

# Interactional Practices in Peer Tutoring of Autonomous Language Learners

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*March 02, 2023*

## 8. BREMER SYMPOSIUM

### ZUM FREMDSPRACHENLEHREN UND LERNEN AN HOCHSCHULEN

Die Rolle von Sprachenzentren neu denken: Flexibilität, Relevanz und Vision

*Rethinking the Role of Languages Centres: Flexibility, Relevance & Vision*

# Outline

- 1) Introduction and Background
- 2) Research on Peer Tutoring of Autonomous Language Learners
- 3) Research Design
- 4) Brief demonstration of *Advice* in Local Setting
- 5) Implications

# 1) Introduction

## Tutors

Trained students assistants  
Support, guidance and advice



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## Learners

Individual learning goals  
Individual methods, tempo and strategies  
Optional academic credit points

# Programm background

## Characteristics

- Programm mediates between individual goals and biographies & strategies of autonomous language learning → *Helping profession* (Graf et al., 2014)
- Common orientation to learning guidance, institution- and activity- specific inferential frameworks → *Institutional talk* (Drew & Heritage, 1992)
- Social norms of how learning and tutoring works → *Community of practice* (Lave & Wenger, 1991)

## 2) Research on Peer Tutoring of Autonomous Language Learners

Research on helping professions in academic settings:

- Research supervision (Vehviläinen 2009; West, 2020)
- Teacher training (Badem-Korkmaz et al. 2022; Waring & Hruska 2012; Waring 2017)
- Office hours (Limberg 2010)
- Writing centre consultations (Babcock & Thonus 2018; Mackiewicz & Babcock 2018)

Studies of one-on-one peer tutoring of autonomous language learners are rare, main foci are learning outcomes and practical applications with an increasing focus on online contexts (e.g. Bohórquez et al. 2018; Boud et al; 2014; Jayathilake & Huxham, 2022; Tanrikulu 2021)

Positive students' reception of the local program (Buschmann-Göbels 2015) & growing popularity in Germany (i.e. Universities of Potsdam, Jena; LMU Munich)

### 3) Research Design - Questions

Investigate the institutionality of interaction:

*(RQ1) What is the macro-structure of learning guidance interaction?*

Identify social activities and actions that contribute to institutional accomplishments (e.g. support, guidance, advisory)

*(RQ2) How do pairs accomplish the main activities of learning guidance in interaction?*

Explore practices of learning and tutoring in longitudinal perspective

*(RQ3) How do shared experiences and co-constructed knowledge of learning and tutoring change the learning guidance interaction over one academic term?*

## 3) Research Design - Methods

### *Gesprächsanalyse* (Deppermann, 2008)

- Focus on talk-in-interaction (*Foundations in Ethnomethodological Conversation Analysis*)
- Dynamic context: members of society collaboratively constitute the situations in which they find themselves and the (inter)actions that take place in those situations
- Social order is reconsidered as a local achievement in situations, the research objective is to explicate how this is done in an accountable way
- Research style using audio / video recordings and detailed transcripts as basic data (*documentation of naturally-occurring interaction*)

### Longitudinal study

- Establishment, maintenance, and modification of social order in local context (*change in interactional practices*)

## 3) Research Design - Data

- Documentation of 54 learning guidance conversations in 5 pairs (5 learners / 2 tutors), over one academic term, in online setting
- Working language German
- Further ethnographic materials include learning biographies / diaries (artefacts), and reflective interviews (instrument)



## 4) Brief Demonstration of *Advice* in Local Setting

Interaction research on advice in educational settings:

- Prominent object of research (cf. Waring & Song, 2018)
- Insights to sequence organization, the management of advice resistance, construction of identity and expertise, or the multi-functionality of accounts (Leyland 2018, 2020, 2021; Park 2014, 2017; Waring 2005, 2007, 2012)
- Relevance of interlocutor differences and epistemic practices (Back 2016, 2020)

Excerpt from learning guidance interaction between Clara (Tutee) & Fred (Tutor)

- Clara has worked on listening comprehension tasks during a language course; she describes her experiences to the tutor, who subsequently delivers a specific form of advice (~00:04:32-00:11:28)
- transcription adjusted for demonstration (*cGAT minimal, segments omitted*)

## Presentation of problem

(CL) meinte halt die (.) dozentin so ja (0.22) hört euch das  
mehrere male an und ihre werdet jedes mal mehr verstehen  
und ich hab\_es mir halt dreimal angehört und ich hab (0.2)  
bei letzten mal genauso wenig verstanden wie beim ersten  
mal (0.73) und [dann war ir]gendwie halt so richtig so (.)  
hm

(FR) [okay ]

## Exploration

(FR) (hä) war das ne stark dialekt oder

(CL) (0.76) es [war halt ]

(FR) [war das halt umgangs]sprache oder wie und was  
war daran jetzt so schwierig

