, they stated that their classroom language needed to be just beyond the level of the learners. They believed in the necessity of challenge in the language learning process. In addition, they suggested that there was no need to use too simple language and to speak too slowly to make the learners comprehend the language.

Discussion and Findings

The findings obtained from the quantitative data have revealed that NSs and NNSs at the elementary and pre-intermediate levels made syntactical modifications while addressing non-native learners of English.

In addition, the use of *subordinate clauses* indicates the measure of subordination in teacher talk. Regarding noun clauses, NSs at the pre-intermediate level used more noun clauses than NSs did at the elementary level which forms a notable difference (see Table 3). The same trend continues in the speech of NNSs at both levels (see Table 4). As for adjective clauses, there was a slight increase in the use of adjective clauses in the teacher talk of NSs and NNSs at the pre-intermediate level compared with the speech of NSs and NNSs at the elementary level, although this does not constitute a notable difference (see Table 1 and 2). In addition to the use of noun and adjective clauses, the use of adverb clauses increased in the speech of NNSs at the pre-intermediate level compared to the use of adverb clauses in the teacher talk of NNSs at the elementary level forming a significant difference (see Table 4). Although there is a small increase in the number of adverb clauses in the speech of NSs at the pre-intermediate level, this does not lead to a marked difference (see Table 3). It can be inferred from the data that teachers mostly tended to use fewer subordinate clauses towards less proficient non-native learners, as Hakansson (1986) pinpoints. This inference is also in accordance with the ideas of Gaies (1977) emphasising an increase in the use of subordinate clauses to the learners with a higher level of language proficiency.

As a second category, the findings of the *types of sentences* illustrated that NSs at the pre-intermediate level used complex sentences most while NSs at the elementary level constructed complex-compound sentences least. It is an undeniable fact that there was an increase in the use of compound, complex, and complex-compound sentences in the teacher talk of NSs at the pre-intermediate level in comparison with the speech of NSs at the elementary level. Despite this increase, the only notable difference was observed in the use of complex-compound sentences. NSs at the pre-intermediate level used more complex-compound sentences than NSs did at the elementary level (see Table 7). An increase in the use of these types of sentences can also be observed in the use of complex and complex-compound sentences in NNSs' speech at the pre-intermediate level. Nevertheless, the only meaningful difference was found in the use of complex sentences rather than compound and complex-compound sentences. NNSs at the pre-intermediate level constructed more complex sentences than NNSs did at the elementary level. As for compound sentences in the speech of NNSs at both levels, it can be said that there was interestingly a slight decrease in the number of compound sentences in the teacher talk of

NNSs at pre-intermediate level compared with the number at the elementary level but that does not form a markable difference (see Table 8).

Upon examination of the overall findings in relation to types of sentences, it can be concluded that speech addressing less proficient non-native learners should be less complex, as Chaudron (1979) and Gaies (1977) put forward. This is also in agreement with the findings obtained from the administered interview with NSs and NNSs at the elementary level and one NS at the pre-intermediate level stressing simplification of the language and avoidance of complex sentence structures.

Finally, syntactical modifications obtained from the quantitative data have also been supported by the findings of the interviews although the opinions of NSs and NNSs at the elementary and pre-intermediate levels on the kinds of syntactical modifications may differ. The results of the interviews have shown that NSs and NNSs at the elementary level focused on the idea that each proficiency level necessitated certain types of grammar structure and teachers needed to interact with the students according to the proficiency level of the learners. As for NSs and NNSs at the pre-intermediate level, only one of the NSs at this level emphasized the necessity of using simple structures with the beginners and he suggested that teachers should use more advanced grammar as the proficiency level of the learners progressed. The other NS and both of the NNSs at the pre-intermediate level also stressed the importance of the teacher talk being modified according to the proficiency levels of the learners because they stressed that using complex structures at the beginner or elementary levels might cause learners to lose their interest and motivation in language learning. However, they also suggested that the classroom language of the teacher should be a little beyond the level of the learners to provide comprehensible input as Krashen (1982) put forth. In other words, NSs and NNSs at the elementary and pre-intermediate level had similar opinions and beliefs on modifying the classroom language according to the proficiency levels of the learners whereas their points of views on the kind of syntactical modifications to be made could show differences.

Conclusion

The findings of the present study try to probe a phenomenon and arouse insights concerning syntactical modifications by native and non-native speakers of English in their speech when talking to non-native learners at the elementary and pre-intermediate levels. By means of the comparison of the teacher talk of native and non-native speakers, this study may contribute to more studies

in relation to the teacher talk of NSs and NNSs and its modifications, and it may raise awareness of EFL teachers regarding the importance of teacher talk.

Although further research is necessary to enhance the findings of this study, the present findings have several important implications for the field of foreign language teaching. First, comprehensible input is at the core of second or foreign language learning and teaching, and modifications in teacher talk can help non-native learners understand the input enabling them to acquire the language. In this sense, the linguistic input in teacher talk may be enhanced for the benefit of non-native learners.

