

Learners' self-transcriptions for improving classroom interaction

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Abstract

The joint nature of language learning has been increasingly recognized in recent years and it is now a truism to say that foreign language acquisition is notably dependent on learners' participation in peer interaction. Classroom interaction creates opportunities not only for language practice but also for language learning. Therefore, peer interaction occupies one of the central positions in the process of language acquisition. The study reported in this paper describes how learners' self-transcriptions of speaking activities engaged them in the negotiation of form and meaning and, consequently, improved the quality of their interactions. The results point to high educational value of using self-transcriptions, which, among others, allowed learners to use their second language (L2) resources for self-correction, encouraged them to improve their production and created many learning opportunities. Based on these findings, some classroom implications are offered.

Keywords: classroom interaction; self-transcription; negotiation of form; negotiation of meaning

1. Introduction

Most contemporary researchers agree that there exists a robust connection between interaction and learning, particularly through cognitive aspects such as

noticing, attention and working memory (Allwright, 1984; Gass, 2003; Long, 1983, 1986; Tsui, 2001). Language learning, as seen from this perspective, is accounted for through learner's exposure to input, opportunities for negotiation of form and meaning (thus ensuring comprehensible input), pushed output and feedback on that output. The mediating mechanisms of noticing or attention are said to stimulate the relationship between communication and language acquisition (Gass, 2003, p. 224). In simplest terms, interaction refers to a conversation that occurs either between learner(s) and teacher(s) or between learners. In the context of interaction, learners obtain information about the correctness or incorrectness of their utterances (Gass & Mackey, 2007, p. 178), which creates opportunities for language learning to take place.

Observations of classroom interaction beginning in the 1970s resulted in a growing number of observation instruments, mainly in the form of checklists (Allwright & Bailey, 1991; Fanselow, 1977; Flanders, 1970; Moskowitz, 1971; Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975; Ullman & Geva, 1982). They also added to the communicative revolution in foreign language teaching of the 1980s as increasingly more attention was given to instances of creative language production and the meaning of an utterance began to be seen as more important than its form. However, as the processes of interaction proved to be extremely complex, the prescriptive approach was partially abandoned in favor of more general awareness-raising approaches whereby the focus was on what happens during interaction rather than on providing detailed accounts of speakers' utterances. This, first of all, led to interest in teacher talk (Chaudron, 1988; Hall & Smotrova, 2013; Long, 1983; Long & Sato, 1983) in order to discover how teachers' behaviors influence classroom interaction. Secondly, a wealth of studies focused on learner talk, investigating communication strategies (Bialystok, 1990; Tarone, 1980), negotiation of form and meaning (Doughty & Varela, 1998; Foster & Snyder Ohta, 2005; Lyster 2002; Pica, 1994), and relationships between task types and interaction (Glew, 1998; Keller-Lally, 2006).

Focusing on what is observable which dominated in the early research on aspects of classroom interaction provided specialists with a number of significant observations. First of all, it has been established that interaction gives learners opportunities for obtaining comprehensible input and that it stimulates learners to produce output (Long, 1983, p. 48). Secondly, it has been confirmed that participation in interaction provides practice of modifying and expanding learners' communicative competence (Tsui, 2001, p. 121). As interaction is a dynamic process of negotiating both form and meaning, it has also been observed that it gives opportunities for corrective feedback, thus bringing errors to learners' attention (Gass, 2003, p. 232).

More recent approaches to the study of classroom interaction additionally take into consideration its unobservable side, that is teachers' and learners'

psychological states, such as motivation (Arnold & Brown, 2001; Johnson & Johnson, 2009), beliefs and attitudes (Petek, 2013; Sato, 2013), cultural norms (Huth, 2006; Johnson, 1995), anxiety (Hall, 2011; Tsui, 1996), as well as self-esteem (Arnold, 2000; de Andres & Arnold, 2009; Shamsudin & Nesi, 2006). As a result, a wider range of sources of data collection is employed, including learner journals, interviews, self-assessment tests, lesson plans, or stimulated recalls. Moreover, as interactional competence (Kramsch, 1996) is argued to be a set of resources that are accomplished in a joint process of communicating rather than one's internal disposition, voices are raised that paired speaking tasks provide greater insight into an individual learner's interactional skills (Galaczi, 2013; McNamara & Roever, 2006; Wagner, 2014).

