

Assessing the Success of Multicultural Communication in English Classroom in terms of Correlation Between First and Second Language Use

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Abstract

The present paper makes an investigation of factors that are associated with the success of language activities in classroom based on conversation analysis. The aim of this study is to demonstrate an original way to assess how successfully the experience of participating in multicultural communication in English classroom leads to enhance learners' motivation for involvement. The data for analysis are collected from conversations between Japanese students and overseas students from China, South Korea, and Vietnam in English language classes held at a Japanese university. In the previous research by Kitamura (2023), the analysis of their conversations exchanged in Japanese made it clear that a sign of positive attitude or a sense of solidarity is often linguistically expressed by Japanese students in a form of code-switching within their first language during the first contact situation. In this research, positive effects gained from such social interaction in classroom are further studied through the analysis of their conversations exchanged in English. Research questions include how the English learners with different language and cultural backgrounds manage silence, turn-taking, and back-channeling to facilitate good communication. Discussion is made on the participants' strategic use of English in relation to that of Japanese, which in turn provides insight in evaluating the multicultural communication activities practiced in English classes.

Keywords: English education; cultural exchange; language activities; conversation analysis; Japanese learners of English