Increased Usage of Syntactic Resources in Turn-taking as the Indicators for IC Development

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Kim Du Re. 2020. Increased usage of syntactic resources in turn-taking as the indicators for IC development. *Korean Journal of English Language and Linguistics* 20, 157-179. Responding to a call by Pekarek Doehler and Pochon-Berger (2015) to investigate the relationship between L2 syntax in turn-taking and interactional competence (IC), the main purpose of this empirical study is to find the evidence of IC construct and its development by comparing how L2 users of different proficiency apply syntactic resources for constructing turn construction units (TCUs) and for projecting possible turn-taking points in talk-in-interaction. The study shows that novice L2 participants depended on a single word or simple repeats in the formation of turn construction units (TCUs) and applied limited syntactic resources for projecting turn transition places. Intermediate L2 speakers, on the other hand, utilized more complicated syntactic resources in constructing TCUs and in projecting possible completion points so that the co-participants could find sequentially relevant places to take turns. The result of the study also displays that TCU construction without evident and substantial syntactic resources required further decoding work for the recipients to disambiguate speakers' actions. The study argues turn-taking practice significantly rely on L2 users' affordedness to use syntactic resources for constructing TCUs, as it clearly demonstrates speakers' current action under way, which confirms that IC development is closely interrelated to L2 syntactic development.

Keywords: second language acquisition, conversation analysis, turn-takings, turn construction unit (TCU), interactional competence

1. Introduction

The purpose of the present study is to investigate the usage of and syntactic resources to discover the evidence of interactional competence (IC) by comparing L2 speakers of different proficiency.

In everyday life, we speak. We speak of others, we are spoken by others, and we speak for others. Speakers adapt their talk in a way to be acceptable and comprehensible for the co-participants, and they put constant interpretative efforts to

understand the talk and to provide relevant responses to the prior speaker. Participants, whether in first or second language, should know when to launch a turn, how to develop so far projected turns, or what to repair when mutual comprehensibility is faltered, all of which refer to IC. Studies in SLA field for the last few decades have focused on the conceptualization and development of IC, or how the speakers in talk use linguistic and other interactional resources to accomplish actions which are "co−constructed by all participants in a discursive practice" (Young 2008: 101). Along with an ethnomethodological approach of conversation analysis (CA), a number of L2 IC studies have recently compared the interactional process between L2 groups of different proficiency (Galaczi 2014, Lam 2018, Kim 2019). These studies were not conducted to confirm a general assumption that more L2 proficient speakers were able to demonstrate higher IC, but conducted to find which significant features can indicate the development of IC. Discovering such IC features are important, as stressed in Roever and Kasper (2018) and Lam (2018), since they can be further applied into developing IC tasks and assessment in practical L2 teaching and learning. SLA researchers are still working to find more critical IC features in a specific interactional process such as in turn−taking, sequence organization, or repair practice (cf. Pekarek Doehler and Pochon−Berger 2015, Skogmyr Marian and Balaman 2018).

Turn−taking, among different interactional practices, is "a basic form of organization of conversation" (Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson 1974: 696). Speakers in conversation coordinate timely entry to hold the floor and organize conditionally and sequentially relevant actions through turn−takings. As Wong and Waring (2010) argued that learning to manage turn−taking should become the very basic start to learn how to communicate in second language, turn−taking organization has been a classic object to study IC and its development.

The previous L2 IC studies have found the critical features of IC constructs in turn−taking roughly in three aspects: topic development, recipient supports, and classroom participation. Firstly, L2 speakers with more advanced IC effectively maintained and developed the current topic through several turn−takings. When opening a new topic, novice L2 speakers abruptly initiated it with little use of prefatory work, while more interactionally competent L2 speakers used anchoring devices to frame their upcoming talk (Hellermann 2008, Pekarek Doehler and Berger 2018). Furthermore, L2 co−participants with higher IC took turns over several times to construct and develop the topic together (McCarthy 2010, May, Nakatsuhara and Galaczi 2019). According to Galaczi (2014), whereas novice L2 speakers' talk was

characterized by short-lived topics and abrupt topic shifts, highly interactional L2 speakers demonstrated a stronger mutuality when developing the topic. This study also quantitatively showed that the more competent the speakers were in IC, the more likely they were to extend the topic.