The study reported below is based on the assumption that classroom interaction can be enhanced when learners take greater responsibility for negotiating forms and meanings in oral communicative tasks, which, at the same time, means reducing teacher intervention and increasing learner autonomy. A less active teacher denotes more active learners. This idea is taken as a point of reference in the current study which employs learners' self-transcriptions for improving the quality of peer interaction in a language classroom. In the course of the study, a group of EFL learners were asked to transcribe fragments of their own language performance, reflect on it, correct their own errors and suggest improvements. They then performed the same speaking activity with a different partner and followed the transcription-correction cycle again.

2. Optimizing interaction in L2 classrooms

In this article, we focus on the use of self-transcriptions; however, it is worth remarking on the already investigated factors influencing the quality of interaction in L2 classroom. There are two co-existing strands in the literature related to enhancing classroom interaction. On the one hand, there are practitioners drawing their reflections from day-to-day observations of their own classrooms and sharing their advice with other teachers in related teacher-focused magazines; on the other hand, there are scientifically-oriented researchers who make attempts at investigating what happens during classroom interaction through carefully planned observations and analyses of transcripts, recordings, student- and/or teacher-centered questionnaires, etc. Both parties tend to concentrate, with varying intensity, on accuracy/form or fluency/meaning. Presented below is a brief overview of the findings of both strands of empirical investigations of classroom interaction, focusing primarily on improving its quality.

Nearly three decades ago, one of the strongest supporters of interactive language teaching, Rivers (1987, pp. 10-14), put forward a number of recommendations as to what should happen in the so-called interactive classroom.

These recommendations can be seen as basic clues as to improving the way interaction occurs in L2 classroom and the way learners benefit from it. According to the author, interaction can be enhanced through:

- much listening to a lot of authentic materials;
- getting learners to react verbally through role plays, discussions, interviews, simulated cocktail parties, sharing their points of view, etc.
- involving learners in joint tasks;
- presenting them with various videos of native speakers interacting;
- improving learners' pronunciation;
- providing opportunities for cross-cultural encounters which allow learners to share their values and viewpoints;
- giving learners opportunities for interaction with a written text through interpretation, analysis, expansion, discussing alternative possibilities, etc.;
- creating opportunities for learners to write to each other (e.g., a class newspaper or 'dialogue journals');
- inductive teaching of grammar rules and creating possibilities for applying them in interactive tasks;
- interactive testing in which learners have the opportunity to respond to real uses of language;
- giving learners opportunities to interact with the community which speaks the target language.

As can be seen, enhancing interaction is based on two ideas: that of providing learners with a lot of authentic input and of getting them to perform a lot of pair- or group work. It is difficult not to agree with Rivers' recommendations; however, they are very general guidelines which provide in-service teachers with little concrete ideas as to how to go about implementing them in their everyday practice.

An overview of some of the standard textbooks used in EFL teacher education (Harmer, 2007; Hedge, 2000; Scrivener, 2011; Ur, 1996) reveals some recurring pieces of advice given to trainees with regards to improving classroom interaction. For one thing, it is commonly suggested that peer- instead of teacher-student interaction should be promoted as it greatly increases student talking time and lessens the pressure of performing in front of a big group. Secondly, it is advised that tasks should be contextualized, personalized, and based on easy language. This increases learners' motivation and allows them to fully participate in interactions without the fear of getting stuck on an unknown word (but see, e.g., Gass, 2003 or Pawlak, 2012, for the beneficial role of the negotiation of meaning). Thirdly, teacher training textbooks advise practicing with learners the so-called real-life communication skills, such as the norms of turn-taking, the use of formulaic adjacency pairs for responding to fixed routines,

teaching ways of starting and closing conversations, developing the knowledge of discourse markers and using survival strategies to prevent communication breakdowns. The teacher's behavior during interactive tasks has also been addressed in the quoted literature and it has been pointed out that teacher talking time should be reduced to a minimum. Increasing wait-time, allowing silence and letting the learners finish their own sentences adds to successful peer interaction. Asking questions and actively listening to learner responses is preferred over giving explanations. Finally, it has been stressed that encouraging a relaxed and friendly atmosphere and building learner confidence may add to greater learner participation in interactive activities. Table 1 briefly summarizes the ideas found in the quoted textbooks. It should be observed that although a coherent taxonomy of concrete procedures to follow in enhancing classroom interaction is difficult to establish, the evoked authors agree on the basic principles fitting most interactive classroom activities.

