

*Collaboration in language development between
American and Polish university students*

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Abstract

The paper focuses on the effects of collaborative translation tasks in native-non-native student pairs for improving language written production and translation skills. The study uses data from one academic year contacts between Polish MA students of English and translation at the State University of Applied Sciences in Konin and the University of Łódź and first-year writing students of non-humanities subjects at North Dakota State University within a Trans-Atlantic Pacific Project (TAPP). A general trend observed in education at present involves internet-based communication and collaborative knowledge acquisition. The paper makes reference to the interaction hypothesis in second language acquisition and in the teaching of translation and discusses the use of interactional – mainly corrective – strategies in their writing on the basis of the Polish-US student direct email contacts, and changes which result in their language.

Keywords: collaboration; corrective feedback; foreign language; interaction hypothesis; native language, Trans-Atlantic Pacific Project (TAPP), translation, writing

1. Introduction

The paper focuses on the effects of collaborative writing/translation tasks in native-non-native student pairs for improving language written production and translation skills. The study uses data from one academic year contacts between Polish MA students of English and translation at the State University of Applied Sciences in Konin and the University of Łódź and first-year students of non-humanities subjects at North Dakota State University within a Trans-Atlantic Pacific Project (TAPP). TAPP collaborations have commonly included writing-translation projects, in which one class writes texts in a source language, then works with another class that translates these texts into a target language (Maylath, King, & Arnó Macià, 2013; Maylath, Vandepitte, Minacori, Isohella, Mousten, & Humbley, 2013). The present exchange is based on writing tasks performed by students of NDSU (NS) and the translation of these texts into Polish by non-native students of English (NNS) at Łódź University and State University of Applied Sciences in Konin in the first semester of the academic year 2015/16 and a selection of Polish texts by the Polish students and their translation into English in the second term. Consecutive versions of these translations were commented upon by NDSU students and corrected and modified accordingly by the Polish students.

2. Collaborative activities and the technological turn

As proposed in numerous publications (e.g., Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk & Bogucki, 2016; Surowiecki, 2004), *collective intelligence* and *the wisdom of crowds* significantly exceed those of an individual. Surowiecki (2004) argues that, similarly to the colonies of bees and ants, the efforts of a group, particularly groups working as a team, are more effective than efforts of an individual. In the context of second language acquisition, this principle seems to work particularly well.

Collaborative task exercises are particularly strongly inspired by an unprecedented technological turn in computer science and rapidly developing language tools that have been accompanying these changes at present. The current state of technological development relevant to the task, both hardware and software, operating in the world-wide web environment all further contribute to the progress in this field. Internet communication facilities such as emailing are widely used as educational tools. Learning is mediated then by the context of email exchanges in our project discussed in the present study, when interlocutors provide questions and suggestions and reach higher levels of conscious understanding of text-creating processes and their writing, and promote a rise in linguistic and cultural awareness. In this sense, our study analyzes the materials which combine the processes of conscious reflection with those of writing

skill development. The medium of an asynchronous-comments exchange is particularly well suited to such a combination as it is able to support different types of corrective feedback. We examine some examples of computer-mediated communication (CMC) exchanges generated during the period of one academic year from 1 October 2015 to 15 May 2016. Included in these exchanges are what is called by other scholars *reflective conversation* or *reflective diaries* (TAPP PROJECT, North Dakota State University – University of Paris-Diderot), that is, “computer-mediated asynchronous discussion around language topics and language-learning issues” as well as versions, typically two, of English language texts which arise during this period of time. Another important aspect of the study is the longitudinal analysis of the Polish students’ development of translational competency and skill. This part of the study is still in progress, as further data from some of the participants in the study discussed in the present paper will be collected during the next academic period of their study.

3. Interaction and noticing hypotheses

The interaction hypothesis was first proposed by Long (1991[1985]) and emphasized the role and significance of interaction in (originally spoken) discourse through turns leading to clarification and fuller comprehension. The exchanges are hypothesized to facilitate language learning and acquisition. What is specific to this kind of interaction seems primarily connected with the metalinguistic function of language. According to Mackey (1999), “when learners are struggling to communicate and are engaged in trying to understand and to be understood, their attention may be on language form as well as meaning” (p. 562). This hypothesis is directly connected with another crucial observation in contemporary second language acquisition pedagogy, referring to Schmidt’s (1990) noticing hypothesis, which assumes the obligatory presence of the act of *noticing* as a necessary condition to knowledge and language acquisition.

4. Research methods and materials

4.1. TAPP

The Trans-Atlantic & Pacific Project (TAPP), in which the present study is rooted, was launched in the 1999-2000 academic year by North Dakota State University and, personally by one of the professors in NDSU’s Department of English, Bruce Maylath, who, together with Professor Sonia Vandepitte of Ghent University in Belgium at present, are the major coordinators of the project activities which link between students in different countries in collaborative teams. By the present

day, the TAPP network has developed a system of collaboration which promotes the development of language and, through this, cultural awareness raising.