Secondly, such topic expansion was possible by sharing the floor with the recipients who demonstrated more listener supports. When receiving turns, contrary to novice speakers who provided minimal responses such as *mmhm* or *okay*, more interactionally proficient speakers added substantial comments on the topic being discussed displaying that they were actively engaged in the content (Galaczi 2014, May 2009, Rühlemann 2013). Lam's (2018: 378) study was significant in that it found the indicators of IC from the responses, i.e., how the co-participants take turns to "produce responses contingent on previous speaker contribution." This study demonstrated that L2 speakers with higher IC constituted contingent responses to the prior speaker's talk by "formulating previous speakers' contribution, accounting for (dis)agreement with previous speakers' ideas, and extending previous speakers' ideas" (Lam 2018: 392).

Thirdly, the discussion on topic extension and contingent responses converged into the discussion of participation framework. Cekaite (2007) showed how a seven-year-old Kurdish girl (Fusi) had changed in self-selecting turn practices. While Fusi, in the beginning stage of instruction, abruptly interrupted others and heavily relied on attention-getting devices such as loud voice or imperatives, she later became able to practice turn-takings in non-disruptive ways and diversified language choices appropriate for ongoing interaction. The study by Watanabe (2017) also has a research relevance in that it investigated how a young EFL learner (Eisaku) had designed self-selected turns in post expansion sequence. Contrary to the initial stage of instruction in which he started new turns in transitionally irrelevant places often resulted in overlaps, he later found appropriate timing to start his turn. Both studies rigorously investigated the classroom interaction to seek how a focal participant had gradually developed turn-taking practice and demonstrated how turn-taking techniques were related to the active participation in classroom activities.

The previous literature on L2 IC discussed so far contributed to finding salient IC constructs regarding turn-taking practices. However, while the prior studies somehow implied the importance of syntactic features, few studies have directly focused on the role of syntactic resources for the discussion of L2 IC development. Although we cannot underestimate the important roles of other prosodic and non-linguistic resources, when talking about the structure of conversation units, what comes primarily

is syntax, or "a syntax conceived in terms of its relevance to turn-taking" (Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson 1974: 721). The present study thus focused on turn-taking practice by L2 speakers with different proficiency to find the empirical evidence on how syntax can be salient construct for IC development. The study compared how limited or abundant "affordedness" (Konzett-Firth 2019) of the syntactic resources led to different turn-taking techniques and discussed how such difference led to the discussion of IC development. The result of the study revealed that emerging interactional skills in turn-taking was bound with an increased ability to monitor syntactic details for projecting anticipatory transition places, to apply syntactic resources for turn complexity and action coordination, and finally to collaborate with co-participants for joint construction of turns.

2. Literature Review

Before moving onto the discussion of roles of syntactic resources in turn-taking and IC development, the study should start from grammatical features salient in conversational contexts. Schegloff (1996: 55) wrote, "the key unit of language organization for talk-in-interaction is the turn constructional unit (TCU); its natural habitat is the turn-at talk; its organization we are calling grammar." That is, when we say grammar, we are not referring to a set of traditional linguistic rules which are decontextualized and prescriptive in nature. When referring to grammar, we are talking about language produced "in real time, subject to real interactional contingencies" (Schegloff 1996: 55). Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson (1974) referred to grammar as language organized by interactional considerations in local environments, in which the key unit is TCU. The important feature of a TCU is that it completes an action. It should complete what needs to be done in the sequence of conversation, such as asking a question or providing an answer. Another significant feature is that TCUs cannot be determined in structural terms as they are "interactively negotiated and jointly, situatedly, contingently produced" (Mondada 2007: 195). TCUs are context-sensitive and can only be constituted within context, as they are contingent on what speakers do.

Each TCU possibly completes a turn so that the end of each TCU can be possible completion points. As Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson (1974: 700) explained, a current speaker exclusively gets the right to talk while the rest of the party waits and listens.

When the current speaker reaches a point where a TCU under way is possibly complete, the co-participants interactionally get the right to produce the next TCU. In other words, the speakers in conversation can roughly estimate, or project where a current TCU would be possibly complete, and they start talking in the vicinity of this potential termination point. The projection of TCU is primarily in relation to syntactic resources (Ochs, Schegloff and Thompson 1996, Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson 1974), as the following (1) demonstrates.

