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CONFLICT IN COMMUNICATION VIS A VIS REPAIRING IN THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOM¹

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ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ: Σ' αυτή την εργασία εξετάζονται οι ομοιότητες και οι διαφορές του "λάθους", ως χαρακτηριστικού στοιχείου της διαπροσωπικής επικοινωνίας και της επικοινωνίας στην τάξη, με βάση έξι κατηγορίες στα πλαίσια της ανάλυσης της διαπροσωπικής επικοινωνίας και της εθνογραφικής ανάλυσης της σχολικής πράξης. Στη συνέχεια, εξετάζονται διεξοδικά, οι πρακτικές δυνατότητες της εφαρμογής των πορισμάτων αυτών στην ξενόγλωσση τάξη με βάση μια επανεξέταση του ρόλου του δάσκαλου της Ξ.Γ. και την ανάγκη να εκμεταλλευθούμε τα λάθη των σπουδαστών της Ξ.Γ., όχι μόνο για παιδαγωγικούς σκοπούς στην διδασκαλία/μάθηση της Ξ.Γ. αλλά και ως μέσον άσκησης στη χρήση επικοινωνιακών στρατηγικών χρήσιμων στη διαπροσωπική επικοινωνία.

1. Introduction

Language learning and language teaching are very complex activities which require constant questioning and analysis of the learning/teaching situation. An important question very often asked by researchers and teachers is: How does the social and interactive context of the FL classroom affect language learning qualitatively and quantitatively, especially in view of the fact that we teach the foreign language for communication purposes? (cf. Seliger and Long, Introduction, p.v. 1983).

In order to evaluate classroom discourse and introduce real world communication practices in the language classroom, we must look very closely at the structure and the language of natural conversation and compare it with the structure and the language of the classroom. It follows that com-

ble exploitation of repairing as a vehicle to introduce more natural communication practices into the language classroom. It is the aim of the present research to investigate how this may be achieved. The foreign language classroom, in particular, is in need of such practices. After all, it suffers from freer communicative use of the target language with less emphasis on formal correctness (Chaudron, 1988: 132-153). In this paper, therefore, through comparison and contrast I will try to pinpoint similarities and differences between conflict and repairing as far as the *practices* and the *language* employed are concerned. By doing so I propose to suggest a way for reconciling the two in an attempt to introduce more real world conversational practices in the foreign language classroom and train learners in using the L2 more effectively in verbal encounters regardless of the overall approach to teaching the teacher may be following in the classroom. It is not my aim to discuss current pedagogical approaches to errors in general (cf. Doff, 1988: 186-197), nor to deal with learner repairing in pair and group work.

3. Data Collection

Classroom discourse data are based on research conducted in the Greek foreign language classroom with reference to English as a foreign language. Ten tapes collected in the Greek foreign language classroom were transcribed and analysed discursively in an attempt to discover the strategies for repairing used by teachers and learners. All teachers but three involved were non-native speakers. The native speaker teachers live and work in Greece.

4. Data Collection: Methodological Considerations

In a descriptive and evaluative study such as the one reported here, a critical step is the selection of a framework within which conflict in communication and error in the classroom can be viewed. A second important step is the establishment of categories which will reflect basic distinctions in the data collected.

Concerning research methodology the present research falls within the realm of ethnographic classroom studies and interaction analysis studies aiming at describing the parameters involved in repairing and their mutual interaction when choices are to be made by users of the language in class or in natural communication encounters. The categories against which data will be analysed are as follows:

1. who initiates repair
2. who acts
3. strategy employed in terms of overtness or covertness
4. affect demonstrated
5. language employed
6. role relationship indicated.

5. On Conflict in Communication

Research on communication has revealed that certain factors pertain to all instances of communication regardless of language and culture.

One important factor that characterizes communication is *conflict*. Conflict most frequently arises from one of the following four factors which, so to speak, also influence the occurrence of repair to resolve conflict in formal or informal settings.

1. Intelligibility and interpretability as a result of lack of shared knowledge between participants.
2. Misunderstandings between participants due to face (distance, power and rank – see Brown and Levinson, 1978).
3. Conversational rhythm and tempo.
4. Unhearings or mishearings due to physical or environmental factors.

Consequently, conflict arises from a misunderstanding of what has been said or intended, or from a conflicting claim to the same resource, or from a refusal to enter expected role relations. Verbal parameters which are likely to relate to conflict include sentence length, topical sequence, intensity and variation. Somatic behaviour, particularly facial expression and gestures may also lead to conflict (Allen and Guy, 1978: 239-240).

