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## Foreign language teaching from a pedagogical lingua franca perspective

### Abstract

According to a social constructivist understanding, foreign language teachers should enable their learners to reflectively explore their own foreign language communication and to negotiate and refine their requirements of communicative and communal success. Suitable conditions for such an experience can be provided in intercultural virtual exchanges in which ‘learners’ of different linguacultural backgrounds are engaged as ‘speakers’ and use their common target language as a pedagogical lingua franca. Two case studies involving secondary school students with English and German as target languages will be presented to illustrate the pedagogical lingua franca approach and to discuss it with regard to issues of learner agency, non-native speaker emancipation, communication monitoring, and pedagogical mentoring.

### 1. Introduction

While intercultural communicative competence development may figure quite explicitly in foreign language curricula in secondary schools, its actual pedagogical implementation is generally rather weak. Due to the somewhat restricted and restricting communicative and intercultural options provided in the face-to-face classroom, functional aspects of communication are usually foregrounded and receive almost exclusive pedagogical attention. Aspects of intercultural communication, on the other hand, play only a minor role in what actually happens in the classroom. The contrast could hardly be starker between communicative practices in school and genuine communication in an intercultural and globalized world, the professed target of up-to-date foreign language teaching.

With regard to English, this discrepancy has in particular been emphasized in pedagogical discussions inspired by research on English as a

lingua franca (ELF). The focus is on speaker-learners who communicate in intercultural exchanges and manage to make best use of their often limited verbal resources when trying to achieve mutual understanding. In this connection, attention shifts from the kind of language being used to how it is used in communication under lingua franca conditions. What counts is the extent to which speaker-learners succeed in activating their communicative capabilities (Widdowson 1978) when deploying their verbal resources to understand their partners and to find expression for what they want to convey. The processes and outcomes involved are generally depicted as strategically creative, richly variable and communicatively successful in terms of intelligibility.

These positive characterizations of ELF communication are often intertwined with comments that cast pedagogical doubt on the wide-spread preference in English language teaching (ELT) for some kind of standard native speaker English (SNSE). A frequently repeated line of argumentation draws attention to the possibility of communicative success despite deviations from SNSE norms and suggests looking for pedagogical solutions “beyond normativity” (Dewey 2012). But what could this possibly mean? Raising speaker-learners’ awareness of the inherent native-speakerism of ELT and inviting them to drop their SNSE orientation altogether? This is the impression one might get from most of the current suggestions for an ELF-inspired reform of teaching English as a foreign language (EFL). Kiczkowiak and Lowe (2019) argue along these lines and take their readers on a journey from ‘teaching EFL’ to ‘teaching ELF’. In addition to “teaching intercultural communicative skills” (Ibid.: 23), they emphasize the pedagogical value of “raising our students’ awareness that conformity with ‘native speaker’ norms is not always the most desirable goal” (Ibid.: 23) and of “exposing our learners to a wide range of language models, so that they are adequately prepared for the diversity of Englishes they will encounter outside the class” (Ibid.: 23).

As a result, ‘teaching EFL’ and ‘teaching ELF’ appear as two mutually exclusive and pedagogically conflicting alternatives. In their view, speaker-learners are required to choose between, on the one hand, a traditional and outdated focus on varieties of standard native-speaker English and, on the other, the development of intercultural communicative competence for a globalized world. In this article, I take the opposing view that it is both necessary and possible to find a unifying and reconciling solution that aims to strike a balance between the SNSE preference in EFL and the need for getting

ready for the challenges of international and intercultural communication (also see Kohn 2018b).