(1) Wong and Waring (2010: 18)
  (a) I
  (b) I wanted
  (c) I wanted to know
  (d) I wanted to know if
  (e) I wanted to know if you got a ⋯ parking place

  The subject (a) projects a verb (*I what?*), and (b) projects verb complement (*wanted what?*). (c) projects an object (*know what?*), and (d) projects a clause (*if what?*). (e) is transition relevant place where it no longer syntactically projects more elements. The co-participants project forward to possible termination point, where a next speaker can hold a floor in this transition relevance place (TRP). The next speaker predicts a place where the syntactic unit being produced is possibly complete, thereby allowing smoother transition with minimal gaps or interruptions (Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson 1974).

(2) Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson (1974: 721)
01 Penny: An' the fact is I— is— I jus' thought it was so kind of stupid
02   [I didn' even say anything [when=
03 Janet: [Y—   [Eh—
04 Penny: =I came ho:me.

  The example (2) explicitly demonstrates how the recipients anticipate possible completion points. Janet attempted to take the next turn (*Y—*, line 03) in a point where Penny's first TCU was possibly completed (*it was so kind of stupid*, line 01). The next attempt to hold a floor (*Eh—*, line 03) also occurred when Penny extended the current talk after syntactically completing the former TCU (*I didn't see anything*,

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line 02). Projectability therefore makes it possible for the recipients to wait until a current speaker's turn is potentially complete so that they can take the next turn.

Speakers in conversation, however, do not just talk in sentences, but use a different range of structures to construct their talk. TCUs thus are composed of structural elements, and they can turn into different structures such as words, phrases, clauses, or sentences in talk (Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson 1974).

(3) Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974: 702)
  Fern: well they're not comin
  Lana: who.

(4) Lerner (1996: 261)
  David: so if one person said he couldn't invest
  Kerry: then I'd have to wait till

The examples show that any linguistic constituent possibly can be a TCU depending on its context. *Who* in (3) is a single word and functions as a full unit, which is grammatically continuous with the prior talk, providing an opportunity for the next speaker to produce the answer (Schegloff, 1996). Likewise, *I* in (1)(a) completes a TCU if it was a reply to a question such as *Who wanted to know?* A unit can be a longer complex structure distributed over more than one turn ("compound TCU," Lerner 1996) as in (4). This example demonstrates that how a speaker projects a possible completion point, which functions as a resource for a recipient to collaboratively complete projected TCU.

As the examples so far have demonstrated, and the previous studies (Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson 1974, Schegloff 1992) have shown, syntax plays major role enabling this projection. Going back to (1), from the beginning of turns, NP *(I)* in the beginning makes the recipients predict a verb complex *(wanted to know)*, and the verb complex makes them predict a certain type of elements *(if ...)* to complete the a unit. Projectability is what makes the recipients calculate the possible ending, and such projectability is based on the predicate, "the element that enables recipients to know what social action is being carried out by a given utterance in a given sequential context" (Thompson and Couper-Kuhlen 2005: 485). Using syntactic resources in turn-taking means, from speakers' side, designing talk in a way to provide predictable trajectories for the recipients, and from recipients' side, knowing to predict in what

position a next predicate is likely to occur.

Then why is turn-taking important construct in the discussion of IC development? As Young (2011: 430) argued, IC is "not what a person knows, it is what a person does together with others." How to construct TCUs and when to allocate turns can only be done reciprocally. Participants know when to finish a turn and to start a new turn based on TCU's projectability, which makes the recipients anticipate the next elements.

As TCU is "interactively determined unit" (Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson 1974: 727), fundamentally based on contexts, it would be impossible to explore all the different resources in different contexts in one study to discuss TCU completion. Although the current research never depreciated prosodic and nonlinguistic resources in TCU projection (Couper-Kuhlen 2001, Ford and Thompson 1996, Goodwin 2000) considering that TCU is primarily with reference to syntax for projecting turn and anticipating transition places (Ochs, Schegloff and Thompson 1996, Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson 1974), and that few IC studies so far have conducted on how L2 speakers use syntactic resources in turn-taking, the current study started from the call that 'the interaction between the two (turn-taking and L2 syntax) deserves minute attention' (Pekarek Doehler and Pochon-Berger 2015: 242). Turn-taking in first language, if not always runs off automatically, is generally organized in smooth, effortless ways. For second language learners, however, turn-taking becomes "doubly problematic" (Carroll 2005: 21), since they not only have to deal with legitimate linguistic difficulties but need to finely calculate the right time to start a turn. Pekarek Doehler (2018) also argued that it is necessary to understand the role of syntactic resources in IC development.