There is evidence consistent with this hypothesis that the necessary condition for natural conversation to take place is *modification* not of linguistic input per se (length and syntactic complexity of utterances, lexical diversity, etc.), but of the *interactional structure* of NS-NS communication. The latter type of modification is achieved through use of such devices (or strategies) as repetition, rephrasing, pre-sequences, various forms of questioning such as clarification requests, restatements etc. aiming at resolving conflict (cf. Schegloff, 1979; Schegloff, Jefferson and Sacks, 1977; Jefferson, 1974; Goffman, 1976, among others). In natural verbal encoun-

ters, communicators do not normally correct errors others make. But they do indicate in other ways that the message was not received clearly, thus leading the speaker to repair his/her utterance in some way.

There are three types of correcting in real discourse: self-repair; initiated self-repair and other-repair. *Self-repair* is the outcome of the speaker's insecurity concerning self-expression or of conflicting cognitive problem-solving processes in action. The ratified speaker initiates the repair and acts on it. The social roles reflected are those of equals in interaction, the listener's attitude is that of a tactful well-meant partner whose ultimate aim is to save face and the definition of the situation (cf. Goffman, 1976).

Initiated self-repair, on the other hand, is induced by the listener's reaction — verbal or non-verbal — to the speaker's linguistic or non-linguistic behaviour. The listener initiates the repair but the speaker acts upon it. Finally, *other-repair* is induced by the listener's reaction — verbal or non-verbal — to the speaker's linguistic or non-linguistic behaviour. The listener initiates the repair and acts on it.

However, in communication, of the three basic types self-repair and initiated self-repair seem to predominate. Repairing is never overtly corrective unless the relationship between interlocutors is such that repairing will not be viewed as a breach of social convention. Other-repair is a dominant feature of communication when one of the participants is in a learning situation or in an inferior position, for instance. Of the three types mentioned I shall only deal with the last two in this study.

The effectiveness of the strategies that speakers adopt in their efforts to create involvement and to cooperate in the joint activity for the development of specific themes and avoidance of conflict depends on their *control over* a range of communicative options and on their knowledge of the signalling potential that these options have in alluding to shared history, values and shared obligations (Gumperz, 1982: 206-207). In real life situations, Gumperz, 1982, argues, learning of discourse or communication strategies is most successful when outside conditions exist which force interlocutors to disregard breakdowns of communication and stay in contact.

Repair processes to resolve conflict, however, presuppose an interruption. On discussing interruptions and the interpretation of conversation, Bennet, 1981: 185, writes that interruptions to resolve conflict are a spe-

cial case of some clash between two or more persons within the framework of human discourse, which need not be verbal only. Interruptions can be seen as accidental or deliberate; cooperative or antagonistic; non-serious or serious, offensive or non-offensive, etc. The quality and intensity of *affect* and *role* centred around one or a set of interruptions can vary across the whole range of the potential depth of human capacity for affect and for role-taking or for role-making in social encounters (cf. Turner, 1962).

Role and affect in repair allow us to distinguish initiated self-repair and other-repair further. This differentiation is based not only on an examination of *who* initiates correction to overcome conflict and *who* acts, but also on the *affect* demonstrated in the linguistic realizations employed and on the *psychological* and *social roles* speakers indicate through their language behaviours.

Initiated self-repair is distinguished into two types. The first type I have called initiated self-repair *overtly* realized. In this case, the listener makes it overtly clear that he/she has not understood the speaker's intent or has not heard the speaker by employing such overt expressions as: "Try again". "I don't understand", "I can't hear you". Overtly realized self-repairs are to be found between partners of unequal social or work position. They can also be used in encounters where speakers are very intimate to each other, i.e. close friends of all ages, husband and wife, lovers. (cf. Tannen, 1987; also Sifianou, 1987). The second type I have called initiated self-repair *covertly* realized. The listener makes it covertly clear that the speaker's message has not been understood or received thus requesting a rerun of his/her utterance. In this last case expressions of the kind "Pardon?", "Can you repeat what you were saying?", etc. are used. Participants express tact and affect towards one another, and they try to save face (cf. Goffman, 1976).

Finally, *other-repair* is also realized in two different kinds. In other-repair *overtly* realized the listener interrupts the speaker and takes the floor without allowing the first ratified speaker to self-repair. He/she provides the correct utterance or information, thus replacing the first ratified speaker. In other-repair *covertly* realized, the listener does not openly interrupt the speaker but provides the correct item or the missing information tactfully while the first speaker is officially holding the floor, thus helping him/her to go on (cf. Duncan, 1974).