4.2. Participants and procedures

Our study has been conducted for two semesters in the academic year of 2015/2016 (see Appendices 1 to 3). In the course of the cooperation two translation tasks of comparable texts were administered (English-to-Polish and Polish-to-English) to 38 and 30 students in Poland and a similar number in the US in each semester, respectively. The cooperation started in October 2015 between Heather A. Slomski of NDSU and Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk of State University of Applied Sciences in Konin in Poland, and engaged US NDSU students representing native speakers of English and students of State University of Applied Sciences (PWSZ) in Konin and of the University of Łódź.

There were 30 Polish students and the same number of NDSU students engaged in the project during the first semester and essentially the same Polish students during the second term, while the group of NDSU students had decreased due to lower enrollment numbers during the spring term. The Polish students are all native speakers of Polish of varied background majoring in English studies (English philology). In the academic year 2015/2016 they completed the first year of the MA translation program. Their English proficiency, monitored during classes of practical English grammar, speaking and writing, evaluated according to the criteria of the *Common European framework of reference for languages*, typically ranged between B1 and C1 levels, that falling between the so-called independent user's *threshold* or *intermediate* proficiency or *vantage* or *intermediate* proficiency in English, on the one hand, and *effective operational* or *advanced* proficiency, on the other. All of the NDSU students are native speakers of English. They are first or second generation college students, generally of middle class background. The most common majors among them are engineering, architecture, and nursing.

During the first term (October-December 2015, Appendix 2) NS and NNSs were paired and US students wrote essays, forwarded them to their Polish partners and, in the course of several-turn exchanges, discussed the content and structure of the texts, provided explanation of culture-specific terms and occasionally modified their own texts in response to the discussion. The Polish students prepared translated versions of the texts, which they submitted to their instructors. In the second term (Appendix 2), a new group of NDSU students was paired with the same Polish students who participated in the first task. This time the Polish students selected their own Polish texts, typically a press article, involving local culture-specific phenomena or events, produced their English translation

of the texts and emailed them to their US collaborators. In a series of email exchanges aimed at the grammatical and lexical feedback of the English used by the Polish students and the clarification of Polish cultural terms, the Polish students introduced a number of modifications and submitted the final version in May 2016.

The aims of the project, in which one party is represented by native speakers of the working language, while the other is represented by non-native speakers, are twofold. As other authors, engaged in the TAPP project propose (Humbley, Maylath, Mousten, Vandepitte, & Veisblat, 2005; [www.NDSU/English/Trans-Atlantic and Pacific Project](http://www.NDSU/English/Trans-Atlantic-and-Pacific-Project)), on the one hand, "cooperation with EFL students may help instructors to inform native speakers in their classroom about the necessity to adjust writing for the needs of non-native audience". On the other hand, the NNS benefit from the native linguistic and cultural knowledge of the NS, which helps the NNS to improve their working language proficiency.

A schematic activity program of the US-Polish TAPP cooperation covers two semesters, as follows:

Semester 1

The NDSU instructor introduces the writing classes by discussing terminology and concepts referring to genres and styles. US students complete the first draft of their essays (in this case, their research-based proposals) and then email them to the Polish students. The Polish students confirm that they have received and can open the documents. The Polish students then comment on the US texts, asking for clarification on unfamiliar terms and offering grammatical and syntactical suggestions. The US students then answer such questions and either make the suggested changes or explain in an email why they wrote the particular passage as is. If both parties are satisfied, the exchange ends here. However, many pairs will continue the process with a second draft of the text, that is the Polish student will offer comments on the revised draft, and the US student will make additional changes. The Polish students receive the texts and then send questions concerning semantic content, terminological clarification and grammatical accuracy to NDSU students. After exchanging the information (typically two turns) and receiving the US students' comments, the Polish students complete the translations, submit them to their Polish instructor and e-mail them back to the USA (the US teacher has basic proficiency in Polish).

Semester 2

The Polish students make a selection of Polish culture-specific texts, typically from quality press, translate the texts into English, and then send them to the US students. The US students request clarification and provide corrective feedback on grammar. The Polish students correct the texts and send them back to

US students. In a number of cases, the US students provide a next turn of additional comments to their Polish partners, which are introduced to the corrected versions before the final versions are sent to US partners. The email letters, comments and consecutive versions of the texts circulating between the students during any of the cooperation stages are forwarded to both the US and Polish teachers, who add final comments to the paper versions of students' translations (see Appendix 3). Students have access to these comments and typically get additional feedback in person either during final meetings or at the consultation periods.

5. Peer corrective feedback

Corrective feedback, understood as "a more competent speaker's reaction to learners' ill-formed output" (Panova & Lyster, 2002), is considered by numerous scholars to be an important facilitative strategy in second language acquisition and language development. The native (NS) – non-native (NNS) student mutual feedback we have been observing in the analyzed context, via email exchanges, has so far been a less frequent research topic in this area. Feedback can be understood either as *corrective recast* (direct corrections and providing correct forms) or *metalinguistic* feedback (applying a more descriptive strategy) (Monteiro, 2014). Each strategy has its own advantages and drawbacks. It may be interesting to note that direct corrections were avoided by either NS or NNS group in our study, possibly due to politeness considerations, but also due to the fact that the CMC interaction setting of the email exchange type provides a context which is more conducive to the metalinguistic rather than corrective recast strategy of feedback, making the former a more convenient and comfortable interactional cooperation technique than the latter. In some cases, there exists a possibility that the US students did not feel confident enough in their own skills/comments/feedback (see Appendices 3-5).