3. Participants and Data Collection

To compare how L2 speakers with different proficiency use syntactic resources to project the possible points of turn completion, the current study analyzed conversational data by two groups of Korean college and graduate students. Although there still are debates on which should be the criteria in grouping L2 participants in cross-sectional IC studies, the prior research used standard test (Galaczi 2014, Lam 2018) or school leveling (Hellermann 2008, Pekarek Doehler and Pochon-Berger 2015) for classifying the groups. In addition, whereas staying in English-speaking areas do not necessarily

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indicate higher proficiency, since IC is based on language learning through interaction, the study assumed higher possibility of intensified interaction from L2 users who stayed in English-speaking countries for a longer period of time (Bella 2012, Roever and Kasper 2018). The current research thus considered the score on TOEFL speaking section and the length of staying in English speaking countries to group L2 participants, which is described in the following Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptions of Participants in the Study

Group	Participants	Average Score	Length of Residence
Novice	A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H	19.62 (Standard Deviation: 1.06)	none or less than six months
Intermediate	I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P	23.12 (Standard Deviation: 1.12)	more than one year but less than two

The participants were studying in various academic disciplines, but none of them majored in English or other linguistic related fields. The first novice group was composed of eight novice L2 speakers with average score of 19.6 out of 30 in TOEFL speaking section. Half of the students in this group responded that they stayed in English-speaking countries about one semester to participate in English training course, while another half said they had no experience of living abroad. The second intermediate group consisted of eight speakers with the average score of 23 and all the members lived in English-speaking countries more than one but less than two years. They believed that English speaking competence was essential for future career and were spending at least one hour a day studying English.

The participants in each group knew each other as they had been going to the same school, the same church, or the same study group. Each group was further divided into four participants in each group to foster balanced participation and intensive interaction (e.g., Smagorinsky and Fly 1993). They had about ten minutes of warming up time before actual recording so that they could feel comfortable talking in English. English recording was done by one of the participants on request while they talked about their personal experiences and opinions regarding two topics, traveling and English learning for about thirty minutes each. They did not know the purpose of the study and the fact that they were grouped according to their English proficiency at the time of the study.

After the recording, each conversation was transcribed in detail by the researcher

using transcription keys (Wong and Waring 2010: xv). As the purpose of the study is to find the indicators of IC development through syntactic resources in turn-taking practices, the study especially focused on projectability, as this is a central feature to define what makes a unit. The notion of projectability as discussed in the previous chapter makes it recognizable for the recipients what action is being under way and the completion of it is a point in which turn transition becomes relevant. The study thus especially explored (i) the syntactic formation of each TCU and (ii) the transition points in which the participants had launched or completed turns. The result of the study is expected to stress out the important roles of syntactic roles not only in turn-taking practices but also in the accomplishment of social actions, which converged into the discussion of IC development.

4. Data Analysis and Discussion

4.1 Syntactic Formation of TCUs

   To investigate the roles of syntactic resources in the formation of TCUs, the syntactic structure of each turn was analyzed. One of the distinctive features of novice L2 users was that insufficient syntactic resources were applied in TCU structure. Rather than forming TCUs with evident syntactic structure such as verb complex or clauses, novice speakers frequently designed their turns with a single word or repeats.

(4) Novice Group 1
01   A: everyday they=
02→   D: =when?
03   A: six AM.
04   D: ahh six AM
05→   A: three sentence?
06→   B: early early hh
07   A: hh u::h there is book? and uh CD
08   B: did did you study?
09   A: uh yes summer vaca[tion
10→   B: [now?
11   A: hh not now.