What makes a difference between overtly or covertly realized initiated self-repair and other-repair is their function and the attitudes shown through the linguistic realizations employed. Covertly realized initiated self-repair or other-repair are designed to help, to enable, to support, whereas overtly realized initiated self-repair or other-repair are designed to evaluate, to challenge, to contest (cf. van Lier, 1988: 211). Initiated self-repair covertly realized as well as other-repair covertly realized are characteristic of social, tactful, supportive communication. They follow non-serious or non-offensive interruptions and they can be called *conversational repairs*.

Other-repair overtly realized as well as initiated self-repair overtly realized are repairs that follow deliberate, authoritarian and serious interruptions. They are characteristic of "didactic" communication. These repairs can be called *pedagogical repairs*. They are specifically pedagogic in nature in the sense that they demonstrate the knowledge vis a vis non-knowledge, power vis a vis non-power relationship that masters and apprenticeships, parent and child, teachers and learners and so on may exemplify (cf. Gumperz, 1982). They do not necessarily mean to correct language errors. They may also refer to pragmatic, cultural, behavioural, cognitive etc. breakdowns of communication, socialization and etiquette. By using the afore mentioned types of repairs one of the speakers in the encounter clearly indicates his/her power position in terms of roles or knowledge as opposed to the other participant. Of course, possible offence can be minimized if the speaker in power position uses appropriate politeness markers. It goes without saying that intonation also plays an important role especially with a language like English (cf. Brazil et al., 1980). The line between conversational repair and pedagogical repair and their use and function in interaction is not always clear cut. The use and function of repair in mother-child discourse clearly indicates how conversational and pedagogic repair may blend together. In fact, one may argue, "didacticness" is present in everyday conversation, only we are not always aware of it.

6. Repair in the Greek FL Classroom: A Description

On examining foreign classroom discourse, we notice that *conflict* is also a factor to be found in instances of teacher-learner, learner-learner communication. The difference is that conflict in the context of classroom discourse is attributed to errors (or discipline problems) committed by learners. Errors can be the outcome of lack of shared knowledge between partic-

ipants in classroom interaction or wrong presuppositions concerning rules of use and usage of the foreign language. What is more, teachers have found ways and means to establish rapport and restore communication in the classroom through the process of the so-called *error-correcting or repairing* (cf. Kasper, 1985; van Lier, 1988). As for learners they usually switch to L1 to solve problems of conflict in pair or group work (cf. Papaefthymiou-Lytra, 1987b).

As the present research indicates, teachers in the Greek FL classroom follow two different approaches to repairing. Depending on teacher choices of repair procedures and language, repair can become a means of checking, testing and of control exercised by the teacher. On the other hand, it may also become a means for introducing natural communication practices in the classroom by sharing control with the learners. When teachers favour the first approach they follow practices that lead to pedagogical repair. When they adopt the second approach they follow practices that may lead to conversational repair in the classroom.

Consequently, a teacher who considers repair a pedagogical means for teaching purposes, tends to use pedagogical repair strategies that are indicative of teacher-centred, evaluation-oriented practices⁴. Pedagogical repair can be either realized as other-repair or initiated self-repair overtly realized (see examples 1 to 8). In the classroom context, when other-repair overtly realized or initiated self-repair overtly realized occur in the turn following the problem turn, they can be regarded as an evaluation in the traditional, exchange structure sense between teacher and learner. Such a teacher rigidly maintains control over language, topic and activity. He/she does not easily allow learners to self-repair and experiment with the language they are learning. Here are some examples of pedagogical repair from classroom data.

Ex. 1

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 | T: ## Bill! Do we know Bill? ⁵ |
| 2 | Ls: ^ ^ Yes. |
| 3 | T: Assi, who is he? |
| 4 | Assi: The man who (...) / the man who (...) // |
| 5 | T: Thodore |
| 6 | Thodore: The man who help Buck. |
| 7 | T: The man who helped Buck / helped Buck. |

Ex. 2

- 1 T: When were you born, John.
 2 John: In Greece.
 3 T: No. When, not where.
 4 John: Nineteen seventy six.

Ex. 3

- 1 T: What was on television?
 Tell me the programmes on T.V.
 last week. No, no, no. Don't look!
 What was on television?
 Anything? Any programme?
 Right. Apostolos.
 2 Apostolos: The twelve //
 3 T: Not the time, just the programme.
 What was the programme?

Ex. 4

- 1 T: ... Right. How did the owner know
 where the animal was, Adda?
 2 Adda: Mrs Newton telephoned the //
 3 T: Mrs Newton telephoned? Had telephoned.
 I think that Dr. Newton and Arthur
 had worked in the garden the other
 day. Why did they have to do that, Celly?
 4 Celly: Because the bullock destroyed the //
 5 T: ## Because the bullock had destroyed
 what?⁶
 6 Ls: ^ ^ The garden.