6. Collected materials: Corpora

The materials collected during the investigated period are of a few types. There are *corpora of (parallel English-to-Polish and Polish-to-English) student-translated texts*, comprising close to 38,000 segments in the English original Source Language and ca 30,000 of Polish corresponding translated units (TL) in the first term and about 34,000 units in the Polish SL corpus and close to 37,000 segments of the corresponding TL (English) in the second term. *Intermediate versions of the translations* are also part of the corpus and so are *all interactional exchanges* between US and Polish students. They are crucial in tracing both linguistic and textual proficiency development of the students as well as the analysis

of writing and translation strategies on the part of NSs and NNSs. The *final evaluation survey* of the cooperation forms an additional material to discuss and comment.

Parallel corpora are considered to be collections of language materials, in which two or more components are aligned, that is, they are subdivided into compositional and sequential units (of differing extent and nature) which are linked and can thus be retrieved as pairs (or triplets, etc.). In our case, the materials are in the preparatory stage of annotation and alignment but can be compared and discussed more generally on the basis of assumed textual, semantic and in some cases, structural, similarity. The second term provides materials to build so-called *comparable corpora* of the students' Polish original and English translated texts. The term indicates a similarity between the main topics of the texts and reference to similar subject matters (contemporary Polish issues). It also assumes co-temporality of the text production, a similarity of (socio-economic) background of the authors and a comparable readership. All the materials collected will be further analyzed for their quantitative characteristics, frequencies and typology of errors, NSs' and NNSs' comments and questions and a longitudinal observation of writing improvement.

7. Comments on the students' work

What should be borne in mind is the fact that both the US and Polish students are trainees and not professional expert writers. The Polish students had more formal training in English as a foreign language writing and in basic translation skills during the first three years of their BA program. By contrast, the US students are all native English speakers. However, many US students lack formal training in grammar and, further, many report that they received minimal corrective feedback from high school writing teachers. Thus, a number of first-year students admit to feeling underprepared for their writing classes upon entering college. A typical first-year writing course introduces students to various genres of essays, such as memoirs, proposals, reviews, commentaries and so on, and is designed to guide students toward becoming critical readers, thinkers and writers.

Our research involves both the text production and reception (see Appendix 4 for samples). The Polish students' texts in English suffered from a number of inadequacies, and in the text production the most frequent errors concerned the use of incorrect terms, inappropriate collocations, inconsistent register, and awkward style. Their translation tasks into English in the second term included additionally problems in their transfer competence (see Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk, 2004, for *transfer competence*), content omission and content-addition, which can be considered typical of translation work though, and, quite frequently, grammar inadequacies, particularly with respect to preposition/particle selection, problems with the

rules of punctuation, distinct in English, lexis-inappropriate-collocation and erroneous syntactic structure, as well as – on the textual level – inconsistent-register selection, awkward style and disturbances in maintaining textual cohesion.

8. English interference effects on the native Polish language of the Polish students

In the first semester the Polish students provided their translations of the original US students' essays into Polish. It is worth noting that in a number of cases the *translation strategies* used there are of the *literal translation* type. The native Polish versions present the students' weak native speaker's metalinguistic competence. English language interference is particularly strong in their use of inadequate genre and style as in "badania nad zachowaniami właścicieli odnośnie ich pupili" proposed as an equivalent of "a study on college students and their behaviors towards pets", in which the Polish phrase "with respect to", representing a rather official style, replaces for instance the less formal "wobec". Another problem was weak control over Polish grammatical patterns and stylistic effects, as in „dawanie zwierzętom ze schronisk domów, a zarazem umożliwienie Fargo stania się lepszym miejscem" as a rendition of "giving home to the animals from shelter homes, and simultaneously allowing Fargo becoming a better place" with a range of stacked gerund forms as equivalent to "the benefits of giving more pets at the animal shelters homes, helping Fargo become a better place". The suggested remedial techniques in this case might be consulting larger language corpora (e.g., *National Corpus of Polish* nkjp.pl, Pezik, 2013), but, primarily, stronger and more frequent exposure to written texts, which can be diagnosed as insufficient on the basis of both reading comprehension tests and answers to dedicated questionnaires.

9. Post-task survey results

A post-task informal survey (adapted from Arnold & Ducate, 2006, p. 49) was administered to all Polish students at the end of the academic year in June 2016. Out of five options possible to circle as answers to the questionnaire questions, that is *strongly agree*, *agree*, *neutral*, *disagree*, *strongly disagree* – a large majority (28 out of 30 students) fully enjoyed the electronic exchange in 1 and 2 semesters and would enjoy participating in such a cooperation again. Those who did not had problems either with contacting or with eliciting responses from their NDSU pairs.

The statements that "The process of writing through topics helped me to understand them better" and "Exchanging information with other students helped me to look at topics from perspectives I would not have considered on

my own" were also approved of by a vast majority (*strongly agree* and *agree* – 28). However, the statement "The forum of the internet exchange provided less anxiety and a more relaxed environment than classroom discussions" was considered either as neutral or received the *disagree* option (29). The reason might be that direct interaction with native speakers of English and exposing one's own linguistic product to their scrutiny, not frequent enough among the students, generated anxiety in them, irrespective of the communication mode and setup. On the whole, such responses show that the students found the exercise helpful and relevant. The negative comments (significantly less frequent), did not refer to the context and form of the collaboration but rather to its implementation.