That novice L2 speakers had limited affordedness of syntactic resources in the formation of turns could be found from the way they constructed the turns. It appeared that the participants in (4) co-constructed step-to-step topical development. However, the careful analysis of the talk showed that this was possible by the minimal application of syntactic resources with only a few lexical items. The participants heavily depended on syntactically simple structures of turns. Rather than making a more complex structure such as *When does the program start?* D (line 02) only resorted to a single word *when* in a rising intonation to make a question. A (line 05) simply formulated her TCU *three sentence* by raising her pitch contour possibly to convey the message that the radio program introduces three English sentences to study. B (line 06), as well, receiving that the program started six in the morning, complained by simply repeating *early* instead of coming up with a more complicated turn such as *It starts too early for me*. B (line 10) again made his turn with one-word question *Now?* when asking A if she was still using the program, averting producing a syntactically more complete interrogative such as *Are you still studying with the radio program?*

It may appear that limited application of syntactic resources has nothing to do with interactional troubles since the speakers were able to maintain and progress their talk without notable problems as (4) demonstrated. They took turns in interactionally appropriate places, and conversational actions such as asking or complaining were properly accomplished. However, as repeatedly stated, IC is not just the accomplishment of interaction. IC is strongly related with recipient-design, or how participants tailor their talk so that it can be efficiently and evidently projectable for the recipients. The next (5) displays how limited syntactic resources in TCU formation can possibly bring misunderstanding, if not serious, in talk.

(5) Novice Group 1
01   C: for example Arirang TV?
02   D: a::h
03   C: ye:s=
04 →   B: =CNN CNN
05   D: listen to [CNN?
06   A: [best best uh English study method is American drama.
07   C: hh I agree.
08   B: listen to mu[sic

09 →   A: [pop song? pop song?
10   D: di- did you see: uh drama?

From the preceding conversation of (4), C in (5) shared her experience of studying English listening. She suggested that listening to English-only television programs was beneficial for enhancing English listening skills. B (line 04) took the next floor to provide an example by simply repeating *CNN*, rather than saying, for instance, *We can listen to CNN to study English*. This simple repetition was not enough for D (line 05) to comprehend what action was being done that he requested a clarification (other-initiated repair), which was not appropriately responded as A (line 06) interrupted. Likewise, it is not clear whether A was asking B if she listened to pop songs to study or was suggesting pop songs as a way to study English, as A did not use enough syntactic clues for constructing her TCU. Projetability becomes relevant when recipients can anticipate predictable predicates from speakers' turns (Thompson and Couper-Kuhlen 2005), but novice participants did not apply enough syntactic resources for appropriate projection.

According to Knox (1994), the speakers with limited proficiency often produced linguistically ambiguous talk because of their lack of control in second language. Constructing turns only with a simple structure suggested "the thoughts that the speakers intend to convey are more complex than their linguistic ability to codify" (Knox 1994: 200). Such little syntactic contribution thus made the recipients do a great amount of interpretive work to disambiguate their utterance. Although it could be a simple job for a speaker, the recipients had to reformulate the original syntactical structure to decode that, for example, *early early* is a complaint while *pop song pop song* is giving an example. In other words, the speakers might have averted constructing more complicated talk but passed the work of decoding to the recipients. This is an opposite way of interactional competence, which involved adapting linguistic and other resources in the eye of recipients to decrease any further clarification work on them.

> Tracing development requires examining the processes through which learners' activities are initially mediated by other people, but later come under their control as they appropriate resources to regulate their own activities. (Lantolf and Johnson 2007: 887)

   Intermediate speakers, on the other hand, did not rely on a single word or a repeat
in TCU formation. They rather constructed their turns with enough lexical items with
evident syntactic structures so that talks could proceed without interactional troubles
and regulate social actions on their own.

(6) Intermediate Group 2
01   K: one of the best way to travel is uh
02   I: yeah?
03   K: in in take taking a rest in hotel.
04   I: hh yeah?
05   K: and to having a delicious [food
06   I: [hh you mean by room service?=
07   K: =yes yes hh if I want to go to the another country?
08   I: uhhuh?
09   K: maybe I pick up the something u:h (1.0) 휴양지?
                                             hyu.yang.ji. (rest spot)
10   L: >you must go< you must go like Mordiv or Ha[waii
11   J: [rat- rather than
           Europe- Europe cities or something like that.