(CL) (0.72)also ich glaube was anders war war halt das es  
irgendwie (1.06)ähm (.) das es schneller war als (.)dieser  
podcast weil

(FR) (0.14)hm\_hm

## Tutee's re-definition of problem

(segments omitted)

(CL) aber bei mir fehlte glaub ich auch teilweise einfach  
wirklich das vokabular und ich hab halt dann (0.44) so  
viel nicht verstanden dass ich(0.13) das ganze nicht  
verstanden hab he

## Tutor's re-definition of problem

(FR) hm\_hm (2.68) ja gut (0.18) auf der andern seite ist es  
auf\_jeden\_fall cool dass du das auch inner french (0.25)  
äh gut verstehst(0.28) das ist immerhin mega cool (1.11)  
und(1.24)ich glaube(0.12)selbst wenn de jetzt da\_bei also  
am anfang bei dem wo du bist noch nicht verstanden hast  
hast du wahrscheinlich trotzdem nen paar wörter jetzt in  
nem kontext gehört und so weiter und unterbewusst hast du  
schon mehr verstanden als vorher

(CL) (0.36) hm

(FR) (1.02) ähm

(CL) (0.11) ja (0.25) vielleicht

## Proceed to common definition of problem

(segments omitted)

- (CL) ich bin mir noch nicht einig ob ich diese aufgabe machen  
möchte (0.67) weil ich (0.25) halt überhaupt keine lust  
darauf habe (0.43) weil ich das gefühl habe das es mich  
nicht weiterbringt
- (FR) (0.44) hm\_hm

## Development of solution

(segments omitted)

(FR) ähm(2.26) aber klar ist ne abwägungsfrage(0.21) auf der anderen  
seite ist das halt auch so wenn du de\_ä (.) ich mein (.) du  
sagst dir halt du setzt dir nen zeitlimit und äh hockst dich  
halt nochmal zehn minuten ran

(CL) (0.41) hm (.) ja da[s ]

(FR) [und] wenn du den eindruck hast da kommst du  
weiter oder da (.) tut sich was(0.55) dann machst de\_dann  
scho\_schaust ob du nochmal zehn minuten weitermachst(0.7) oder  
so(1.16) und wenn du aber nach zehn minuten merkst so boah du  
verstehst ja immer noch nichts(1.13) dann kannst auch sagen gut  
dann lässt das halt(0.2) weil sonst(0.26) na ja im schlimmsten  
fall frustriert s dich wenn du weiter [(machst)]

(CL) [ja ](0.5) ja das n  
guter gedanke ich glaub das werde ich machen also

# Processing of solution

(segments omitted)

(CL) vielleicht am wochenende das ich nochmal das versuche  
ob es (0.11) manchmal ist es ja auch die  
tagesform(0.43) [das ] was sich geändert hat

(FR) [hm ]



## Preparation of realisation / Discharge

(segments omitted)

(CL) (0.8)und dann sonst(0.29)ist es aber glaub ich auch okay wenn ich dann immer noch nicht weiterkomme wenn ich für ich entscheide dass(0.14)äh mir das nichts bringt

(FR) hm auf jeden fall ich meine auch da in nem sprachkurs(0.66)also(0.25)du kriegst vielleicht hausaufgaben aber am ende du bist die person die das was lernen will

(CL) (0.31)ja

(FR) (0.59)und\_äh auch da kannst entscheiden was du davon machen möchtest oder was du davon nicht machen möchtest

(CL) (0.16)hm ja und ich glaub auch also ich hab ja diesen podcast gehört wie man halt natürlich französisch lernen kann

## Selected Conclusions

Typical macro-structural organization of a specific form of advice:

- Suggests an alternative procedure in view of negative experience in learning activity
- *Presentation of problem → Exploration → Re-definition of problem → Development of solution → Processing of solution → Preparation of realisation → Discharge*
- shows similarities to Kallmeyer (2000), but: *unsolicited* advise-giving

Social activities / actions:

- Specific form of advice: Suggest an alternative procedure (*institutional accomplishment*)
- Negotiation of learner's obligation (*shared understanding of learning*)
- Tutor strategy: Preference for tutee's decision on adequate method (*ensuring autonomy*)
- shows similarities to Waring (2012, 2017) research on writing center consultations

Preview to longitudinal perspective:

- Change in the execution of practices (e.g. structures that ensure autonomy)

## 5) Implications

Insights from the study aim to provide a better understanding of:

- Interactional features of this specific helping format
- Critical points in interaction that affect institutional accomplishments
- Effective practices to manage institutional accomplishments
- Learning and tutoring strategies in context of autonomous language learning (see also Oxford, 2017; Legenhausen 2009)

*A better understanding can inform the future training of peer tutors, sensibilising them for the common project in which autonomous learning is mediated in social interaction*

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