The NDSU students involved in the exchange were all college freshmen. At this level they are typically not yet used to carefully reading over their writing before submitting it. They are also only just beginning to think consciously about their target audience when writing. In the opinion of the NDSU students, the Polish students offered very good suggestions toward helping the US students to be more clear and articulate, and they appreciated the comments from the Polish students. This exchange allowed the NDSU students to see the effect of their words on an authentic audience, as opposed to only having an instructor/professor at the other end of the text. In our opinion, the comments from the Polish students added an additional layer to the US students' learning, as these suggestions reinforced some of the comments that the lecturer gives to her students herself regarding clarity and grammar. The NDSU students learn to adjust their written texts to international readers and functions in the first part of the collaborative practices and develop their awareness of other cultures and languages during the period of their exposure to the English texts produced by non-native language users.

A short post-task informal survey was also administered to the second-term US students in May 2016, although only half of the students were available on the day it was given. Of the 15 students surveyed, all but one reported to have had a positive experience with the TAPP project. The student who reported a negative experience, however, took responsibility himself or herself by admitting that he or she gave his or her Polish partner insufficient feedback. This US student, however, did comment on his/her cultural awareness raising by writing: "I learned a little bit about what some classes do in other countries, like translating their papers into English. Non-English-speaking students are expected to learn English much more often than Americans are expected to learn other languages". Many other students made similar observations which demonstrated their own cultural awareness raising. One student commented on his or her realization of the difficulty of learning English as a second language. Other students noted that through this collaboration they were introduced to another culture and that they enjoyed

communicating with someone from another country. Another student wrote that he or she learned how to give feedback in a respectful way.

The overall effect of the TAPP collaboration on the US students' writing was very positive. The final versions of the US texts in term one reflected corrective changes primarily in tone and diction (informal to formal), clarity (replacing vague pronouns with nouns, and adding additional commentary/explanation), and grammar. In the second term, the feedback given by the US students on the texts translated by the Polish students illustrated the cultural awareness-raising as described above, and, in many cases, the collaboration stimulated self-confidence in the US students in their own writing skills, grammar, and ability to give constructive criticism. This was important because, prior to the term-two collaboration, a number of US students felt anxious about commenting on the Polish students' texts.

Linguistic problems identified for the Polish students referred both to text comprehension and to production. US English phraseology, terminology and frequently informal style as used in US texts made the texts difficult to understand for the Polish students, while in the production of the English texts what is observed is primarily syntactic interference from Polish. In the translation of the US English texts into Polish during the first term, we observe heavy English interference on the students' native Polish, which shows their lack of the monitoring function in native language production and absence of metalinguistic awareness. Worth noticing are also varying translation strategies, depending on the direction of translation. Numerous instances of *domestication* strategies used in the translation of English texts into Polish are balanced by prevailing numbers of *foreignization* instances in the process of the translation of Polish texts into English to be read by the US students. Structural interference from English to Polish results in the NNSs' oververbosity, a lower incidence of the use of phrasal verbs, more natural in the NS context to the advantage of more descriptive, less natural phrases, used as a communication strategy. Successive versions of the texts in English bring gradual closing of the hiatus, and bridging the gap between the Polish-affected and native-speaker language.

The effect on US students' writing style cannot be overlooked either. The Polish students, more experienced in formal writing and grammar instruction, provided their comments on US students' grammar and style and, what is crucial particularly in the intercultural context, exerted some influence on an increased level of disambiguation of some fragments of the NSs' texts.

10. Conclusions

Writing, and particularly NNSs' writing is frequently reduced to surface-level issues (such as articles, grammatical tenses, punctuation). Our study shows that

in the case of communicative intercultural writing, what is important for the reader are semantic and general-content issues rather than strict grammar accuracy. Unsurprisingly, this is evident in the US students' comments, queries and corrections. The NNS philology students in Europe, on the other hand, pay more attention to the formal correctness of texts, observed in the type of corrective feedback, which predominated in their comments with regard to the NSs' essays.

Style, understood after Delcambre and Boch (2006) as the intersection of specific-particular and shared-common textual properties, and *genre*, which is important for text-type distinctions, are still other variables for developing written production, both by native and non-native users. Writing, as Donahue suggests (2009, p. 424), "a tool for learning for learning, for assessing learning, for processing thinking, for summarizing concisely, for responding, for developing texts in disciplinary work", needs to be made a special focus of attention in the course of collaborative writing education. NSs have a richer repertory of genres practiced, a property that needs to be consciously developed and practiced in foreign language education, which, however, as can be observed in our study, cannot be neglected in native language education either.

Corrective feedback was observed to bring positive results. As observed above, all of the peer comments and reviews collected in our study relied on a greater amount of positive feedback, although the Polish students' first reactions were full of anxiety, related to the exposure of their NNS English writing to NS's judgment. As observed in numerous previous publications (Monteiro, 2014; Russell & Spada, 2006), and aptly summed up by Nicol and MacFarlane-Dick (2006, p. 205), "corrective feedback facilitates the development of reflection and self-assessment in learning, provides information to teachers that can be used to help shape the teaching. It also provides opportunities to close the gap between the trainees' current and desired performance and, what is particularly important, it increased students' confidence in producing suitable work in this area by encouraging positive motivational beliefs and self-esteem".