Ex. 5

- 1 T: ... She has had twins.
 She's just had twins.
 And why is the man so
 surprised? Alex.
 2 Alex: Er (...) because (...)
 3 T: What did he think?
 4 Alex: (...) er (...) He thought
 that his wife (...) er (...)
 would (...) er (...) born (...)

- 5 T: It's not the right verb, dear.
 6 Alex: Would have (...) er (...) only one
 baby...
 7 T: Allright.

Ex. 6

- 1 L: This weekend I'm going to go /
 I'm going to go to the cinema,
 to play tennis, play voley-ball.
 2 T: !! Mm, Mm.
 3 L: ::: to see television //
 4 T: See television? False step.
 5 Ls: ^ ^ Watch.
 6 T: It's watch television. OK. Not see.
 7 L: ::: and to read my lessons or to //
 8 Ls: ^ ^ Study.
 9 T: To study. We study our lessons.
 To read books in English. Read in Greek
 but study in English. Study lessons,
 read books.
 ## Do you understand the difference,
 to read? I'm going to read some newspapers. Right.

Ex. 7 @@

- 1 T: Allright. So there is the most of /
 one of those is / only one of those
 is correct.
 Jenny.
 2 Jenny: Jimmy didn't have any homework.
 3 George: No.
 4 T: Jimmy didn't have any homework
 since last week? Alexandra?
 5 Alex: Jimmy hasn't have //
 6 T: Jimmy hasn't have any homework
 since last week?
 George?
 7 L: (heard commenting in Greek) *E, av den*
eivai to eva, tha eivai to allo. (= Oh,
 well, it will be either one or the
 other)⁷.

- 8 George: Jimmy hasn't had.
 9 T: That's correct.
 10 Ls: (heard commenting in Greek in a whimsical manner, most probably addressing George) *A! Nai; Mpráβo!*
 (= Oh, yes? Good for you!)
 11 T: Jimmy hasn't had any homework since last week.

Ex. 8 @@

- 1 T: Yes. Andrew.
 2 L: It's opposite the library. / librari /
 3 T: It's opposite the library. / laibrari /
 4 Ls: (after being signalled by the teacher)
 ^^Library. / laibrari /
 5 T: It's opposite the library. O.K.

Ex. 9

- 1 T: Next please. Dimitri. To be busy.
 2 L: Em, yes. Hectic.
 3 T: ## Do you think so?
 4 Ls: ^ ^No!
 5 T: No, because we'll find hectic somewhere else.

As the study of classroom repair indicates there is a heavy emphasis on *other-repair* or on *initiated self-repair overtly realized*. Such repair strategies, however, interrupt the flow of discourse and stop the learner's interactive work and cognitive work in its tracks by focussing interest on the trouble spot. Summing up, the practices that teachers employ to realize pedagogical repair strategies are as follows: *First*, teachers do not allow learners enough time to sort things out, i.e. to self-repair. That is, of course, contrary to what usually happens in natural communication. *Second*, teachers may interrupt learners abruptly and repeat the word or expression that was misheard or misunderstood. See, for instance, Ex. 2, turn 3 and Ex. 3, turn 5. Sometimes the teacher's repetition may be accompanied with a humorous or derogatory remark as in Ex. 3, turn 5. *Third*, teachers nominate other learners or encourage the class to correct or continue. See, for instance, Ex. 1, turn 5, Ex. 4, turn 4; Ex. 7, turns 4 and 5 or Ex. 8, turn 4. *Fourth*, teachers may repeat the erroneous utterance

in a questioning or scornful way and then they may provide the correct answer himself/herself. See, for instance, Ex. 4, turn 3. *Fifth*, teachers may inform the learner that he/she has committed an error expecting him/her to correct it. See, for instance, Ex. 5, turn 5 and Ex. 6, turn 4.

Often before the teacher reacts verbally or non-verbally some other learner(s) may shout out the correct utterance or may protest the speaker's selection by crying out "No", see example 7, turn 3, for instance.

However, when control in terms of language, topic and activity is shared a type of repair is favoured which reflects world communication practices. It aims to further the interaction as it is developing through initiated self-repair or other-repair processes covertly realized⁸. Here are some examples of learner-centered communication-oriented repair practices identified in the data.

Ex. 9

- 1 T: What's the dialogue between Tony and Bill and Penny? What's going on in this dialogue? Mm? What's Tony saying?
 2 L1: Tony is looking for find Depapa on map.
 3 T: || O.K.
 4 L1: and Bill show him.
 5 T: ## Bill shows him.
 6 L1: where is it.
 7 T: ## Where it is.
 8 L1: (*laughing*) O.K. where it is and he sees that is near Terala, a bigger island and Bill says there's an airport in Terala.

