



Discourse Features of Oral Interactions among Junior High School Students

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Discourse Competence

- Swain (1984) : Discourse Competence
- Halliday & Hasan (1976), Widdowson (1978): Cohesion & Coherence
- Goffman (1981), Richards & Schmidt (1983): Turn-taking
- Sacks et al (1974): Turn-taking (Nomination, Self-selection)

- Yule (1996), Yngve (1970): Backchannels
- Duncan and Fiske (1977): Non-verbal factors in backchannels
- Clancy et al. (1996): Reactive Tokens
 - 1) Backchannel: “Um hun.”
 - 2) Reactive expression: “Great.”
 - 3) Repetition
 - 4) Collaborative finish
 - 5) Laughter
 - 6) Short statement: “That s wonderful.”

1) Coherence of topics

- a) Number of subordinate topics
- b) Number of words uttered on each subordinate topic
- c) Number of words uttered relating to the given topic

2) Turn-taking

- a) Self-selections
- b) Nominations

a) Reactive Tokens A:

- Reactive expressions: “Great!”
- Repetitions of statements by another speaker
- Short statements: “That’s wonderful.”

b) Backchannels

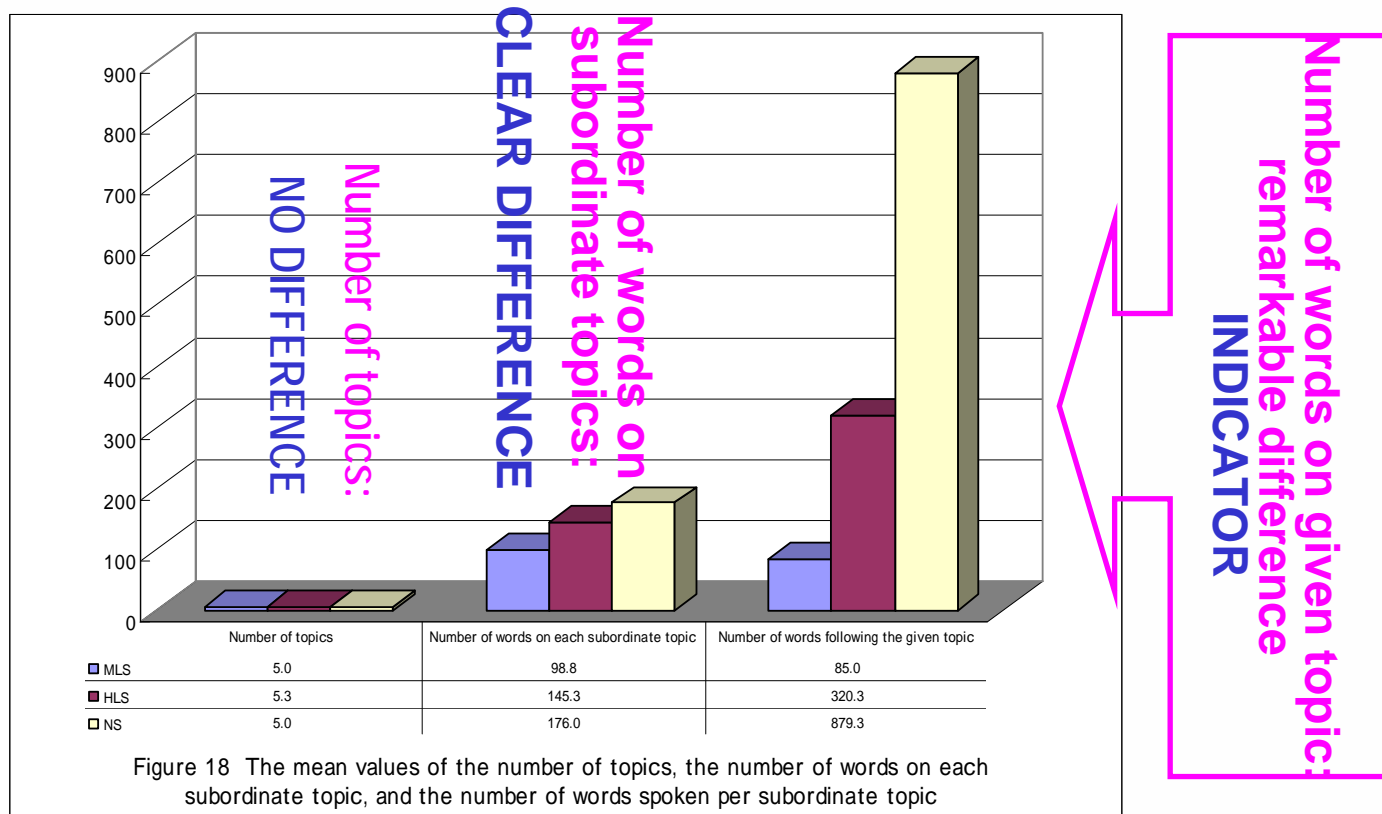
- One-word utterances: “Yeah.” “Oh.”
- Laughter