## 2. Towards a pedagogical lingua franca approach

As a pedagogically designed target language model, SNSE can be conceptualized as comprising two complementary and interrelated types of competence components: (A) a repertoire of phonetic/phonological, lexical and grammatical means of expression and (B) the skills and routines of using these means of expression in spoken or written communicative interactions. Choosing a certain English target language model is not a trivial matter; it usually has a socio-educational origin and history with strong implications for learners' emerging speaker identity. Any decision for or against a certain model thus needs to consider the local educational context and conditions. But how do the demands and challenges of ELF communication fit in? My argument is that the SNSE model as such is not the problem; the way it is taught and learnt, however, certainly is. This becomes evident in the light of a social constructivist perspective, according to which acquiring mastery of a language in the sense of a repertoire of linguistic means of expression essentially involves processes of individual and cooperative creation (also see Grazzi 2013). Hence, whatever the target language taught, speaker-learners will always develop “their own version of it in their minds, hearts, and behaviour” (Kohn 2011, 80). The outcome is MY English (Kohn 2018a), be it as a first, second or foreign language depending on the conditions under which it was formed. Throughout this development, speaker-learners are influenced by their personal dispositions and biographical characteristics as well as by their communicative experiences and communal aspirations. Continuous guidance concerning the direction of their learning is provided by their personal requirements of successful communication, which serve as beacons of navigation and enable them to assume agency for their own learning (Kohn 2020). As a result, speaker-learners inevitably change, adapt and expand their target language input due to the essentially creative learning processes they engage in.

This social constructivist insight suggests that our pedagogical concern regarding issues of normativity and native-speakerism should not be focused so much on the repertoire and skills specified by the target language model but rather on the conditions of learning and teaching towards this model. Is

learning, despite all declarations of learner autonomy, in the end narrowed down to copying and cloning? Or are speaker-learners granted the kind of pedagogical space and guidance that would help them appropriate the target model for their own communicative and communal needs and purposes (also see Seidlhofer 2011, chap. 8; Widdowson 2009, 211)? The key pedagogical problem in foreign language teaching should not be seen in whether speaker-learners are exposed to some kind of standard native speaker input variety as the language taught. Rather, the problem is whether and to what extent they are pedagogically encouraged and supported to take on a more emancipated role by drawing on their ordinary social constructivist creativity when ‘acquiring’ their own signature brand of the input variety taught (Kohn 2018b, 38).

The social constructivist perspective on language learning draws attention to the processes of individual and collaborative creative construction by which ‘learners’ develop and appropriate their own English and their own ways of using it in intercultural ELF contexts guided by their own communicative and communal requirements of success and their satisfaction as ‘speakers’. This leads to the question and pedagogical challenge of how the foreign language classroom could be changed and enriched so that it helps speaker-learners engage in creative processes of target language appropriation by social constructivist learning.

An option currently favoured in pedagogical ELF debates emphasizes the need to raise teachers’ (and students’) awareness of the nature of intercultural ELF communication through the observation, analysis, and reflection of recorded manifestations of ELF interactions (Sifakis 2019; Sifakis et al. 2018). Pedagogical insights are expected to be gained from the study of communicative input material. The pedagogical lingua franca approach introduced by Kohn (2018a; 2020) takes a different stance by shifting the pedagogical scope from ELF ‘input’ to ELF ‘involvement’. Instead of drawing on other speakers’ ELF communication as a “model” (Kiczowskiak and Lowe 2019, 23), speaker-learners from different countries and of different linguacultural backgrounds are enabled to meet in intercultural encounters. They use their common target language English as a pedagogical lingua franca and explore their own ELF interactions through reflective practice. Authentic communicative ELF involvement thus becomes the very centrepiece of a pedagogical solution, which can be easily transferred from English to other target languages as well (Kohn 2016).

How can a pedagogical lingua franca approach be implemented? While a traditional school exchange involves travelling abroad and, in this connection, is faced with difficulties and limitations regarding time, budget, and organization, intercultural virtual exchange and telecollaboration offer pedagogically innovative alternatives. Embedded in blended learning settings, they open up an online space in which intercultural contact, communication, and learning can be taken outside and beyond the physical classroom environment. The pedagogical arrangement is that of a flipped classroom, with an important extension and generalization: the widespread focus on flipping knowledge acquisition is replaced by the idea to flip anything that is deemed pedagogically relevant and desirable but difficult to pursue and achieve in the face-to-face classroom (Kohn and Hoffstaedter 2015). In our case, this concerns intercultural communicative practice and development.