Table 1 A summary of ideas on optimizing classroom interaction in ELT textbooks

Area of consideration	Ur (1996, pp. 121-122)	Hedge (2000, pp. 271-276)	Harmer (2007, pp. 343-348)	Scrivener (2011, pp. 60-61)
Grouping learners	Use group work to increase the amount of learner talk		Make sure learners get the chance to interact in small groups	Make use of pair- and group-work to maximize opportunities for speaking; arrange seating so that everyone can see each other; get students to interact with each other rather than with you
Task construction	Base the activity on easy language; make a careful choice of topic and task to stimulate interest	Contextualize and personalize the tasks	Involve learners in real talk, do not just ask questions commonly found in course books; provide opportunities to repeat the same task with different interlocutors	
Training	Give some instruction or training in discussion skills	Teach ways of opening and closing a conversation, responding appropriately in fixed routines (invitations, apologizing, etc.), taking turns, keeping a conversation going as well as choosing and changing topics of the conversation.	Teach the rules of turn-taking, various discourse markers to buy time or to mark the beginning of a segment, as well as survival and repair strategies (paraphrasing, using all-purpose word, being able to appeal for help)	
Teacher intervention	Keep students speaking the target language		Support learners; prompt their responses if they struggle; provide feedback after the task	Ask questions rather than give explanations; actively listen to students; allow silence; allow students to finish their own sentences
Atmosphere		Build confidence and ease in students		Encourage a friendly, relaxed learning environment
Time management			Give learners time to prepare for the task and/or rehearse what they are going to say	Allow time for students to listen, think and process their answers; allow thinking time

More specific answers to the question how to go about improving classroom interaction come from Sato and Lyster (2012, p. 617). The authors have shown that training in providing peer corrective feedback given to students over a certain course of time positively influenced their L2 accuracy and fluency development. In the cited study, learners were trained to be providers of corrective feedback either in the form of prompts or in the form of recasts. This in turn led to a finding that negotiating form and meaning during peer-to-peer communicative tasks sharpened learners' ability to monitor their own and their interlocutors' language production. In his study, Pawlak (2012, p. 88) arrives at a similar conclusion. Having analyzed over a hundred student-student interactions during pair and group work, he suggests a need for training students in negotiating form and meaning. Such training should focus on raising learners' awareness of the importance of pair and group work, showing them how negotiation of form can lead to more reliance on the target language, demonstrating the use of conversational strategies, introducing exercises in negotiating form and meaning, and teaching them negotiation strategies. Of primary importance, however, seems to be the teacher's example, which should show students that negotiation of form and meaning is a usual element of classroom discourse (as opposed to relying on learners' mother tongue). In addition to ensuring that L2 classroom interaction entails elements that account for form-focused and meaning-focused negotiation, pedagogical value has been ascribed to (broadly understood) computer-mediated interaction. Wolski (2013, p. 27-28) recommends the use of digital tools for simulating interaction such as a chatbot (a computer program for stimulating written interaction), voice recognition software (for improving pronunciation) and a virtual interaction simulator (which combines features of a chatbot and voice recognition software allowing for practicing oral interaction with a computer-generated interlocutor).

3. The place of negotiation of form and negotiation of meaning in improving classroom interaction

Particular attention in studies of classroom interaction has been devoted to developing learners' abilities of negotiation of meaning and negotiation of form. The former has been the focus of numerous SLA studies and denotes various *conversational moves* (Lyster 2002, p. 381) utilized by speakers to resolve communication breakdowns. The latter indicates the kind of feedback which leads the speaker to peer- or self-repair of non-target output. Both of these mechanisms are closely related to the positive influence of interaction on acquiring the target language (Gass, 2003; Long, 1986; Pawlak, 2012; Swain, 1995).

Gass and Mackey (2007, pp. 181-182) identified four interactional moves used by teachers to improve interaction by pushing learners to enhance their accuracy:

- clarification requests (e.g., 'Pardon?' or 'I don't understand' or 'What did you say?');
- comprehension checks (verifying if an interlocutor has understood, e.g., 'Did you understand?');
- confirmation checks (comments on the well-formedness of learners' output, e.g., 'Is this what you mean?');
- recasts (rephrasing an incorrect utterance using correct forms).