Ex. 10

- 1 T: Athina. When did Madonna begin singing, please? When did Madonna begin singing?
 2 L: She / she have been singing //
 3 T: Oh! Just when did she begin?
 4 L: Nineteen eighteen (...)
 5 T: About?
 6 L: About nineteen eighty three.
 7 T: Good. Madonna began singing about nineteen eighty three

Ex. 11 @@

- | | | |
|---|----|--|
| 1 | T: | The next question, Ioanna. |
| 2 | L: | The third one? |
| 3 | T: | Yes. |
| 4 | L: | <i>(reading in a soft voice)</i> What are you permitted and forbidden to do in school? |
| 5 | T: | Excuse me, I didn't quite hear that. |
| 6 | L: | <i>(reading in a loud voice)</i> What are you permitted and forbidden to do in school? |

Ex. 12

- | | | |
|---|-----|--|
| 1 | L1: | Mr Eldridge and his son arrived in a truck. The Newtons all helped them to load the animals on to it. They chased it out of the garden. On Sunday, Dr Newton and Arthur had to work in the garden. |
| 2 | L2: | <i>(after raising her hand)</i> I am not sure but I think we've done a wrong. I think they first chased it out of the garden and then (...) // |
| 3 | T: | They chased it out of the garden first and then they telephoned them. Right. |

In Ex. 9, for instance, in turn 3, T does not attempt to correct the learner's errors but T encourages him to continue by employing the back channel strategy of "go on" (cf. Duncan, 1974). In turns 5 and 7, however, T decides to notify the learner of his error but T has followed practices that are usually employed in conversation. T has made use of a variation of the so-called back-channel cues strategy (cf. Papaefthymiou-Lytra, 1981/1987)⁹. T has provided the correct form in a tactful way, much appreciated by the learner who — in my opinion — shows his appreciation by laughing and employing the lexical item "O.K." in his utterance in turn 8 before repeating the correct form¹⁰. See also Ex. 10, turns 3 and 5. Sometimes other learners may also employ conversational practices in order to repair. See for instance Ex. 12, turn 2. Consequently, when self-repair or other-repair occurs during the problem turn, it is generally aimed at helping in the production of that turn, as is the case in natural conversation. The practices, therefore, that teachers favour in exercising other-repairs

or initiated self-repairs covertly realized, are the very strategies that communicators use to resolve conflict in face-to-face interaction (cf. Papaefthymiou-Lytra, 1981/1987, Varonis and Gass, 1985 among others).

7. On Conflict in the Foreign Language Classroom: A Discussion

A careful cross-examination of the factors that lead to conflict in interpersonal communication and to errors in the classroom indicates that there are a lot of similarities between them.

As with conflict in natural communication, repairing in the classroom arises from one of the following factors: intelligibility and interpretability as a result of lack of shared knowledge between participants — teachers and learners or learners and learners. This knowledge may refer to all levels of the foreign language, that is to say, phonological, morphological, syntactic, semantic, pragmatic, or discoursal. (cf. Long, 1977; Schwartz, 1980; Thomas, 1983). It may also refer to cognitive matters or the content of the interaction, cultural variations or culturally conditioned conceptual schemata (cf. Widdowson, 1984). Environmental factors may also play an important role, i.e. a class singing next door, other classes having a break etc. They may easily lead to mishearings or misunderstandings. Inattentiveness or lack of interest and motivation may also lead to errors, misunderstandings or discipline problems. Discipline problems can be considered as problems adhering to misunderstandings of face and power in the classroom.

Choice of repair procedures to restore breakdowns in classroom communication, however, seems to be conditioned by the classroom context. The classroom context as a particular social environment has often been called a *command context*. van Dijk, 1986, has provided us with an excellent definition of the classroom context. On discussing speech acts and their linguistic realisation, he argues that the pragmatic function of an utterance is often somehow expressed in the grammatical structure of a sentence. The same, he claims, may hold for the expression of macro-speech acts through the discourse as a whole. To exemplify his view he refers to what he calls a *command context* and describes its characteristics. There we may expect, he argues, typical uses of pronouns, imperative syntactical structure, selection of typical lexical units, the absence of hedging, indirectness etc. as a global constraint on the sequence. Similarly, the sentences will globally

have to refer to an action of the hearer in the near future. We can make the general, albeit vague assertion, he argues, that each macro-speech act determines the style of the discourse viz the "set of grammatical structures resulting from choice-operations on semantically equivalent options" (van Dijk, 1986: 245). His description fits well the classroom context as a command context.