In the Erasmus+ project TeCoLa ([www.tecola.eu](http://www.tecola.eu)) and its predecessor project TILA (<http://tilaproject.eu>), we implemented a pedagogical lingua franca approach with the help of telecollaboration activities in intercultural virtual exchanges. The aim was to provide secondary school students with opportunities for authentic communicative interactions in intercultural contact zones as part of their foreign language learning experience. Corresponding to the project partners' countries and languages, the main target languages used as a pedagogical lingua franca were English, French, German and Spanish. The spoken and written communicative collaboration activities were supported by video platforms like Skype or BigBlueButton, an OpenSim-based virtual world, digital walls in Padlet, Google Docs/Slides, and an accompanying Moodle course with chat and forum. To facilitate a lively communicative exchange, the students were matched to work in pairs or small groups. Adopting a blended-flipped learning arrangement, the intercultural telecollaboration exchanges were generally linked to preparatory or follow-up activities in class. In this way, the teachers involved were able to pedagogically mentor and indirectly assess telecollaboration activities during which they were not present. Regarding the thematic orientation of the exchanges, preference was given to 'soft' intercultural topics such as eating, fashion, sports, or waste disposal. With this decision, the intercultural focus was shifted from the topic to the communicative moves the telecollaboration partners engaged in when trying to cope with challenges arising from cognitive, attitudinal or behavioural differences and divergences.

To avoid problems due to a lack of matching class hours, weak internet capacities, or insufficient communicative privacy in the computer room, we

encouraged our teachers and students to arrange their telecollaboration access from home. This had the beneficial side effect of forcing the students to be more autonomous. They were required to check their technological infrastructure, make appointments, and manage their online meetings. In addition, communicating from their home environment makes the tasks more authentic. It becomes easier for students to leave their own mark by, e.g., bringing in their thematic associations and interests. They may also extend the duration of their interactions or even make appointments for more ‘private’ meetings on Facebook or WhatsApp. While moving outside the actual foreign language teaching context reduces the researcher’s opportunities for data collection, it significantly increases the pedagogical value of the exchange. After all, the pedagogical lingua franca approach is about learning for life. Using school-related tasks as a stepping-stone towards private communication outside school only further increases the degree of authentication and is thus pedagogically desirable.

### 3. Learner agency and non-native speaker emancipation

To throw some light on the pedagogical value of using one’s target language as a pedagogical lingua franca, I will now report on a case study that was carried out as part of the European TILA project (Kohn and Hoffstaedter 2017). Emphasis is on foreign language learning in secondary schools and the effects of a pedagogical lingua franca approach on the students’ learner agency and non-native speaker emancipation. The study was based on three text and four video chat conversations in English between Spanish and German student pairs as well as on two video chat conversations in German between French and Dutch student pairs. The students were between 14 and 16 years old; their CEFR proficiency level was B1. In the English conversations, the topic was “New technologies and social media”; in the German conversations, three topics such as “School”, “Fashion” or “Media” could be chosen from a list of ten. Telecollaboration access was from home and pedagogically embedded in preparatory and follow-up activities in class. The empirical data available for analysis included the recorded conversations and semi-structured reflective feedback interviews with four of the students.

Compared to face-to-face foreign language teaching, the telecollaborative pedagogical lingua franca condition significantly increased the students’ learner agency in terms of the sheer amount of communicative participation.

The average duration of the conversations was 46 minutes, which is a depth of immersion that is hardly achievable in regular classroom activities. In this connection, it should be noted that the oral video interactions, while similar in duration to the written text chats, produced a far richer output as measured by the number of words used. In the interviews, some students also mentioned the relevance and authenticity of the intercultural exchanges, thereby emphasizing their potential for enriching foreign language learning with real-life communication.

Another manifestation of increased learner agency concerned self-initiated and collaborative topic development. The private home environment seemed to invite students to go beyond the agreed topics and to bring up their own thematic interests and preferences, either spontaneously or triggered by lexical/propositional elements in their partners' contributions. Again, there is an interesting difference between the written and the spoken mode of communication: while self-initiated topics occurred in only one of the three text chats, they were a regular characteristic of the video chats. Other things being equal, spoken conversations thus seem to be more likely to encourage authentication through thematic appropriation.