The first three of these can be seen as examples of negotiation of meaning whereas recasts serve the purpose of negotiation of form. These interactional moves can be used by learners during peer interaction as a form of peer corrective feedback. Studies have shown the benefits of such collaborative efforts in language learning (Chaudron, 1988; DeKeyser, 1993, as cited in Mitchel & Myles, 2004, pp. 167, 180; Pica et al, 1986). Lyster and Ranta (1997) and Lyster (1998, as cited in Gass, 2003, p. 239) demonstrated that recasts were not particularly effective for corrective feedback; however, they proved useful for moving the lesson forward through focus on content rather than on the form. On the other hand, Mackey and Philp (1998, as cited in Gass, 2003, p. 239) argued that recasts used with negotiation are more useful than negotiation alone.

Any deviations from the mainstream classroom discourse serving to highlight formal inadequacies in L2 (be they syntactic, lexical or phonological) can be seen as examples of negotiation of form (Majer, 2008, p. 82). Negotiation of form is therefore triggered by grammatical errors rather than communication breakdown as it is a principal goal of the more proficient party to provide tutorial, that is to focus the learners' attention on errors while withholding the correct form and to push them to modify their output (Tsang, 2004, p. 199, as cited in Majer, 2008, p. 82). The pedagogic function of negotiation of form has been confirmed in various studies of teacher-learner interactions (e.g., van den Branden, 1997; Lyster, 2002; Lyster & Ranta, 1997). However, as the purpose of negotiation of form is to direct attention to grammatical errors, it rarely occurs in interaction between peers unless the task itself is designed to make it happen (Sato & Lyster, 2012, p. 597). As learners are seldom able to provide one another with interactional moves indicating the occurrence of errors, negotiation of form is often avoided in favor of task completion. Although negotiation of form has been observed in a number of peer interaction studies (Mackey, Oliver & Leeman, 2003; Sato, 2007), it has not been reported to provide quality feedback signaling that an error occurred or providing opportunities for self-correction. Another reason for scarce occurrence of negotiation of form in peer interaction is that it by nature explicitly shows little acknowledgment of the interlocutor's

turn. As a result, it does not attempt to sustain positive affect (Nicholas et al. 2001, p. 721, as cited in Majer, 2008, p. 82).

Naturally occurring breakdowns of communication may lead to negotiation of meaning which has been observed to serve not only as opportunities for practice of specific instances of language features but also as a medium through which learning takes place. Long's (1996, pp. 451-452) Interaction Hypothesis states that negotiation of meaning which triggers interactional adjustments between a learner and a more competent speaker facilitates acquisition through connecting "input, internal learner capacities, particularly selective attention, and output in productive ways". Long (1996, p. 452) argues that negotiation of meaning comprises three types of interactional moves:

- input modifications (e.g., putting stress on key words, decomposition, partial self-repetition);
- semantically contingent responses (e.g., recasts, repetitions, expansions);
- conversational modifications (e.g., confirmations, confirmation checks, comprehension checks, clarification requests).

Some research indicates that more negotiation of meaning takes place in learner-learner interactions than in interactions between non-native and native speakers (Porter, 1986; Sato & Lyster, 2012; Varonis & Gass, 1985). In the former case, researchers managed to abstract such interactional moves serving the development of L2 as input modifications and interactional feedback. It has also been noted that in such cases learners tend to self-correct more (Sato & Lyster, 2012).

4. Learners' self-transcription in a foreign language classroom

An emerging trend in foreign language education is self-study (Brandenburg & Davidson, 2011, p. 703) and one of its central concepts is self-transcription which is still under-discussed in related literature (Davidson, 2009). Current research on using self-transcriptions in foreign language teaching demonstrates improvements made by learners trained in the use of such a technique, particularly with respect to the noticing of their own errors. In their study, Stillwell et al. (2010) argue that self-transcription promotes language learning through allowing learners to re-experience task performance without the pressure of on-line processing and letting them notice and reflect on the language used. Therefore, self-transcriptions serve as a means of raising students' language awareness and allowing them to track their own progress. Benson et al. (2011, p. 104) suggest that such reflective learning strongly promotes key psychological components of learner autonomy. As Mennim (2012, p. 52) showed, finding errors in one's own output with the use of self-transcription is also seen as awareness-raising activity which encourages negotiation of form. In this study, a group of

Japanese learners managed to effectively negotiate form while working autonomously with little teacher intervention. Baleghizadeh and Derakhshesh (2012), in turn, discuss how investigating learners' errors with the use of self-transcriptions of their performance helped them produce more accurate language in following performances of the same task.