   When talking about places for a travel, from the preceding conversation K said he
did not like to stay in crowded places. He argued that the best way to travel is to
take a rest and have delicious meals in a hotel. The participants in (6) did not
construct their TCUs with a single word or repeats of key nouns but used syntactic
resources to clearly demonstrate their actions. For example, K (line 05) did not just
utter a delicious food but constructed a verb complex (*having a delicious food*) so that
the next speaker I (line 06) could anticipate a predicate (*food*) to project a possible
termination point to launch his turn. Likewise, L (line 10) suggested a place for K in
a complete clause structure (*you must go like Mordiv or Hawaii*) so that J (line 11)
took his turn in a transitionally relevant point.
   Using enough syntactic resources in the formation of TCU means, as these examples
have indicated, making it possible for the recipients to project possible predicates and
displaying social actions under way more evidently. The next example (7) also
stresses the important roles of syntactic resources for projectability and turn-taking.

(7) Intermediate Group 2
01   O: because ss- uh there are all of the experience that my mother
02   just catch uh cath my neck
03   P: [hhh
04   M: [neck? your neck?
05   O: just go to the English institution=
06   M: =from your elementary school or kindergarten?
07   O: yeah.
08   P: wow.
09   O: I think so. but at that time I really really uh do not did not
10   understand [why she
11   M: [why she
12   O: um do like this.

Considering IC is what the participants do altogether by sharing more common grounds through interaction (Young 2011, 2019), the evidence of IC development appears clear when examining how much the participants can anticipate the next action each other. O in (7) talked about his childhood experience when his mom forced him to study English. Adding to O's turn (line 05), M (line 06) formed a prepositional phrase so that they could jointly construct a TCU. Furthermore, M (line 11) anticipated the next possible predicate so accurately that both O and M produced the same element (*why she*) at the same time. This example implies that intermediate L2 users had more developed IC by using syntactic resources so that they could co-construct turns and anticipate common predicates.

The study by no means implies that novice speakers were not able to construct syntactically complete TCUs in talk-in-interaction. As Gardner and Wagner (2005) argued, every L2 speakers, regardless of their L2 proficiency, are normal speakers in that they can carry out interaction by coordinating their actions contingent on what others do. What this study attempts to focus on, however, is that there surely is the evidence of IC development in intermediate L2 groups in their practice of turn-taking. The next example (8) demonstrated that novice speakers used syntactic resources to project possible transition points.

(8) Novice Group 2
01   H: we went to the uh 자갈치시장 tsk and and we ex-
                                  Ja.gal.chi.shi.jang. (Jagalchi Market)
02   expect to see many things uh but there is nothing
03→   G: hh why- why hh uh at 자갈치[시장?]
                                      Ja.gal.chi.shi.jang. (Jagalchi Market)
04→   H: [so we] so we (1.0) we just we feel
05   we just felt very (1.0) tired hh

   H in (8) talked about his recent trip to one of the famous markets called *Jagalchi*
and complained that there was nothing much to see. G (line 03) asked why H went
there in a syntactically appropriate place. In the next turn, H (line 04) recycled the
overlapped part *so we*) so that he could restart his TCU in the clear (Carroll 2004) in
a place where G's turn was possibly syntactically completed. The participants here
used syntactic resources for projecting transition points. However, H's reply to G's
question was *so we felt very tired* (lines 04-05). The sequentially relevant action for
H would have been answering to the question (Schegloff and Sacks 1973), explaining
why he went to the market in the first place. However, H (line 04) did not receive
G's question but took his turn to elaborate more about his trip. In other words, there
was little sequential relevance, which blocked the progressivity of talk as there was no
contingent sequence between the speaker and the recipients. As such case was not
frequently found, it would be misleading to conclude that novice speakers were not
able to produce sequentially relevant actions. However, it did imply that keeping
contingent sequence and using syntactic resources appropriately at the same time could
be much challenging to the novice speakers. It also implies why the novice L2
participants in (4) and (5) resorted to a single lexical word without evident syntactic
information.
   IC development refers to an increasing ability to carefully adapt and monitor
interactional resources to design turns specifically for the recipients (Pekarek Doehler
and Pochon-Berger 2015). L2 novice speakers, however, frequently used simpler units
to implement a particular action and left the remaining decoding works for the
recipients because they were not yet capable of regulating the activities on their own.
Although this simple construction of a unit may have saved the speaker from this
challenging turn transition places, or "the natural habitat for a variety of interactional
tasks" (Carroll 2005: 201), it could not be a good evidence for IC development, as

speakers with higher IC would do proactive works (Kasper and Ross 2007, Kim 2019) so that their talk is mostly recognizable for the recipients without requiring further repair process to work on meaning negotiation. On the other hand, intermediate L2 speakers constructed with sufficient syntactic clues so that recipients could project what elements to come, which is the critical evidence for IC development.