Greater thematic flexibility was accompanied by more challenges concerning expressing and understanding intended meanings, which required a collaborative languaging effort as a third kind of learner agency (Swain 2006). In our case study, the focus of languaging was on successful communication rather than on form and issues of correctness. This was clearly in keeping with the lingua franca nature of our conversational exchanges. A particularly enlightening case of languaging for communicative success occurred in a German lingua franca conversation between a French and a Dutch student. When the French student argued that homework should be fun, she used the German word "lustig" [Translation: "funny"]. Since the Dutch student heard "lüstig" [lystiç] (with *Umlaut*) instead of "lustig", she did not understand her partner and also failed when trying to consult an online dictionary. Eventually the two students detected the mishearing/mispronunciation and managed to resolve the lexical communication problem. Interestingly enough, however, the lexical repair led to yet another communication problem on the propositional level since the Dutch student misinterpreted the original statement as saying that homework was fun: "Warte! Du findest Hausaufgabe Spaß?" [Translation: "Wait! You think homework is fun?"]. Her partner then used a paraphrasing strategy to successfully close the languaging cycle: "Ich denke, dass

Hausaufgaben langweilig sind und es sollte lustiger Hausaufgaben sein” [Translation: “Homework is boring and should be more fun”].

A fourth kind of learner agency essential for ensuring communicative success concerns the partners’ rapport with each other. In our pedagogical lingua franca conversations, rapport-related agency could be observed particularly in manifestations of an overall cooperative, consensual and supportive attitude, e.g. “That’s pretty much my opinion as well”, “I wish you luck”, “I think you are going to do great”, or “Wow, you draw! I envy you”. What is more, in situations of stress and frustration because of unsuccessful communication and failed languaging repairs, the conversational atmosphere was sometimes characterized by empathetic moves of comfort and encouragement, e.g. “Oh God I can’t talk about it in English because I don’t know the words.” - “Doesn’t matter [...] I know like we are beginners of English; we haven’t got such a level to speak about everything we want.”

All these qualities of increasing learner agency from communicative participation to thematic appropriation, collaborative languaging and empathetic rapport arguably contribute to the emergence of more emancipated non-native speaker identities. As a key force in this process we can identify speaker satisfaction, that is the extent to which the interacting speakers are actually satisfied with their communicative performance and the way it meets their own requirements of communicative and communal success. The pedagogical lingua franca approach offers a space for students to check and explore their familiar requirements of success with regard to their validity for authentic communication and to adapt and extend them as deemed necessary and suitable. The reflective interview data available from the case study provide first insights into the complex interrelations between learner agency, speaker satisfaction and non-native speaker emancipation.

The students were generally highly satisfied with being immersed in communicative interactions they felt were authentic: “I think it’s good because it puts us in a real situation [...] with real people.” Authentication went along well with thematic autonomy: “Wir haben uns echt gut verstanden [...] uns weniger auf die Aufgabe konzentriert [...] sondern mehr auf uns selber und so über private Sachen geredet [...] ich war sehr zufrieden mit dem Gespräch” [Translation: “We got along really well [...] were less focused on the task [...] but more on us and talked about private things [...] I was highly satisfied with our conversation”]. When trying to ‘morph’ one’s



participant role from learner to speaker, sufficient room for thematic autonomy is a crucial element of emancipation.

Increased authenticity also made the students aware of the need to adapt the requirements of success they had internalized from foreign language practice in the classroom to real-life communication. This concerned in particular shifting attention from the mere correctness of linguistic means of expression to whether these forms were used successfully to contribute to conveying the intended meaning. Pedagogical lingua franca communication was perceived as a facilitating condition (“We both like have the same level, we are in the same boat.”) and obviously made it easier for the students to shift from correctness to communicated meaning: “Weil das ja auch nicht ihre Muttersprache war, war’s dann schon so okay. Es [Fehler machen] ist eigentlich egal. Sie kann mich verstehen” [Translation: „Since it was not her native language, it was okay. Making errors doesn’t matter. She can understand me”].

Another emancipatory advantage of the pedagogical lingua franca condition was its value for promoting the students’ confidence and self-assurance: “Das Selbstbewusstsein steigt einfach mit jeder Unterhaltung, und man fühlt sich immer sicherer” [Translation: “Self-assurance increases with each conversation and you become more confident”]. Not surprisingly, exchanges with native speakers were judged to lead to communication apprehension: “Ich weiß nicht, ob ich mich nicht sogar noch weniger getraut hätte, weil ich einfach noch viel mehr Angst gehabt hätte vor Fehlern” [Translation: “I don’t know, I might have been even less courageous because of fear of making errors”]. Confidence and self-assurance enabled students to move from languaging for correctness to languaging for communicative success, and they also helped them accept and endure uncertainty or breakdowns when communicative ambition surpassed available resources and capabilities. Cooperation and empathetic rapport ensured a supportive atmosphere.