According to Cooke (2013, p. 75), learner self-transcriptions show how reflective practice supports the development of noticing (being essential to autonomous language acquisition). Willis (2015, p. 8) mentioned an assignment he had once given to his students involving self-transcription. Even the highly educated students, native speakers of English, had been surprised that they had not used "complex sentences with a plethora of subordinate clauses". Encouraging results of using self-transcription activities have also been related to greater language sophistication and easier comprehension (Mennim, 2003) and making short- and long-term language gains (Lynch, 2007; Mennim, 2007). All the reported studies entailed an element of error correction whereby learners working individually, in pairs or small groups attempted to reformulate and improve their transcriptions. The majority of these attempts were produced in the direction of the target language which, according to Mennim (2012, p. 52), suggests that learners can work with their own resources in developing their L2 knowledge.

5. The study

The rationale behind the study discussed below stems from an emerging field of research in foreign language pedagogy concerning the use of self-transcription in a FL classroom. It has been the hope of the author to shed more light on the beneficial aspects of engaging learners in negotiating form and meaning with regard to their own performance using self-transcriptions, all this with a view to expanding their autonomy, increasing awareness of their own strengths and weaknesses, and developing their linguistic resources. In the process, the learners were asked to perform an interactive speaking activity in pairs and record it onto their mobile phones. As homework, they were asked to prepare self-transcriptions of their oral performances. During the following classes, they were asked to work with their transcriptions and find their own errors and offer improvements to their performance whenever possible. Learners discussed their doubts with the teacher-researcher and received feedback concerning the number and quality of the corrected errors after he analyzed the transcriptions during the following classes. Then, the learners were asked to perform the same speaking activity again with a different partner, record it and prepare another self-transcription which was again used for self-correction and reflection on possible areas for improvement.

5.1. Classroom intervention

The participants were a fairly homogenous group of 17 EFL students, aged 15-16, who were learning English at a B1 level at an upper-secondary school in northern Greater Poland. It was their first year in a new school and the present author, their teacher, observed that most of them had difficulties in speaking in a foreign language. These difficulties were, however, not so much connected with their language proficiency as with the fact that they lacked confidence and therefore produced very short utterances and did not get involved in speaking activities.

The interactive speaking activity required them to imagine they shared a house with their classmate and discuss solutions to a number of problems in this house such as spiders in the bathroom, a leaking tap, or a dog's hairs on the sofa. Before they started the activity, the teacher-researcher asked volunteers to record themselves while performing the task. Most of the learners were eager to do so and used their mobile phones to record their conversations. Before the recordings began, they were asked to act as naturally as possible, that is behave as if the recording did not take place and try not to pay attention to the recording device. The learners were also informed that their recordings would be used for preparing self-transcriptions. Having performed the activity, the learners were provided with a number of practical ideas about how to prepare such transcriptions. These ideas included hints on how to note pauses, hesitations, or laughter (the learners were advised to write these in brackets) and were told that it is common for spoken language to be full of repetitions, ungrammatical utterances and sentence fragments. Out of the 17 participants, seven returned their self-transcriptions during the following classes and those who did claimed the task had been easier for them than they had expected. The teacher photocopied some of these self-transcripts for the learners who did not bring theirs.

The error-correction and language improvement exercise was performed individually. However, learners were allowed to refer to bilingual dictionaries or use their peers as sources of knowledge in trying to arrive at solutions. Each learner was asked to review his or her transcription in order to evaluate his or her output and suggest error corrections and/or improvements on the language used. The decisions were to be recorded in a simple table made up of two columns, namely *Fragment* (i.e., the fragment of the transcription) and *Correction/Improvement* (i.e., suggested changes to the fragment quoted). The speaking activity was repeated after the learners received feedback from their teacher concerning their work with self-transcriptions. They were asked to perform it with a different partner and prepare self-transcriptions, which were later analyzed similarly to the first ones.

5.2. Results and discussion

Each of the self-transcriptions prepared by the learners consisted on average of 300 words. Each learner was asked to analyse his or her self-transcription and mark fragments which should be corrected or could be improved. The errors found by the learners were mostly grammatical ones and referred, among others, to a wrong tense, a missing article, or an incorrect preposition. Some learners marked semantic problems, such as a wrong word or lack of the English equivalent (in instances where speakers were unable to come up with an English word or a synonym, they relied on a Polish equivalent). Naturally, phonological errors could not be marked in the transcriptions. Table 2 shows examples of learners' corrections and improvements.