Furthermore, both the role of the teacher and the status and power vested in that role definitely affect this issue. Management and disciplinary functions of teachers involve them in giving commands; their power and status vis a vis learners mean that many of those commands will be encoded as imperatives, forms that would be marked (because they will be unmitigated by politeness markers) in informal conversation among equals. Thus teachers' speech shows more imperatives and so fewer questions and/or statements (Long and Sato, 1983: 271). Of the questions used most of them are display questions whereas in natural communication referential questions predominate¹¹. This result suggests that, communicative use of the target language — enriched by appropriate and varied politeness markers indicative of a variety of social and psychological roles — makes up only a minor part of typical classroom activities. As a matter of fact, in some classes, imperatives can be nearly the only communicative use of English to which learners are exposed (Long and Sato, 1983: 280). However, as Edwards, 1981: 303 maintains, where the authority of the teacher has been partly relinquished or eroded, then the resulting interplay of 'alternative frames of reference and relevance' will be evident in the discourse. That is why recent methodologies have laid a lot of emphasis on pair and group work in an attempt to introduce psychological and social role relationships other than that of teacher-learner role relationship (cf. Di Pietro, 1987; Rivers (ed.), 1987, among others). However, in a monolingual and a monocultural foreign language classroom this assumption may not hold true. Learners tend to switch to L1 to solve problems in pair or group work (cf. Papaefthymiou-Lytra, 1987b).

The teacher's role as a foreign language user and a discourse participant has been undermined. Consequently, the treatment of conflict by participants in interpersonal communication seems to be different from the treatment of error by participants in classroom discourse. As a matter of fact, on examining conversational discourse and classroom discourse we notice that accidental, cooperative, non-serious and non-offensive interruptions tend to appear more in conversational discourse (cf. Leech, 1983:

the maxim of tact). On the other hand, deliberate, antagonistic, serious and sometimes offensive interruptions tend to emerge more frequently in classroom discourse. In practice, however, the latter does not preclude the former in the classroom. See, for instance, teachers' behaviour in Ex. 9-12 in section 6.

The question is, however, whether we should consider repair processes as serving two independent functions, that is to say, pedagogy in the classroom and conflict (or trouble) in conversation in the outside world. If this is the case, then they ought to be realized differently strategically and linguistically. On the other hand, one may argue that this is a pseudo-problem. In reality, in both cases repair processes serve one macro-function, that of enabling language users, be it learners or non-learners, to resolve conflict or error in the process of interaction whether in the outside world or in the classroom. If this is so, then either practice can be adopted regardless of circumstances provided it serves the purposes of the user. In this sense, it should really make no difference whether the interaction takes place in the purpose-oriented foreign language classroom or outside the classroom in formal or informal speech encounters. In fact, one may argue that it is up to the teacher to treat classroom interaction as a natural encounter rather than a "didacticness-oriented" encounter. In principle, it depends on the *strategy* employed by the listener — here the teacher or other learner —, the actual verbal or non-verbal *language* employed and the degree of *affect* it demonstrates. Choice of strategy, language and affect also conditions the kind of social and psychological roles the participants in interaction are expected to demonstrate and accept at face value.

8. Practical Implications

Can we really influence the command context of the classroom and introduce conversational practices in the foreign language classroom that reflect other psychological and social roles by adopting world communication practices? It seems that repairs, or error correcting, may as well function as a vehicle for more communicative use of language in the foreign language classroom (cf. van Lier, 1988. See also Papaefthymiou-Lytra, 1981/1987). The more so, since repair is a common feature to be found in natural communication as well. Furthermore, since interlanguage systems and communication patterns reflect the original learning environment (Faerch and Kasper, 1983), in our case, the foreign language classroom, it

seems reasonable to assume that the ways learners cope with communication problems outside the classroom can be largely determined by the experiences learners may have had in the foreign language classroom. Before learners try to use repairing in pair or group work they must find out how it can be done in the FL and what exactly they may say. Teacher-learner interaction may as well prepare learners to that end.

In order to demonstrate how this can be implemented in the classroom, I would like to discuss the options for error correction suggested by Long, 1977, and compare them with practices followed in natural communication. I am using examples from correcting forms of the L2 because correcting erroneous forms is as important and common a practice for the language teacher as correcting meanings. Furthermore, the teacher may be easier persuaded to indulge in conversational practices for error correcting if he/she is aware of the multifunctional use of communication practices in the foreign language classroom. Long, 1977: 290, suggests the following options for teacher error correction of a specific erroneous utterance.

Learner's erroneous utterance.

S: He go to the park on Saturdays.

Teacher's options for error correcting.

(a) 1. No.

2. He go to the park on Saturdays?

(The student utterance repeated with rising intonation, probably accompanied by some non-verbal cue such as raising eyebrows).