To conclude, “[in] the telecollaborative lingua franca conversations, the students’ readiness for agency and emancipation, cooperation and rapport seemed to emerge spontaneously. In our interpretation, this was due to the activation of their natural and educationally nurtured disposition for social presence and cooperative interaction combined with the facilitating force of the pedagogical lingua franca condition” (Kohn and Hoffstaedter 2017, 363).

#### 4. Communication monitoring

When speaker-learners try to make best communicative use of their linguistic (and non-linguistic) resources and capabilities, they continuously check their performance against their requirements of communicative and communal success. They do this before, during and after the event and in consideration of the respective communicative situation. This is what we refer to as communication monitoring. In terms of empirical extension, the concept overlaps with procedures of negotiation of meaning as introduced in Varonis and Gass (1985) and further explored in many subsequent studies (Gass 1997). The crucial difference lies in the explanatory framework. While negotiation of meaning stands in the interactionist tradition of SLA research, our conceptualization of communication monitoring is based on a social constructivist understanding of communication and language learning with its assumption of speaker-learners being in charge as potentially self-responsible and emancipated agents of their own communicative success (Kohn 2018a, 19). Being in charge culminates in the strategic processes of monitoring by which they try to minimize the inevitable gap between communicative intent and achievement and thus to maximize their speaker satisfaction.

To gain a more differentiated and deeper understanding of communication monitoring in pedagogical lingua franca exchanges, we designed and implemented a case study as part of the Erasmus+ project TeCoLa (Hoffstaedter and Kohn 2019). The study involved 6 pairs of Dutch and German secondary school students (16-18 years, B2) who engaged in pair exchanges in the TeCoLa Virtual World (TVW). The students accessed the TVW environment outside class hours from their homes, and they used their common target language English as a pedagogical lingua franca. In the virtual world, the students were represented by their avatars through which they were able to move around, talk to each other, and exchange written messages via a text chat function (Fig. 1).



Figure 1: Students discussing issues of waste disposal in the TVW

Multimedia boards were used throughout the environment that could be edited by the teachers to create learning stations or paths to support task-based learning activities. The student pairs in our case study were required to do a learning path about the topic “Waste and waste avoidance”. They followed the path from board to board reading the information presented, watching a video clip and discussing the issues raised. Further information about this task and other TeCoLa tasks is available in the Task section of the Teacher resources on the TeCoLa website (<http://tecola.eu>).

Drawing on recordings of the virtual exchanges, worksheets, and reflective interviews with the students and teachers involved, special case study attention was given to identifying and exploring the main manifestations and practices of communication monitoring and their implications for pedagogical mentoring and teacher education. Our conceptual model of communication monitoring distinguishes monitoring moves in relation to four kinds of challenges that need to be addressed to make a communicative exchange successful: (A) task instruction, procedure, content, and purpose, (B) comprehension of words and utterances, (C) utterance production with a focus on form and meaning, and (D) partner orientation and rapport (Fig. 2).