4.2 Syntactic Resources for Turn Completion

As De Ruiter, Mitterer, and Enfiled (2006: 531) argued that "syntactic structure is necessary and possibly sufficient for accurate end-of-turn completion," more evident clues for IC development can be found by examining how L2 speakers design their turns to signal turn termination for the recipients. The previous chapter discussed that transition relevant points are essentially related, although not necessarily, with syntax. While novice L2 speakers successfully took turns without noticeable troubles, some examples implied that they used less syntactic information when finishing turns.

(9) Novice Group 1
01   D: we are not try to the uh uh speak in English just just uh
02   Korean Korea::n speak.
03   C: I think that uh uh
04   D: we we we don't try to speak in English? that is very bad. uh uh
05   study.=
06   C: =I I I can't speak uh uh the perfect perfe:ct sentence.

In (9), C and D were talking about their experience of learning English, and D completed his turn by lowering the pitch (line 02) when there was syntactically more to come (*speak what?*). C (line 03) launched the floor after receiving this falling intonation. D (line 04) interrupted and recycled *we* to take his new turn even though C had syntactically more to produce (line 04, *I think that what?*), and D (line 05) finished his turn with falling intonation leaving his turn incomplete (*study what?*). The speakers here applied little syntactic information in the completion of TCU, and rather depended on intonational resource to imply that the current turn was over.

(10) Novice Group 2
01   E: I like travel. and the uh last year last.
02   (3.0)
03   E:ss- winter I had I have a friend she uh she likes she likes too.
04   (2.0)
05   E: uh we uh went Busan? we buy buy=
06   F: =Busan?
07   E: yes uh Busan it's it's good. hh
08   (3.0)
09   E: u:h we uh we eat a lot of fish?

 E in (10) described her short trip experience to Busan City. Similar to the speakers
in (9), E (line 03) finished her turn by lowering the pitch when there was
syntactically more to project (*she likes what?*). F (line 06) cut in for other-initiated
repair in a place where E had not syntactically finished her turn (*buy what?*), and
blocked E's so far projected action. E (line 09) could not pick up from where she left
off but expanded her turn talking about the food, leaving the prior action unfinished
(*buy what?*). This example likewise demonstrated syntax plays little role in turn
projection in novice speakers' turn completion.
   Whereas the novice speakers often resorted to intonation rather than syntactic
resources for turn completion, the data from L2 intermediate speakers implied that
they could afford wided repertoire of syntactic resources for designing the end of
turns.

(11) Intermediate Group 1
01   K: I try to question the uh professor in English? English? but uh
02   uh it is really hard for me at this situation so: (1.0) uh I
03   want to exposed to uh I want more exposure?
04   I: oh.

 K in (11) talked about his problems he had faced when taking English lectures.
Compared to the examples by novice L2 speakers who often failed to construct
syntactically appropriate structure and frequently depended on intonation changes, this
excerpt displayed that intermediate speaker could construct syntactically complete
TCUs. To signal expanding turn, K (line 02) withheld his pitch by lengthening *so* after

syntactic completion of a former TCU where possible transition might have occurred with pitch drop (Wong and Waring 2010). K(line 03) replaced *I want to exposed to* with *I want more exposure* as the former projected more elements (*exposed to what?*) while the latter completed the unit. The co-participant I (line 04) took the next turn upon K's completing self-repair as it no longer projected more elements.