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APPENDIX 1

Letter of information on the TAPP to the American and Polish students

TRANS-ATLANTIC/PACIFIC PROJECT OF COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

USA: Heather A. Slomski, North Dakota State University
e-mail: tappheathera@gmail.com



Poland: Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk, State University of Applied Sciences, Konin/University of Łódź
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Dear Students,

We wish to invite you to participate in a Trans-Atlantic & Pacific Project (TAPP) that links students in writing, usability, and translation classes in joint international projects. For fifteen years now TAPP has been spreading to numerous universities on four continents.

Prof. Heather Slomski from North Dakota State University, USA, and Prof. Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk from State University in Applied Sciences in Konin, and Łódź University, Poland, have started their cooperation and plan to engage in it students from the writing courses at NDSU and translation students from Poland. The collaborative syllabus and timetable are proposed below. Each of the steps listed is to be recorded in the form of an e-mail exchange of questions/answers/text versions between the students paired, which will also be cc'd to both HS and BL-T.

We hope that mutual peer feedback in online writing and translation education in the form of international collaboration will provide new insights and will contribute to the development of these skills in a faster and more effective way.

APPENDIX 2
TAPP SYLLABUS AND TIMETABLE

Winter term: October 6th 2015 – December 10th, 2015

Step 1. HS and BL-T collect information from their classes and organize the US & PL student pairing till 23 Oct.

Step 2. US students send their assignments to the paired PL students (a 6-7-page paper that uses research to explain a problem and propose a solution plan for it) till Wednesday 28 Oct

Step 3. PL students would ask their first questions within 6 days (till Tuesday, Nov. 3)

Step 4. US students answer within 8 days till Monday Nov. 9

Step 5. Nov 9 - Nov. 25: a more intensive question/answer period: the students email questions and answers back and forth while PL students are translating US students' texts into Polish.

Step 6. The deadline of Monday, Nov. 30 for PL students to send US students final questions/comments

Step 7. US students use the PL students' comments to help them revise their final portfolios, due by Monday, Dec. 7.

Step 8. PL students' Polish translations collected and forwarded to US by 10 Dec to keep in the records.

Summer term (15 February – 30 April 2016) TAPP instructions

Polish-to-English translation by Polish students in cooperation with NDSU students

Instructions for Polish students

1. Please select a Polish text (press, essay, or the like) concerning national Polish or local, regional matters of about 3-4 page long, send it off to me by February 28, translate it into English and send it off to your NDSU pair, Heather Slomski and BL-T till Sunday 20 March 2016
2. NDSU students will see
 - (1) whether your English text is logical in its structure and argumentation, i.e., whether the passages are coherently linked and the use of various conjunctions (but, nevertheless, and yet, etc.) supports this logic.
 - (2) from the lexical point view - whether the use of words, terms and collocations sounds all right,
 - (3) whether the syntax used sounds native or rather foreign/unconventional (in the sense 'I would never use it like that because it is not English').

- (4) Moreover, if there are some passages/phrases vague because they sound like specific to Polish culture, context, etc. NDSU students would ask further clarification as the texts are meant for a non-Polish reader, so certain things obvious to the author may sound incomprehensible to the reader - and they should be made more transparent by the use of some clarification strategies (definition, better equivalent, etc.).
NDSU students will send their comments and you're supposed to answer and introduce corrections till 11 April 2016 (deadline).
3. Polish students have their final versions of the texts ready by Monday 25 April to send them off to NDSU students, Heather Slomski and BL-T

Timetable

- (1) Sunday 20 March 2016 English translated texts ready – the deadline to send first versions of translation off to NDSU
- (2) From 20 March – 11 April, NDSU students send their questions/comments/answers and Polish students answer and introduce corrections
- (3) Polish students have final texts ready by Monday 25 April to send them off to NDSU

APPENDIX 3

Samples of students' introductory turns and comments in the messages¹

(1) NNS to NS

My name is S.M. I am 22 years old. I live in Kalisz. It is a small city located in central Poland. I am a M.A. student in the Department of Translation Studies at the University of Łódź. I am interested in applied linguistics. I love teaching English to young learners. I like listening to music and watching thriller movies. I am glad to be working with you. I am sending you my translation. Feel free to correct any mistakes. If you have any questions or comments, please let me know. ;)

Sincerely, S.

(2) ANSWER to (1) - NS to NNS : Hello S.,

It was incredibly nice getting to know you. I was fascinated to hear how different Poland is from America. I was especially interested in the tradition of smiling because it is so programmed here in America to gently smile to others as you pass by to show neighborliness. It did not even occur to me that my whole life I have been graciously grinning at strangers. A little about me, is my name is Jake J. and I am 18 years old. I live near the Twin Cities (Minneapolis/ Saint Paul) of Minnesota. I attend North Dakota State University and would like to major in electrical engineering with a minor in computer science. I love Mexican food and my favorite place in the whole is my lake home up north in Minnesota. I do, like you, enjoy listening to music and highly recommend checking out Apple Music! I like to watch most types of movies, but I really like comedies and adventure.