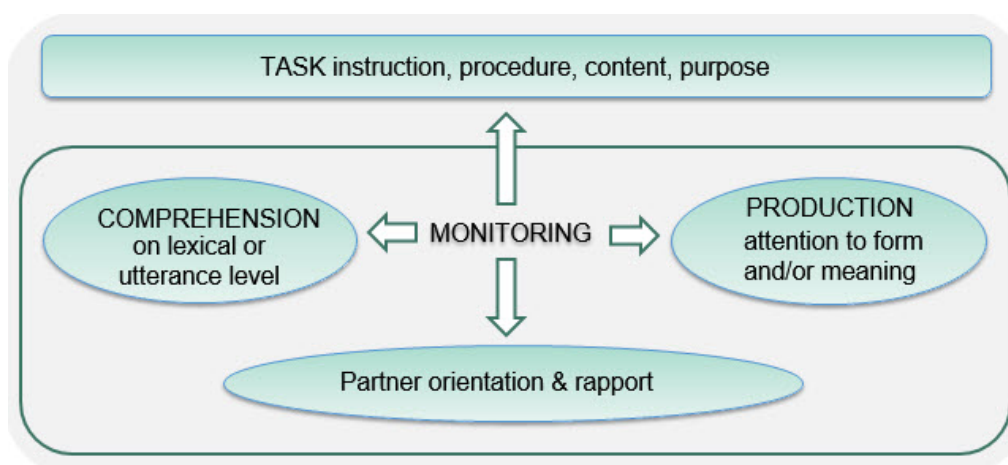


Figure 2: Target areas of communication monitoring

In task-related monitoring the students collaborated to check whether they agreed on how to understand the learning path task at hand and whether they carried it out according to their understanding. Relevant issues included instructions (“So, what do we have to do?”), procedures (“Oh, must I click down there?”), content (“I’m just watching the last part of the video ... well, I think it’s C.”), and purpose (“Why is this good for our English?”).

As regards comprehension-related monitoring, explicit signalling included utterances like “What does X mean?” or “I don’t understand what you want to say”; nonverbal signals did not occur since the avatars could not display subtle gestures or facial expressions. In most cases, comprehension problems had their origin in problems the respective partners encountered when trying to express themselves. This explains why, apart from the occasional online look-up, most attempts to solve a comprehension problem included a cooperative paraphrasing or translanguaging strategy by the partner, e.g. “What does ‘avoid’ mean” - “‘Avoid’ is, ehm ya, how can I explain it? Ehm, we are trying not to.” It was interesting to note that many comprehension problems seemed to go unattended. Quite obviously, the students only addressed problems they considered being in stark conflict with their requirements of success and let the others pass.

Production-related monitoring, by contrast, occurred far more frequently, which also points to the pedagogical relevance of output processing (Swain 2005). Explicit indicators of the speaker’s insecurity included formulation checks (e.g. “How do you say it ‘apple skin?’”) and comprehension checks (e.g. “Do you understand?”). Most of the production

problems, however, were not signalled explicitly but were evident from the speakers' repair moves, e.g. pauses, structural breaks, or reformulations. Attention to pronunciation, word form or grammatical structure was rare; the primary focus was on the complementary desires of expressing one's thoughts and being understood. As regards expressing themselves, our speakers encountered in particular two overlapping problems: lexical gaps and messy propositional formulations. Both problems were generally tackled in a cooperative manner. When dealing with a lexical gap, the partners often resorted to a strategy that combines a more or less successful initial paraphrase with an online look-up or an equivalent from their native language, e.g.

A: "I don't know, these things you put into your glass where you can drink. It's long and thin. Maybe wait" [starts look-up]

B: "Oh, straw" - A: "Yes, yes, yes. 'Strohalm' [German equivalent]".

In the case of a propositional formulation problem, speakers' tenacity to meet their own requirements of success can make all the difference, as the following example shows:

A: "... if you make a law which forbids to use, to produce plastic bags for shopping malls, ya, for shopping malls, then maybe you have one, you have a big - Hah"

B: "Yeah, I know what you mean. It's a bit difficult."

Because of student B's reassuring and comforting intervention, student A could have easily stopped trying, but he did not give up, fought his propositional frustration and eventually managed to express himself to his satisfaction.

A: "... plastic usage will go down rapidly and if you also try to find other ways to conserve all these fruits like eh the meats you have in the plastic bags, maybe you find other ways to conserve it that it stays fresh."

The sibling of expressing oneself is being understood by one's partner. This is why, more often than not, our students used comprehension checks along with their struggle for expression:

A: "... also the pollution of big factories and other companies, because of the policy [means 'pollution'] of our air, I think it's also harmless, harmful for us to breathe these air."

A: "Do you know what I mean?"

B: "Yes, I know what you mean."

Although B confirmed comprehension, A did not seem entirely satisfied with what he managed to express:

A: “I don’t know how to describe it, so I tried.”