(b) 1. He go to the park on Saturdays?

(Stress on "go".)

2. He what to the park?

(c) 1. Go or goes?

2. You 've missed the third person "s" of goes.

(Long, 1977: 290)

I consider Long's options as examples of pedagogical repair strategies, the function of which is didacticness. They demonstrate the least care and tact for the speaker, here the learner, and lack affect.

If, however, teacher-centred practices are replaced by world communication practices, then the end result will be different. To demonstrate the difference between the two practices I will also use Long's example.

Learner's erroneous utterance.

S: He go to the park on Saturday.

Teacher's options for error correcting.

1. T: Pardon?

Can you repeat it, please?

Sorry, I didn't hear you.

(The repetition strategy can be used to signal trouble instead of a blunt "No" or a mere repetition of the utterance with a rising intonation accompanied by a non-verbal cue of, say, disapproval as suggested by Long).

2. T: He does what on Saturdays?

(The clarification request strategy can be used to signal to the learner that there is trouble. Notice also that the use of "does" may ring bells for "goes" the correct item. Compare with Long's suggestion "He what to the park?").

3. T: What do we say in English — "he go" or "he goes"?

(Using the L2 strategy can also signal to the learner that there is trouble which may cause problems in communication. In this particular example, note the use "we" which includes both addressor and addressee as an indication of solidarity and common interest.)

(From Papaefthymiou-Lytra, 1981/1987: 206-210)

The world communication strategies suggested for error correction may easily lead learners to initiated self-repair or other-repair. Note also that the strategies suggested are placed in a special order in accordance with the degree of help provided to the learner. The *first* option, i.e. a repetition strategy, provides the learner with the least help possible, it merely signals trouble and invites the learner to decide on the problem and correct it.

The *second* option, i.e. a clarification request strategy, provides the learner with more help than the first one. It locates the problem area for the learner and invites the learner to correct it. The *third* option, i.e. using the L2 strategy (cf. Papaefthymiou-Lytra, 1981/1987: 174-178) provides the learner with greater help. It identifies the problem for the learner and provides him/her with two options, one of which is correct. The learner is invited to choose one, presumably the correct one. Other conversational strategies that can serve similar purposes as those suggested are: the back-channel cues strategy, the restatement strategy, the elaboration strategy, the expansion strategy and so on. I consider them good examples of communicative repairs. The practices suggested are similar to the communication strategies used by interlocutors in N-NN as well as NN-NN discourse.

In line with this argument if learners fail to hit the right utterance, teachers should prefer using conversational repair to pedagogical repair. In this way teachers become *participants* in the discourse, not *correctors* of discourse. By using conversational repair such as those suggested above, teachers promote initiated self-repair and other repair in a collaborative way engaging learners' interest in it and giving them ample time for it. In this way we can incorporate the notion of "wait time" [proposed in Fanselow, 1977, in terms of delay evaluation] in the interaction itself, instead of treating it as a pedagogical device.

It is understandable that learners ought not to be trained only as recipients of such world conversational practices exercised by teachers. They must be also trained as senders of these in verbal encounters. In other words, teachers may become models of such world conversational practices for learners through error correcting. But this is not enough. They should also encourage learners to make use of such conversational practices when they address them or other fellow learners in pair or group work. Teachers and learners, therefore, should make use of all types of conversational repair procedures paying particular attention to the language they employ to express themselves. In other words, language, politeness and affect conforming to the cultural and linguistic presuppositions of the target language should go hand in hand. After all, foreign language learners are by definition life long learners¹². They will often face crisis in communication inside or outside the classroom situation for the very same reasons discussed in sections 6 and 7.

In short, I would consider this kind of repair as learner-centred in the sense that it bestows on learners the benefit of the doubt which may lead to initiated self-repair or other-repair covertly realized, which is a natural feature of L1 competence. Such practices also restore the learners' rights and obligations as speakers and listeners in the FL classroom. After all, correcting errors of any sort — grammatical, pragmatic, cognitive, paralinguistic, etc. — demands care and tact on the part of the teacher similar to the care and tact demanded by any conversationalist in a verbal encounter (cf. Thomas, 1983: 99). This can be the case, however, only if the FL is not looked upon as a subject to be taught but it also becomes the means of communication for the FL classroom participants, namely, teachers and learners.

If teachers, however, are to make use of the findings of conversational analysis concerning conflict, they must first become aware of possible similarities between natural communication and classroom discourse. Such an awareness will allow them to employ more conversational practices in the classroom for the benefit of their learners who do not have access to natural conversational English in face-to-face interaction. After all, in the FL context the teacher is the only live and authoritative language user in the classroom. The teacher is the only live source who can show to learners how to cope with language as foreign language users (cf. Papaefthymiou-Lytra, 1987a: 94-103).