Second, the data gained in this study or similar research may be used by in-service or teacher training programs to give more instructions about how to produce effective teacher talk providing comprehensible input to L2 learners. Furthermore, the findings of the study may be beneficial in terms of preparing ELT materials and resources which can be used in different classrooms and with various non-native learners to meet their need for comprehensible input.

Third, teacher resources may concentrate on the phenomenon of teacher talk by presenting and describing adjustments at lexical and syntactic levels in order to contribute to the development of professional skills and improvement of the quality of an ESL or EFL teacher.

Questionnaire

Background information of the participant

1. Name:
2. Surname:
3. Age:
4. Number of years in English language teaching:
5. University degree obtained and year:
6. Any English certificates:
7. Any master or doctorate degree:

Interview

1. Do you think that the language that the teacher uses in the classroom should change according to proficiency level of the students while interacting with them?
2. If so, what kind of modifications do teachers make in their speech? (Such as simplification, elaboration in the use of vocabulary or structures or some other modifications of the language)

References

- Chaudron, C. (1979). Complexity of teacher speech and vocabulary explanation/elaboration. The 13th Annual TESOL Convention. Boston, MA.
- Cullen, R. (1998). Teacher talk and the classroom context. *ELT Journal*, 52(3), 179–187.
- Doughty, C. J., & Long, M. H. (Eds.). (2003). *The handbook of second language acquisition*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Ellis, R. (1994). *The study of second language acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ellis, R., & Barkhuizen, G. (2005). *Analyzing learner language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Gaies, S. J. (1976). *Sentence combining: A technique for assessing proficiency in a second language*. Paper presented at the Conference on Perspectives on Language, University of Louisville, Louisville.
- Gaies, S. J. (1977). The nature of linguistic input in formal second language learning: Linguistic and communicative strategies in ESL teachers' classroom language. *On TESOL*, 77, 204–212.
- Gaies, S. J. (1983). The investigation of language classroom processes. *TESOL Quarterly*, 17(2), 207.
- Håkansson, G. (1986). Quantitative studies of teacher talk. In G. Kasper (Ed.), *Learning, teaching and communication in the foreign language classroom* (pp. 83–98). Århus: Aarhus University Press.
- Hatch, E. M. (1983). *Psycholinguistics: A second language perspective*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House, 64.
- Henzl, V. (1973). Linguistic register of foreign language instruction. *Language Learning*, 23(2), 207–222.
- Henzl, V. (1979). Foreigner talk in the classroom. *International Review of Applied Linguistics*, 17(2), 159–165.
- Ishiguro, T. (1986). *Simplification and elaboration in foreign language teacher talk and its source*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Stanford University, CA.
- Krashen, S. D. (1981). *Second language acquisition and second language learning*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Krashen, S. D. (1982). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition* (pp. 21–64). Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Krashen, S. D. (1985). *The Input Hypothesis: Issues and implications*. London: Longman.
- Pica, T., & Long, M. H. (1986). The linguistic and conversational performance of experienced and inexperienced teachers. *Talking to learn: Conversation in second language acquisition* (pp. 85–98). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.

- Seedhouse, P. (2004). *The interactional architecture of the second language classroom: A conversational analysis perspective*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Wesche, M. B., & Ready, D. (1985). Foreigner talk in the university classroom (pp. 89–114). In *Input in second language acquisition*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House.
- Wright, T. (2005). *Classroom management in language education*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Xiao-Yan, M. (2006). *Teacher talk and EFL in university classrooms*. Unpublished master's thesis, Chongqing Normal University & Yangtze Normal University, China, 5–13.
- Xu, X. H. (2010). Analysis of teacher talk on the basis of relevance theory. *Canadian Social Science*, 6(3), 45–50.

Arzu Ünel, Meryem Mirioğlu

Syntaktische Modifikationen in der von Englischlehrern – Muttersprachlern und Ausländern im Klassenraum gesprochenen Sprache

Zusammenfassung

Die von einem Lehrer im Klassenraum gebrauchte Fremdsprache ist die Grundlage der Kommunikation zwischen dem Lehrer und seinen Schülern und die Sprache des Lehrers (eng.: *teacher talk*) spielt dabei grundlegende Rolle. Zum Ziel der im vorliegenden Artikel dargestellten quantitativ-qualitativen Forschung wurden syntaktische Modifikationen im Englischen, die sowohl von englischen Muttersprachlern (eng.: *native speakers of English*) als auch von den englisch sprechenden Ausländern (eng.: *non-native speakers of English*) gebraucht waren. Die Schüler in der zu untersuchten Klasse verfügten über die Englischkenntnisse auf der Grundstufe und auf der Mittelstufe, und die Forschung wurde in Bezug auf türkische Schule durchgeführt. Die Ergebnisse zeigten bedeutende syntaktische Modifikationen beispielsweise im Bereich der Anwendung von verschiedenen Satztypen in der Sprache von den beiden Lehrergruppen auf, die offensichtlich vor allem vom Wissenstand der Schüler abhängig waren.