Successful communication has an essentially cooperative quality with relevant implications for communication monitoring. In addition to monitoring one’s own comprehension and production, it is important and advisable to also keep an eye on one’s partner’s performance. To clarify the possible partner-oriented monitoring moves, it is helpful to distinguish between five cases:

1. Speaker X does not have a comprehension problem and uses verbal or nonverbal backchanneling signals to confirm continued attention and comprehension;
2. Speaker X has a comprehension problem and tries to get his/her partner to give support in the form of e.g. repeating more slowly or providing a paraphrase;
3. Speaker X has a production problem and tries to get his/her partner (e.g. by a formulation check) to give support by, e.g., making suggestions for a solution or by allowing for more production time;
4. Speaker X tries to find out whether his/her partner has a comprehension problem (e.g. by an explicit comprehension check) so as to be able to respond by, e.g., formulating more clearly, using a paraphrase, or shifting the topic;
5. Speaker X notices that his/her partner has problems with contributing or finding a suitable expression and tries to help by pausing and allowing for more time, by uttering a production prompt (e.g. “Do you separate your rubbish?”), or by suggesting an expression as a possible solution.

These partner-oriented monitoring moves, which significantly strengthen the interactivity between the communication partners, are particularly successful when accompanied by the expression of empathy and rapport, e.g. regarding solidarity and comfort (“Yeah, I know what you mean. It’s a bit difficult.”) or team spirit (“Yes, we are a very good team.”). The relevance of empathy and rapport was emphasized by one of the Dutch students in his reflective interview: “We both had the feeling that we could help and understand each other. [...] I think I normally try that with as many people as possible - just to reinforce each other.”

While our case study conversations draw attention to major kinds of communication monitoring in pedagogical lingua franca exchanges, they are considerably poorer with regards to the density and diversity of the actually occurring overt monitoring moves. Most of the students’ comprehension and production-related monitoring was self-centred and its partner orientation rather weak. It is thus not surprising that comprehension checks generally seemed to be motivated by the speakers’ own production insecurities instead of by an interest in their partners’ ability to understand. In addition, across all

exchanges, expressions of rapport were scarce and, what is more, there were no instances of explicitly signalled rapport monitoring.

## 5. Pedagogical conclusion

When monitoring their communicative performance, speaker-learners work towards improving it in terms of their own requirements of success. In doing so, they become aware of their strengths and weaknesses, create opportunities for further languaging and learning, and promote their non-native speaker emancipation. For pedagogical reasons, a rich exploitation of the possibilities of communication monitoring would thus be highly desirable. This leaves us with the question of how to account for the students' rather modest overt monitoring behaviour.

To begin with, the influence of communicative routines available from ordinary 'out of school' communication needs to be mentioned. Overt monitoring is in a potential conflict with keeping the flow up, hence the frequent strategies of 'wait and see' and 'let it pass'. An optimal balance between the two very much depends on the respective communicative interaction and its situation-specific requirements of success. Low-stakes communication as in small talk is, for instance, often characterized by somewhat loose monitoring, whereas high-stakes communication, e.g. in exams or job interviews, might make a stronger overt monitoring effort advisable, in particular regarding comprehension. Issues of politeness play an important role and need to be considered as well, especially in connection with rapport-related monitoring.

Another factor that strongly influenced the monitoring behaviour of our case study students was the educational school setting with its focus on task completion over communication. For most students, finding the right answer and getting the task done seemed to be the guiding force and reduced their readiness for engaging in more extended discussions. This school effect was even reinforced in pairings where one of the two students was the dominant communicator, answered all the questions, and left the weaker partner little room for contributing.

Full exploitation of the intercultural and communicative language learning potential of the pedagogical lingua franca approach, whether in virtual encounters or face-to-face, requires continuous pedagogical mentoring. With regard to virtual exchange, O'Dowd, Sauro and Spector-Cohen (2020) explored the essential role of teachers as pedagogical mentors with attention to online interaction strategies. In our pedagogical lingua franca contexts, the focus is on enabling the interacting speaker-learners to

develop their skills and readiness for communication monitoring beyond the routines of ordinary communication. Relevant measures and interventions include helping them

- raise their awareness of the pedagogical value and effects of communication monitoring,
- refine and negotiate their requirements of communicative and communal success,
- adopt consensual and cooperative ways of communication monitoring with an emphasis on partner orientation and rapport,
- acquire verbal and non-verbal means of expression relevant for communication monitoring.

The ADAPT strategy of “Successful Intercultural Communication” with its five steps of ‘Awareness’, ‘Don’t judge’, ‘Analyse’, ‘Persuade yourself’, and ‘Try’ provides a suitable backdrop of general guidance (Chong 2018).

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