Table 2 Examples of learners' error corrections or improvements

Learner	Fragment	Correction or improvement
Marta	<i>We can telephone for technic</i>	<i>We can phone for a technician</i>
	<i>Or we must phone to the garden man</i>	<i>Or you can call the gardener</i>
Patrycja	<i>Neighbors have parties every Friday</i>	<i>The neighbors have parties every Friday</i>
	<i>I will to buy</i>	<i>I will buy</i>
Jakub	<i>He is how family</i>	<i>He is like a family</i>
	<i>You are not a allergic</i>	<i>You are not allergic</i>
	<i>I scare with spiders</i>	<i>I'm scared of spiders</i>
Malwina	<i>It's noise</i>	<i>It's noisy</i>
	<i>Mouse in kitchen</i>	<i>Mouse in the kitchen</i>

Some corrections provided by the learners were, however, inaccurate. Examples are provided in Table 3, with the caveat that the names of the learners are not provided in this case.

Table 3 Examples of inaccurate corrections made by the learners

Fragment	Example of inaccurate correction
<i>I don't have money a lot</i>	<i>I don't have money enough</i>
<i>And our garden are overgrewed</i>	<i>And our garden is overgrewed</i>
<i>Desinfect the kitchen</i>	<i>Pest control the kitchen</i>
<i>I scare with spiders</i>	<i>I scare of spiders</i>
<i>New window cost much</i>	<i>New window cost a lot</i>

In the course of the study, the seven learners' self-transcriptions were analyzed to check how many of their own errors had been found, how they had been corrected by the learners, and whether these corrections were in fact accurate. Table 4 presents the results of this analysis, including the number of errors found by the teacher, the number of errors found by a learner, and the number of

appropriate corrections or improvements offered. As can be seen from such data, the learners were able to identify between 25% and 100% of their errors (62% on average). Out of these, about 80% of their corrections were accurate. In statistical terms, these results indicate that the seven learners who worked with their self-transcriptions managed to correct about a half of the errors they had made.

Table 4 Results of the first self-transcription analysis

Learner	Number of errors in self-transcriptions	Number of errors found by the learner	Number of accurate corrections or improvements
Paulina R.	8	6	5
Radosław	4	1	1
Paulina M.	11	8	6
Marta	14	6	4
Patrycja	6	3	3
Jakub	4	3	2
Malwina	6	6	4

The learners received feedback from the teacher on how well they had managed to self-correct and on possible areas for improvement with respect to their participation. This included general ideas on encouraging the interlocutor to speak, avoiding silences, listening actively to the partner, and dealing politely with interruptions. They performed the same activity during the following classes and the procedure of recording, preparing self-transcription, and correcting was repeated. The results of this task repetition are presented in Table 5. As can be seen, when the task was repeated, the learners made fewer errors, found more (percentage-wise) of them in their self-transcriptions, and were able to correct most of them. Table 5 demonstrates that when the learners repeated the task, the overall number of errors they made dropped by 19 (from 53 when the task was conducted for the first time to 34 in task repetition). On average, the learners were able to find 75.5 % of their errors and self-correct 88% of them.

Table 5 Results of the second analysis of self-transcriptions

Learner	Number of errors in self-transcriptions	Number of errors found by the learner	Number of accurate corrections/ improvements
Paulina R.	3	2	2
Radosław	6	3	3
Paulina M.	8	7	6
Marta	7	6	5
Patrycja	4	3	3
Jakub	3	2	1
Malwina	3	3	3

In the course of the analysis, the author also focused on examples of negotiation of meaning as evidenced in the learners' self-transcriptions. The interactional moves known collectively as negotiation of meaning serve the purpose of moving the conversation forward in situations when communication breakdowns occur resulting from inadequate linguistic knowledge on the part of any participant of the interaction. As evidenced in the examples retrieved from the participants' self-transcriptions, in the vast majority of instances, negotiating meaning boiled down to using a Polish equivalent of the linguistic item in question, as in the example below:

Example 1

A: Call someone who... isn't scared about spiders. And the broken window is in the bathroom. We can't ... kąpać się?

B: Take a bath.

A: We can't take a bath because we could get cold.

Example 2

B: The neighbour... jak to się mówi ['How do you say it?']

V: Neighbours.