(12) Intermediate Group 1
```
01      I: she uh she of course she speaks English very well and it is
02         totally uh different than uh my English cause she uh she has
03         comforting comfortable uh comfortability.
04      J: ºmmº
05      I: she uh her English is naturally made by the uh thee um (1.0)
06         uh naturally made.
```

   A similar observation could be found in (12). While talking about the ways to study English, I (lines 01-03) gave an example of his girlfriend who was born and raised in an English-speaking country. He constructed multi-unit turns by combining units with connectives *and* (line 01) and *cause* (line 02) when reaching syntactically relevant places for turn-taking. When I (line 03) approached *she has*, as the initial choices *comforting* and *comfortable* needed further increments (*comforting what?, comfortable what?*), he successively repaired derivational morphemes to come up with a noun form *comfortability*, an object which no longer projected more predicates. I (line 05-06) also deleted *by the* in the process of self-repair to signal the termination of his turn as *naturally made* did not project further elements. The examples above demonstrated that the intermediate L2 speaker here could use syntactic information to project turn termination point, and change derivational morphemes to construct syntactically complete units, while the recipients could also use such information to take the next floor (line 04).

(13) Intermediate Group 2
```
01      N: but at the at the end of the uh musical the uh Mama Mia there
02         are so:me event that all of all of the audience >and and< the
03         casting u:h casting move move uh casti:ng?=
04      O: =casters?
05      N: yes. casters all dance together and
```

The speakers in (13) demonstrated that they used syntactic resources for constructing turns. N (line 03) used a rising pitch in this syntactically incomplete turn for practicing self-initiated other-repair (Schegloff, Jefferson and Sacks 1977), allowing "conditional entry" (Lerner 1996) to the turn. O (line 04) took the floor not to start her own turn but to replace the trouble-source with appropriate morpheme (*casters*) in sequentially appropriate place (self-initiated other-repair, Schegloff et al. 1977), as there were syntactically more to come (*casters did what?*). N (line 05) confirmed O's repair solution and returned to progress more of the story under way. This implied that the development of IC is closely interrelated with syntactic development to project end-of-turn completion for the recipients.

As Levinson (2016: 6) argued that "conversational turn-taking is very cognitively demanding, using prediction and early preparation of complex turns to achieve turn-transitions close to the minimal reaction time to a starting gun," the data by novice speakers showed how challenging it was for the novice speakers to apply syntactic information to terminate TCU in such and interactionally imminent and critical period. Intermediate L2 users, however, displayed "an interactionally relevant syntax" (Lerner 1991: 441) to use syntactic information to project possible TCU termination points and to co-construct turns, which is a significant indicator for IC development.

5. Conclusion

The purpose of the current study was to compare the application of syntactic resources in turn-taking between L2 speakers with different oral proficiency to discuss IC development. The result of the study discovered that syntactic formation of TCU with the choice of sufficient syntactic information was highly interrelated with the turn projection and action coordination. The novice co-participants did not employ enough syntactic resources in turn-taking management so that they frequently ended up launching a floor in syntactically irrelevant and thus sequentially irrelevant places. The insufficient use of syntactic resources in TCU, such as a single word, a repeat, or a simple combination of words made their actions appear ambiguous and sequentially inappropriate, which was an opposite approach to recipient-design, a process to adjust talks to be understandable and acceptable for the recipients, as they had to put additional interpretative efforts to figure out the action projected in talk. Intermediate L2 speakers used enough syntactic resources when taking or giving turns so that their

turn-taking could be done in non-interruptive manners. Evident syntactic structure in their talk made it possible for the recipients to project upcoming social actions. The result confirmed that "syntactic structures are of great relevance in their own right in organizing social actions" (Lindström 2006: 110).

Interactionally competent speakers also applied appropriate syntactic information to terminate current TCU, which was evident information for the recipients to take the next floor. Such syntactic affordedness made the recipients accurately understand the current action under way and project the next action ahead so that their talk can be acceptable and comprehensible for each other.

L2 users should be aware that syntax is not just a part of linguistic rules but central resources which make their co-participants construct and manage turns, anticipate upcoming work, demonstrate actions in talk, and co-construct so far projected turn, all of which are important constructs for IC. As Wong and Waring (2010: 9) stated, turn-taking is "the axle in the wheel of social interaction, the main supporting shaft that undergirds interactional competence."

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Examples in: English
Applicable Languages: English
Applicable Level: Tertiary

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Appendix

Transcription conventions (adapted from Wong and Waring 2010: xv)

.	falling intonation
?	rising intonation
−	abrupt cut-off
:	prolonging of sound
word	stress
owordo	quiet speech
>word<	quicker speech
<word>	slowed speech
hh	aspiration or laughter
[word]	beginning and ending of overlapping speech
=	continuing speech with no break in between
(0.0)	length of a silence in tenths of a second