c) Body language

- Gestures including nods and smiles

RESULTS

Coherence of Topics (Quantitative analysis)



Example (14) (MLS: Group B, lines 99-109)

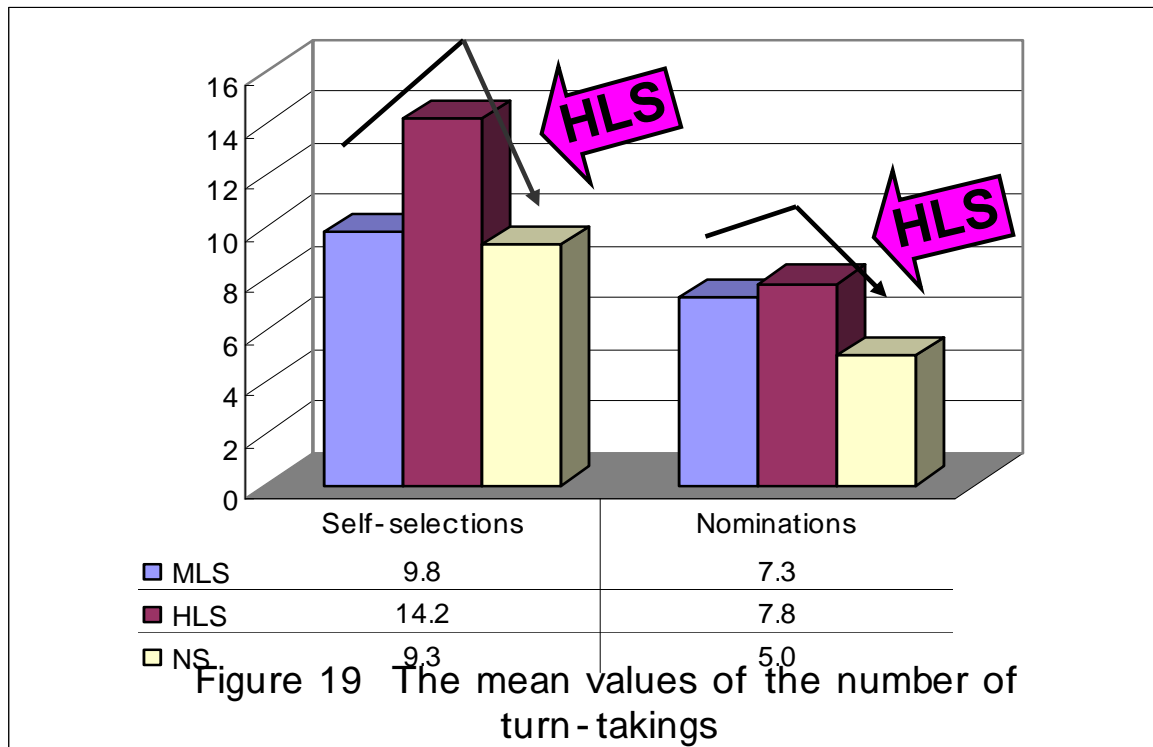
- 99 A: I like summer better than any other season. = I like sea. = To walk on a
100 C: = Oh. ((nod)) = Ah. ((nod))
101 B: = Oh. ((nod))
102 A: beach is pretty. And I like fireworks.
103 B: Fireworks? ((nod))
104 C: Fireworks? Oh, yes. ((nod))
105 B: I like fireworks very much.
106 A: ((nod)) Me, too. It's very beautiful. ((nod))
107 B: Yeah. ((nod)) I think so, too.
108 C: Do you like swimming?
109 A: I can't swim well.