All this, of course, in an attempt to abandon the distinction between conversational practices and pedagogy and treat classroom interaction as composed of interrelated actions leading to a common goal that of learning to use the foreign language successfully for purposes outside the classroom environment. Using a language for communication is not just the product of rule following either linguistic, sociolinguistic, pragmatic or discursal, but of decision making in action. Resolving conflict in communication is an instance of cooperative decision making in action. I am well aware that some teachers may argue that time limitations, pressures from administrators, etc. may not allow them to indulge in time consuming conversational repair where teachers are acting as participants in discourse. This may be true but I consider it worth trying. It is obvious that there is a need for such practices to be adopted in the foreign language classroom. If control to resolve conflict in classroom discourse is shared, it will allow them to introduce more conversational practices — so badly needed, after all — in the foreign language classroom.

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Notes

1. An earlier version of this paper was read at the International Symposium on *Applied Linguistics and Language Learning and Teaching: Present Trends and Future Prospects* organized by GALA and held in Thessaloniki, Greece on June 2-4, 1988.
2. In this paper I am using the term repair in a similar sense defined by van Lier, 1984 and Kasper, 1985. In particular, like Kasper, 1985, I include the notion of meaning negotiation and of error handling under the wider notion of repair. Furthermore, I would incorporate the whole treatment of repair as it is to be considered in this paper as part of the broader issue of classroom management language and management strategies.
3. This paper may seem that it draws to some extent from van Lier, 1988. However, in Papaefthymiou-Lytra, 1981/1987, I argued for the need to introduce communication practices, which I had called regulative strategies, in the foreign language classroom via error correcting. In pp. 206-210 I discussed the implementation of this view in classroom interaction in relation to the role of the teacher and the learner in the foreign language classroom. This paper is indeed the outcome of an in depth research of this hypothesis in the Greek foreign language classroom. In the meantime, Kasper's (1985) and van Lier's (1988) work among others was published, which greatly support the findings of my own study.
4. Van Lier, 1988, distinguishes only two types of repair in the classroom, the initiated self-repair and other-repair. He calls the former a conjunctive repair and the latter a disjunctive repair (p. 187). For a detailed discussion of the structural organization of classroom repair, see van Lier, 1988. In this study, each type is further distinguished into two different kinds.
5. Transcription symbols used in examples of classroom discourse:
 - / Self-repetition or self-correction.
 - (...) Hesitation.
 - (-- --) Pause.
 - // Interruption.
 - = To indicate speaker's change of thought in the middle of a turn.

- ## Teacher's utterance is addressed to class.
 - || Speaker employs the communication strategy of back channell (cf. Duncan, 1974). See also Note 12.
 - ** Teacher corrects in a tactful manner employing a variation of the back-channell cues strategy.
 - ^^ Learners volunteer error correcting, commenting, answering questions etc. without taking the floor officially.
 - @ The teachers in these examples are native speakers of English living and working in Greece.
 - O No answer from learner(s).
 - ::: Speaker continues his/her turn after interruption.
6. Teacher error correction in this example raises the important question of varieties of English and foreign language teaching.
 7. For a discussion of the use of the L1 in the foreign language classroom see Papaefthymiou-Lytra, 1987b.
 8. Other-repair covertly realized as defined in this work is similar to van Lier's (1988) same-turn other repair in intra-turn position (pp. 119-120).
 9. The back channell strategy must be distinguished from the back channell cues strategy. The former is used to monitor interaction. A participant in an event employs it to make clear to his/her co-participant that he/she is within the joint activity and urges him/her to continue. This strategy is usually realized by a small set of lexical items such as "Yes", "Right" or vocalizations such as "Uhm", "Mhm" (Duncan, 1974). The latter is a communicating strategy employed by listeners to fill in missing information in speaker's utterances and help speaker continue with his/her turn (cf. Papaefthymiou-Lytra, 1981/1987: 160-162).
 10. For a discussion about laughter as an interactional device, see Jefferson, 1985.
 11. Display questions are known-information questions; referential questions are genuine information questions (cf. Long, 1983).
 12. Here I would like to raise a question concerning the relationship of learner needs, especially of young learners and adolescent learners, and foreign language learning. How useful will the language behaviours, they are currently learning, be ten years later? Which language behaviours can be of relevance to all learners regardless of age and needs? I would like to suggest that strategies for resolving conflict, for instance, can be of everlasting use regardless of age and needs. After all, the foreign language learner is a life-long learner. Consequently, syllabuses should not be built around learners' current needs only but they must also incorporate features of language that can be of more general use. See also Willems, 1987.

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