I loved reading your paper and learned so much. As I mentioned, it was interesting to learn the differences in tradition and culture of our countries. Your paper was very well written and had an ironically relevant topic, which made it easy for me to understand. You had great vocabulary, in fact, there were a few words I had to google because I did not know the meaning of them. The grammar and punctuation was good, but I added a few recommendations that may be helpful for the future. Lastly, the format of the paper was done very well and the transitions were clear.

Overall very impressive paper! However, I hope the comments I made are helpful. Please let me know if you have any questions at all and I will be more than happy to try to answer them.

Good luck in your studies!

(3) NS to NNS

Note: Everything that is highlighted in yellow are grammar mistakes or changes that I made to the paper. You should read your paper and look at this edited version at the same time to make sure that you catch all of the grammar that I changed. (: The comments on the side go more in depth on things that could be changed or slightly modified!

¹ The original spelling, vocabulary and linguistic structure are retained in all samples. Names are anonymized.

I think that this was a great beginning for your essay! Although after reading through it, I am still not 100% sure what the assignment was supposed to be on. Were you supposed to write about a specific character within a book? I think that it would help if you had an introductory paragraph that explained more what the paper was about instead of going right into the details of the character. It would help your readers understand better. Also, there are a couple paragraphs in which there should be a transition sentence so your reader isn't just jumping right into a scene. Describe what is happening before telling the reader. You have great detail within the paper which I really enjoyed reading!

I was impressed with your ability to know certain phrases such as: every fiber within him. There are times when the writing is a bit choppy and doesn't seem to flow naturally. I found myself having to reread sentences and felt as though you were jumping to different scenes. Work on using transition sentences and maybe even starting new paragraphs. That should help. On the comment sections on the side I note certain phrases that don't translate well to English. Unfortunately, it is hard to tell what you are trying to say in some instances): Try rephrasing these sentences to simpler terms. Hopefully this will help it sound more natural and not foreign

Overall I really enjoyed reading this! I think that it was just a little unclear as to what I was reading. I think that if you add a paragraph in the beginning to describe what your paper is about exactly it should help. Try not to jump into the middle of a scene, add transitional sentences in order to help your writing flow a little better.

APPENDIX 4
Samples of corrective feedback

4.1. Samples of NNS out-text corrective feedback to NS texts and NS reactions

wrt Paragraph 1

- The best way to stop college freshman from gaining weight is to try and get them to live a healthy lifestyle.
What do you think about a little change into: ‘The best way to stop college freshmen from gaining weight is to get them to live a healthy lifestyle’?
SJ: Yes, I agree that ‘freshmen’ works better.
- We will be able to prevent college freshmen from not only gaining weight but also stop them from living an unhealthy lifestyle which would prevent them from doing the best work that they could do while they attend college.
What would you say about putting it this way: ‘We will be able to prevent college freshmen not only from gaining weight but also to stop them from living an unhealthy lifestyle, which would prevent them from doing the best work they could do at college’?
SJ: Yes I agree to this change it make the sentence sound more smooth.

wrt Paragraph 2

- College freshman need to pay attention to the food that they are consuming throughout the day.
With regard to your sentence, did you mean ‘college freshmen’?
SJ: Yes, I did mean ‘freshmen’.
- Instead of eating junk all the time when you go there for meals, try to get a salad every once in awhile.
What do you think about this: ‘Instead of eating junk food every time you go there for a meal, try to get a salad every once in a while.’
SJ: Yes, I agree to this change it sounds more organized.
- Calorie intake at the dining centers can be a dangerous thing if students are not carefully.
- Did you mean: ‘... are not careful’.
SJ: Yes, I did mean ‘careful’.
- So even just finding little things like that like eating an apple or some fruit instead of a candy bar for an afternoon snack
I don’t understand the underlined part. Can you explain it, please?
SJ: This was a quote used and I believe it would be easier to understand if it were: “So even just finding little things like eating an apple or some fruit instead of a candy bar for an afternoon snack”. If you still are confused please let me know.
- Stay away from snacking on desserts and junk food as much as possible.
I would write ‘snacking desserts’, without ‘on’.
SJ: Yes, I would agree with that.

- There are plenty of meals that can be made that are fast, healthy, and cheap.
I understand your sentence but what would you say about a little change into: 'There are plenty of meals to be made at home that are fast, healthy, and cheap'?
SJ: Yes, I would agree to that it sounds much better.

- I was able to find an article written by Sarah Mahoney who is a writer out of Maine who often writes about health topics for several magazines.
What do you think about this: 'I found an article written by Sarah Mahoney, a writer out of Maine, who often writes about health'?
SJ: Yes, I agree to that change.

- In the article Mahoney says, "Canned light tuna, frozen brown rice, whole-grain pasta stock up on these (and prepped veggies), and you have a healthy dinner in a flash" (Mahoney 113-116).
Can you explain me the phrase 'stock up on these', please?
SJ: 'Stock up' means that Mahoney suggests that you buy a lot of the food items she suggested before and keep them in storage for future usage. If you are still confused, please let me know.

