TECHNIQUES FOR REDUCING TEACHER TALK TIME

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ETECS
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Conference Aims

- To learn how to self-assess our own TTT.

- To learn useful techniques to reduce TTT.  
  (AND INCREASE STT)
What the Experts Say

“Research(...)show that teachers need to pay attention to the amount and type of talking they do, and to evaluate its effectiveness in the light of their pedagogical objectives”

(Nunan,D. 1991: 198)
Task: Think → Pair → Share

- Who is doing the talking?
- What are the students doing?
- Do they seem engaged?
- Does this type of interaction promote Ss’ development of communicative skills? Why or why not?
Task: True / False

- Students’ opportunities to speak in class should be maximized to help them develop speaking in English.
- Students must be given ample opportunities to communicate, with as much teacher intervention as possible.
- Whenever a student can say something, the teacher should intervene or interfere by talking.
- Neither the teacher nor any one student should monopolize talking time in class.
Task: True / False

- Teachers must give students sufficient time to formulate their ideas in order for them to sufficiently elaborate.
- The teacher should answer his or her own questions.
- Classroom techniques like personalization and student-to-student questions are not useful to maximize student talk time.

*From ICPNA’s Teacher’s Guide: Concepts, Practices, & Techniques*
SOME THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS
The Traditional Teacher-Fronted Class

- T speaks most of the time.
- T leads the activities.
- T constantly passes judgment on Ss’ performance.
Aspects of the Teacher-Fronted Class

- The IRF pattern
- The 2/3 rule (Edwards and Mercer, 1987)
- J. Goodlad’s research
IRF: The Dominant Interactional Pattern

- TEACHER: What comes after fall?
- STUDENT: Winter
- TEACHER: Way to go!

Initiation
Response
Feedback
The 2/3 rule
(Edwards and Mercer, 1987)

- N=25
- 25*3 = 75 (Total IRF-pattern interactions)
- S1TT $\rightarrow$ 1/75
- S2TT $\rightarrow$ 1/75, etc.
- TTT = 2/75 + 2/75 + 2/75...
- TTT = 50 occurrences
  - S1 = 1 occurrence!!
TTT: John Goodlad’s Research

- 8-year study (1980’s)
- T out-talked class. Ratio 3:1
- 75% of class time: Instructions
  - 70% TT- T→S
  - 5%: T created Ss anticipation of needing to respond.
  - Less than 1%: T required some type of open response from Ss.
VIDEO (SELF)-ANALYSIS
What the Experts Say

“One of the unique benefits video provides is its ability to record a lot of non-verbal communication (smiles, eye contact, and more).”

Andy Curtis
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Behaviors/Techniques Conducive to Excessive TTT</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The teacher gives long and unnecessary explanations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The teacher does not elicit from students enough when presenting new language.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>The teacher asks follow-up questions instead of encouraging students to do so.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>The teacher summarizes and/or paraphrases instead of giving students opportunities to do so.</td>
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<td>Behaviors/Techniques Conducive to Excessive TTT</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The teacher gives opinions about facts and ideas that do not pertain to the class.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The teacher adds additional information to students’ responses.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The teacher poses questions and then answers them him/herself.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>The teacher paraphrases instructions more than necessary.</td>
</tr>
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<td>#</td>
<td>Behaviors/Techniques Conducive to Excessive TTT</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>The teacher does the wrap-up.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>There is not enough wait time for students.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>The teacher unnecessarily repeats what he/she or the students have said.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>The teacher does not give students enough chances to guess and predict.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
SUGGESTED STRATEGIES TO REDUCE TTT (AND INCREASE STT)
DON’TS & DO’S

- Long explanations
- No elicitation
- T asks follow up Q
- T summarizes, paraphrase, etc.
- T talks about himself/herself.

- Don’t explain, SHOW
- Elicit
- Promote S→S Q
- Have Ss summarize, paraphrase, etc.
- Give Ss a chance to talk about themselves (Pairs / Groups)
DON'T’S

- T adds additional info…
- T answers his/her own questions
- T paraphrases instructions more than necessary

&

DO’S

- Have Ss ask follow up questions.
- Have Ss answer /
  Have Ss ask you Qs
- Use comprehension checks/ have Ss repeat instructions
DONT’S 

- T does wrap up (e.g. at the end of class)
- Not enough wait time
- T repeats what Ss say
- No chances to guess

&

DO’S 

- Have Ss do the WP (challenge them)
- Give them prep time.
- Have other ss paraphrase/ask Qs/etc.
- Set tasks to develop guessing skills
Does this mean Ts should...?
Students in charge? Yeah, right!

- “The students do all the work; the teacher gets the money”
- “All we do in class is play games, solve problems ourselves, and talk a lot. When is the teacher going to teach us something?”
- “It looks like the teacher is never prepared; he hardly ever explains.”
- “He needs to learn how to lecture.”
- “The teacher leaves us on our own; I need more guidance. I paid my tuition for being taught.”
The fear of losing control

Can you help me, Mrs. Martin? This wasn't covered in any of my education courses.

From http://www.classroommanagementonline.com/
TASK: TTT vs. STT (TEACHERS’ ROLES)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T’s role</th>
<th>100-0</th>
<th>80-20</th>
<th>60-40</th>
<th>50 - 50</th>
<th>20-80</th>
<th>0-100</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>CONTROLLER</td>
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<tr>
<td>ORGANIZER</td>
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<td>PROMPTER</td>
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<tr>
<td>PARTICIPANT</td>
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<td><strong>X</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>OBSERVER</td>
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<td><strong>X</strong></td>
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Who Should do MOST of the talk in Class?
Autonomous Learning Projects

- Promote learning beyond the classroom setting.
- Help teachers reduce TTT
- Ss are to be given the proper scaffolding for the ALP to enhance learning.
Task: True / False

- Students’ opportunities to speak in class should be maximized to help them develop speaking in English.  (T)
- Students must be given ample opportunities to communicate, with as much teacher intervention as possible.  (F)  
- Whenever a student can say something, the teacher should intervene or interfere by talking.  (F)
- Neither the teacher nor any one student should monopolize talking time in class.  (T)
Task: True / False

- Teachers must give students sufficient time to formulate their ideas in order for them to sufficiently elaborate.  
  (T)

- The teacher should answer his or her own questions.  
  (F) not

- Classroom techniques like personalization and student-to-student questions are not useful to maximize student talk time.  
  (F)

*From ICPNA’s Teacher’s Guide: Concepts, Practices, & Techniques*
Summary

- Promote $S \rightarrow S$ interaction.
  - $S \rightarrow S$ question
  - $S$ giving feedback to each other
  - $S$ using the language to get to know their peers more

- Promote
  - Paraphrasing ($S$s use their own words)
  - Reporting ($S$s tell the class about...)
  - $S$s giving feedback to each other
Summary

- Play different T roles
- Do not interfere with true communication
- Reflect on your teaching (have your class videotaped).
- Don’t be afraid of giving up some of the control of the class.
- Promote Autonomous Learning
- Aim at quality TTT / STT
FOOD FOR THOUGHT

- The question eventually is not “HOW MUCH TTT...? rather, “WHAT KIND OF TTT...?”
THANK YOU

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