B: Neighbours have parties every Friday. I can't sleep because of that.

Example 3

V: Our dog is always lying on the sofa and there is a lot of... jak jest sierść? ['How do you say animal hair?']

B: Po prostu hair. ['Simply hair']

Example 4

A: We can lay...

B: Lay?

A: Położyć.

In fact, more often than not the learners resorted to their mother tongue in situations when a communication breakdown came up. Unless we understand negotiation of meaning as, among other things, a mechanism through which learning takes place, it is difficult to call this dependence on L1 an example of negotiation of meaning. Clearly, these learners would benefit from instruction in communication strategies.

It appears that, on the whole, this small-scale study provides a basis for a positive appraisal of using learners' self-transcriptions in a foreign language classroom. It is the present author's claim that working with self-transcriptions can lead to improvement in learners' interactional skills, particularly with respect to raising awareness of their language proficiency and helping them to focus on the form and meaning of their performances and, thus, enhancing the quality of their interactions. Learners' positive reactions to the use of the error-

correction activity (also the reaction of learners who had not invested their effort in preparing self-transcriptions) mirrors the positive reaction of learners in similar studies (e.g., Mennim, 2012). Such outcomes should be attributed, first of all, to the deep personalization of the task; secondly, to the authenticity of the material used; and, thirdly, to successful problem solving. Mennim (2012, p. 64) explains that even if learners are unable to solve all the language problems they encounter during error correction tasks, they still can turn to the teacher or their peers. Moreover, reaching an impasse in negotiating form or meaning can also be seen as a learning opportunity. As Lightbown (1998, as cited in Mennim, 2012, p. 64) underscores, noticing an L2 gap can have a priming effect since learners are more prone to notice a given form in any future language input they receive.

6. Limitations and conclusions

In this study, a group of 17 learners was asked to prepare self-transcriptions of their performance during a paired speaking activity. Seven learners returned their transcriptions during the following classes and worked on improving them and correcting their own errors. The aim of this study was to observe the extent to which learners are able to use their L2 resources for self-correction and to check whether the use of self-transcriptions translates into improving peer interaction in subsequent tasks. However, before any conclusions can be offered, a few limitations of this small-scale study should be taken into account. First of all, the study presented above would have benefited from employing a control group. This would have allowed a comparison of the obtained results against the results of participants who had not undergone any kind of classroom intervention. In addition to that, a question remains as to whether the use of self-transcription was the sole reason why the learners performed better in task-repetition. Perhaps, the sheer fact of conducting the same task twice resulted in improved performance. Also, a qualitative analysis of self-transcriptions might have shed more light on whether the use of this procedure improved the participants' overall interactive skills, that is the skill of turn-taking, using discourse markers, developing topics, encouraging the interlocutors to participate in interaction, etc. Furthermore, a post-test (again with a control group) might have shown whether the gains of using self-transcriptions were long-lasting. Future studies should surely aim at eliminating such weaknesses.

In the course of the study presented above, negotiation of form was made possible through the correction of errors in the learners' self-transcriptions. The activity encouraged the learners to focus on the form of language without much intervention on the part of the teacher. Interestingly, the learners proved able to use their L2 resources to discover more than half (62% on average) of their

errors and to correct a clear majority (80% on average) of them when they conducted the interactive speaking activity for the first time. After the task was repeated, these numbers increased to 75.5% and 88%, respectively. Although the teacher was not present when the learners were engaged in self-correction, the high number of all the instances of language corrected by them has to be seen as the greatest success of this classroom intervention. For practical reasons, the teacher would not have been able to listen to and monitor all the interactions happening in the classroom under typical circumstances. Similarly, he was unable to monitor all the learners while they were engaging in their self-correction. However, the analysis of the data shows that the learners were to a large extent capable of reflecting on their own performance and managed to enhance the quality of their production autonomously. Even if they were unable to spot all the linguistic inadequacies of their transcripts, they received more feedback on the quality of their interactions than would have been possible if they had been given assistance from their teacher, which would have had to be limited anyway due to time constraints. Willis (2015, p. 18) underlined that classroom interaction should be rich not in presentation and practice, but in language use and analysis, being the key components of task-based language learning. It therefore seems justifiable to devote some classroom time (in the case of this study it was one 45-minute lesson) to involve learners in self-correction of their transcriptions as it allows spending more time on the analysis of each learner's performance than it would have taken if the teacher had listened to each peer interaction individually.

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