- Another important thing that college freshman often do is skip breakfast.
With regard to your sentence, did you mean: 'Another important thing that college freshmen often do is skipping breakfast'?
SJ: I after rereading the sentence I believe that it would be better if I put: "Another thing that college freshmen tend to do is skip breakfast".

- People always say breakfast is the most important of the day, and it really is.
I know what you mean and I think you missed the word meal (meal of the day).
SJ: Yes I did miss the word 'meal'.

- Students who skip breakfast often think that they are allowed to eat more at other meals throughout the day to make up for lost calories from missing breakfast
What would you say about a little change into: 'Students who skip breakfast often think that they are allowed to eat more during other meals to make up for lost calories'.
SJ: Yes, I agree to that change.

- This will lead to eating much more than what the average calorie intake is for one day.
With regard to your sentence, did you mean: 'This will lead to eating much more than the average calorie intake for one day is'?
SJ: Yes, that is what I meant to say.

- Eating breakfast will make you feel more full throughout the day so you will not have to eat as much at your other meals.
What do you think about writing 'fuller' instead of 'more full'?
SJ: I'm not sure. I believe more full works well but I can also see fuller working too.

- All of these things tie into the fact that students need to pay more attention to what they are eating throughout the day.
What does the phrase 'tie into' mean in this sentence? Can you explain it, please?
SJ: By using the phrase 'tie into', I am saying that all the things I listed before will lead to or relate to the topic that follows it. In this case, it is how students need to pay more attention to what they are eating. Please let me know if you are still confused.

wrt Paragraph 3

- Like I said before, college students have a hard time of managing their time well.
What do you think about a little change into: 'As I said before, managing their time is hard for college students'?
SJ: Yes, I would agree to this change,
- The skill of having good time management is crucial in the solution of getting college freshmen to live a more healthy lifestyle.
What would you say about: The skill of having good time management is crucial to get college freshmen to live a healthier lifestyle.
SJ: Yes, I would agree to this change it sounds more smooth.
- If students can manage their time, they can do so many things that will allow them to live a more healthy lifestyle.
Did you mean: ...a healthier lifestyle?
SJ: Yes, I did mean that.
- They will be able to find time to go work out and get some physical activity into their lives.
What do you say about: 'They will be able to find time to work out and get some physical activity into their lives'?
SJ: Yes I agree to this change.
- Even if it is just for a half an hour for only 2-3 days a week, it is going to help out in the long run
What would you say about a little change into: 'Even if it is just half an hour, two or three days a week, in the long it will help them'?
SJ: Yes, I agree to this change it sounds much more organized.
- Students will also be able to get more sleep if they are able to manage their time properly.
What do you think about putting it this way: 'Students will also get more sleep if they are able to manage their time properly'.
SJ: Yes, I agree to this change.
- They will be able to find a way to balance all the work that they have to do and accomplish.
Can you explain me what you mean in this sentence, please?
SJ: What I am trying to say is that the students will be able to accomplish everything that they have to do very effectively and efficiently.

- Just by doing something as simple as managing time will benefit a college freshman in many ways.
What would you say about: 'Just by doing something as simple as managing their time, college freshmen will benefit in many ways'?
SJ: Yes, I do agree to this change.

wrt Paragraph 4

- They must inform these students the risks that come with weight gain and what it can lead to.
What do you think about a little modification into: 'They must inform these students about the risks that come from weight gain and what it can lead to'?
SJ: Yes, I agree to this change it sounds much better.
- Also they need to tell these students what the university has to offer so that students can prevent weight gain.
What would you say about changing it slightly into: 'Also, they need to tell these students what the university has to offer so that they can prevent weight gain.'
SJ: Yes, I agree that putting a comma in would make the sentence sound better.
- I was able to find an article that talks about the risks that come with weight gain.
What would you say about this: 'I found an article about the risks that come from weight gain'.
SJ: Yes, agree to this change.
- In the article Tom Vogt, the author of the article, wrote that gaining even a few pounds can increase the risk of diabetes and heart disease in normal weight people (Vogt C1).
What do you think about a little change into: 'Tom Vogt, the author of the article, wrote that gaining even a few pounds can increase the risk of diabetes and heart disease among people of normal weight'?
SJ: I believe both ways sound equally well.
- Universities also need to inform students of what the university has to offer to help students prevent weight gain
What do you think about 'Universities also need to inform students about its offer to help students prevent weight gain'?
SJ: Yes, I agree to this change.
- Most universities often have wellness centers that are able to be accessed by the students.
What would you say about: 'Most universities often have wellness centers available to students'?
SJ: Yes, I agree to this change it sounds more simple.
- They must educate their freshman where it is, what it has to offer, and what are its hours.
What do you think about: 'They must inform their freshmen where it is, what it has to offer, and what its hours are'.
SJ: Yes, I agree to the change.