MLS: change topics
unexpectedly

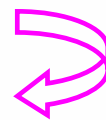
HLS: conversation is more coherent
NS: conversation flows naturally

Mean values of number of turn-takings



Example (17) (MLS: Group A, lines 18-25)

18 A: Oh, I see. Do you like it?



nomination

19 B: Me? ((A:nod)) Ah... I like ... yes. Ahaha.

20 A: My brother is a university student. ((B,C:nod)) He likes baseball. (B:laugh)

21 He belongs to the baseball team. His position is a catcher.=

22 C:

=Oh. ((nod))

23 ((B:nod))



self-selection

24 A: Do you like baseball?

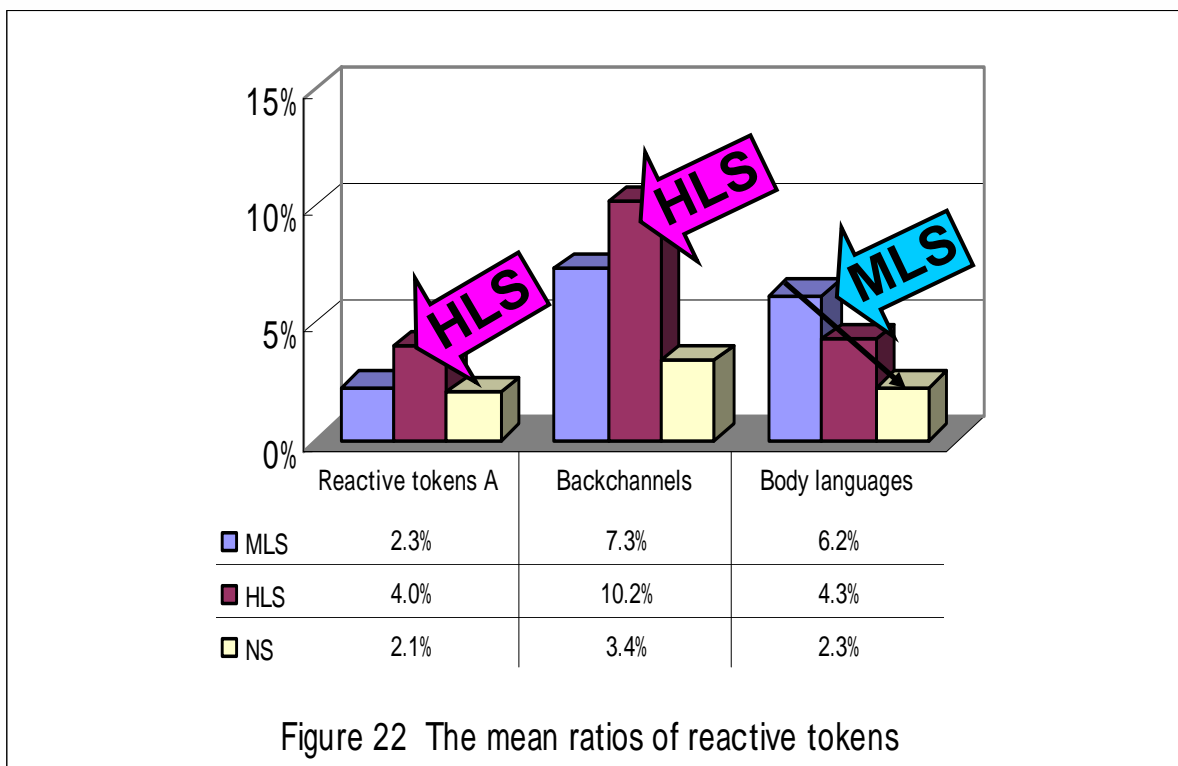


nomination

25 C: Ah... mmm... yes... ((A:nod)) But.. I don't watch TV.

NS: conversation flows naturally

Mean ratios of reactive tokens



Example (21) (HLS: Group A, lines 142-153)

- 142 C: Our social studies teacher is very interesting. [Uh, he has big voice.
143 A: [Yeah.
144 B: Hahaha.
145 A: Big voice?
146 C: And he looks like octopus.
147 B: Oh. Hh...
148 A: Octopus? [Octopus?=
149 C: [Yeah! = Yeah. He has no hair.
150 B: Wahaha.... ((nod))
151 A: No hair.... So... and our school nurse ((B:nod)) is very pretty, too.
152 C: Oh!
153 B: Oh, I know. ((nod))



SUMMARY

- Coherency of topics
 - a prominent difference among groups
- Turn-takings
 - less proficient speakers take more turns and have an increased number of unnatural turn-takings
- Reactive tokens
 - HLS: many backchannels and reactive tokens