- All the information that I talked about above could easily be informed to college freshman at a beginning of the year health presentation.
What would you say about a little change into: 'All the information that I wrote above could easily be passed to college freshmen at the beginning of the year during the presentation about health'? (I'm not sure what the underlined part means)
SJ: The underlined part is just proposing the possibility of the university giving a beginning of the year health presentation to the freshmen students so that they are aware of their health and how the university can help them stay healthy. If you are still confused please let me know.

wrt Benefits

- The benefits that come with the solution of preventing weight gain and living a healthy lifestyle for college students are amazing
What would you say about changing it a little into: 'The benefits for college students that come with the solution of preventing weight gain and living a healthy lifestyle are amazing'?
SJ: Yes, I agree to this change.
- I asked Professor Gretterman what are some benefits about living a healthy lifestyle as a college student and she said, "It improves cognitive functioning which includes memory, learning, and attention"
What do you think about this: 'I asked Professor Gretterman about the benefits for college students connected with living a healthy lifestyle and she said: ...'? (I would like you to pay attention to the surname as previously you wrote it with one letter 't').
SJ: Yes it is spelt with only one 't' I am sorry for the confusion.
- That right there shows that you will do better as a student if you can live a more healthy lifestyle.
Could you explain me what you mean by 'that right there', please?
SJ: By saying 'that right there', I am just emphasizing how the stuff that was said before was caused by living a healthy lifestyle which will lead to doing better as a student. If you are still confused, please let me know.
- This will allow students the chance to be more successful while they attend college.
What would you say about a little change into: 'This will give students a chance to be more successful at college'?
SJ: Yes, I would agree to this change.

wrt Conclusion

- Now you can see the problems that come with weight gain among college freshman and why it is important that we solve these problems.
What do you think about this: 'You already know the problems connected with weight gain among college freshmen as well as why it is important to solve them'?
SJ: Yes, I agree that this change sounds much better.

- If we can get college freshman to prevent weight gain and live a more healthy lifestyle, they will be able to have a more successful college career which will allow them to do many positive things with their lives.

What do you think about: 'Getting college freshmen to prevent weight gain and live a healthier lifestyle results in their being successful at college and making careers, which will allow them to do many positive things in their lives'.

SJ: I believe that both versions sound well.

- Freshman 15: Did you mean 'after their first year'?

SJ: Yes, that is what I meant.

4.2. NSs in-text corrective feedback to NNSs texts

<p>The human migration that occurred a thousand and five hundred years ago had an impact on the shape of the present-day Europe</p>	<p>Komentarz [MC1]: You can omit the "and" it's not needed in numbers</p>
<p>The consequence of the great human migration that occurred a thousand and five hundred years ago - that is visible today - is the political division of Europe. Amongst scientists there are constant disputes over the matter of how that turbulent period of history looked like within the boundaries of the present territory of Poland.</p>	<p>Komentarz [MC2]: Can change the "a" to "one"</p> <p>Komentarz [MC3]: You can get rid of this "and" as well for the same reason</p>
<p>According to Andrzej <u>Michałowski</u>, PhD, from the Institute of Prehistory (IP), UAM, Poznan, the extraordinary mobility of peoples is rooted in our human nature. "That perseverance regarding travelling, undoubtedly inherited from the first wandering ancestor of ours, that is <u>homo erectus</u>, basically creates the whole human history. Starting from the very moment of forming our species in Africa, circa two hundred thousand years ago, until the contemporary times, as we observe another great exodus from the early 20th century." - explains the scientist who deals with the Migration Period on a daily basis. This way the sequence of events that was present in Europe from the 4th to 7th century is defined.</p>	<p>Komentarz [MC4]: Can change "that" to "this" as it is your main subject</p>
<p><u>Michałowski</u> summarized the topic from the perspective of research excavation in <u>Wielkopolska</u> in an article "After, before, or in between," which was published in a periodical "The Studies on the Early Poland" (Vol. 4), released by the Museum of the Polish State Origins in Gniezno.</p>	<p>Komentarz [MC5]: Sentence establishing credibility to the quoted person, adding "explained" to a 5 line quote is pushing the limit a little. You might want to cutout "explains the scientist who" and just refer to them by name again.</p> <p>Komentarz [MC6]: Change "an" to "the or his/her"</p>

4.3. NNS English-to-Polish translation task

Polish students' questions/requests for the clarification and explanation of NS phraseology

Samples of NNS questions

What are „digital job boards” in section „Why is this such a big deal”?

What do „Grant 33” and „Nikolaou 180” refer to? (Section „Why is this such a big deal?”)

What does it mean „Graduate level curriculums” in section „What happens after high school?”?

What are „the Medical College Admission Test” and „the Pharmacy College Admission Test”?

...

„a huge problem energy wise” What did you mean by the word „wise”?

„with the current carrying capacity of fossil fuel” What is ‘the current capacity’? I do not know what it is at all...

„we benefit from harvesting the energy”. Harvesting means collecting or gathering?

Samples of NS answers

[Q: What is an alculator?]

An Alculator is a device that allows people to input there weight, height, and drinking habits. It then tells them how there drinking habits compare to the recommended amounts. It also tells them how much weight they will gain due to the amounts of alcohol they are consuming. Hopefully this answers your question. Please let me know if you have any further question.

[Q: what are extreme weapons?]

Extreme weapons are those that are very powerful and that serve no practical purpose, such as hunting or self-defense. Military-grade weapons are similar due to their ability and purpose to kill as many people as quickly and efficiently as possible.

[Q: do you mean more developed countries?]

Yes, by „other established countries“ I do mean economically more developed countries.