Focus on form as a joint accomplishment: An attempt to bridge the gap between focus on form research and conversation analytic research on SLA

VIRGINIE FASEL LAUZON AND SIMONA PEKAREK DOEHLER

Abstract

Several debates have recently addressed complementarities and/or (in)compatibilities between two lines of research concerned with second language interactions: Focus on Form research and conversation analytic work on repair in second language interactions. While our expertise primarily lies in the latter, we follow up on recent calls emanating from the former for more qualitatively oriented analysis. In this paper, we report on a study of correction in naturally occurring French L2 classroom interaction addressing the following question: how is attention focus on form distributed among the participants and interactionally organized across the temporal unfolding of talk? *We show the analytic difficulty of determining precisely whose focus we observe in focus on form episodes. The findings substantiate an understanding of attention focus – along with the cognitive orientations of participants – as a* process *that is interactionally occasioned and organized, and the transformation of which into joint focus hinges on the local contingencies of talk.*

1. Introduction

Over the past three decades, the field of SLA research has experienced the growth of studies investigating how participants in second language interactions deal with issues of linguistic form. One line of research, which goes back to Michael Long's Interaction Hypothesis (Long 1981), has explored overt but incidental focus on form (FoF) in otherwise meaning-centered classroom activities (for recent studies see IRAL 47[3–4] and some of the papers in Mackey 2007). Another line of research, emanating from conversation analysis (CA; Sacks 1992), has studied the sequential organization of repair in second language talk-in-interaction, within the classroom (e.g., Seedhouse 2004) and in other contexts (e.g., Brouwer 2003; Kurhila 2001). A recent debate about the relation between the notions of correction and repair has raised critical ques-

IRAL 51 (2013), 323–351
DOI 10.1515/iral-2013-0014
0019042X/2013/051-323

tions as to whether and how these two lines of research may fruitfully complete each other (Hall 2007a and b; Seedhouse 2007; LLRT 2010). In this paper, we wish to contribute to this debate by investigating the notion of *focus on form* through a conversation analytic lens.

The CA approach to SLA (CA-SLA, for a recent discussion see Pekarek Doehler 2010) sharply contrasts with the basic assumptions underlying the Interaction Hypothesis as well as with some of the methodological procedures used in work on FoF. CA-SLA has developed as a counter-position to the Doughty and Long (2003) description of SLA research as a "cognitive science" (see Firth and Wagner's 1997 seminal statement). The epistemological, conceptual and methodological divergences between these two approaches to the role of social interaction in L2 learning have been the object of fervent debates (e.g., the MLJ 1997, 2007).

In this paper, we wish to explore on empirical grounds some of the complementary insights that these approaches may offer for our understanding of the complexity of second language interactions and their relation to learning. We address two central questions. First, how can we analytically determine whose attention focus we actually observe in focus on form episodes: the teacher's, the learner's, or a joint focus? Second, how is attention to form organized across the moment-by-moment unfolding of talk? In doing so, we document participants' orientation to form as an interactionally organized process that unfolds across time.

The paper first offers a brief overview of studies on focus on form and provides background on the notion of repair as used in conversation analysis (Section 2). After presenting data and methodology (Section 3), we use a coding scheme derived from FoF research in order to build a collection of interactional episodes comprising corrective feedbacks in our data (Section 4). We then carry out a CA-based analysis of selected excerpts taken from this collection in order to show how participants' orientation towards form is progressively accomplished, interactionally organized, and inscribed in the sequential organization of their mutual actions (Section 5). This procedure, drawing explicitly from two distinct conceptual and analytic frameworks, is designed a) to gauge the possible complementarities between the two research traditions, and b) to critically assess the robustness of the coding criteria emanating from FoF research in the light of the moment-to-moment unfolding of talk-in-interaction. We conclude by outlining implications for future research on the relation between social interaction and second language learning (Section 6).

2. Focus on form and repair in second language (classroom) interaction

2.1. *Focus on form and corrective feedback*

Research on focus on form originates in the work of Michael Long (Long 1981, 1991; Long and Robinson 1998). According to Long's Interaction Hypothesis, drawing second language learners' attention to linguistic forms that are contextualized within meaningful interaction helps them process input, and thereby enhances learning. Focus on form instruction (FFI)[1] is one way of drawing the learners' attention to form and to increase their sensitivity to input. According to the classic definition,

> focus on form refers to how focal attentional resources are allocated. Although there are degrees of attention, and although attention to forms and attention to meaning are not always mutually exclusive, during an otherwise meaning-focused classroom lesson, focus on form often consists of an occasional shift of attention to linguistic code features – by the teacher and/or one or more students – triggered by perceived problems with comprehension or production. (Long and Robinson 1998: 23)

Studies on focus on form have investigated how FFI is implemented in the second language classroom, using quantitative analyses of data recorded in non-experimental (e.g., Lyster and Ranta 1997; Lyster 1998; Lyster and Mori 2006; Panova and Lyster 2002) and quasi-experimental settings (e.g., most of the studies presented in Doughty and Williams 1998; Loewen 2005; Lyster 2004; see also the studies discussed by Lyster and Saito 2010). Non-experimental data have been used to describe the practices of FFI, while quasi-experimental data have been used to relate types of instruction or types of corrective feedback to learning outcomes based on pre-tests and post-tests. Much work has been carried out on corrective feedback, which has been broached as an "analytic teaching strategy" (Lyster and Ranta 1997: 42), i.e., a procedure that is initiated by a teacher as a reaction to a student's *error,* designed to correct that error and/or to draw the student's attention (or the students' attention) to that error.

What we know from the quoted body of research about corrective feedback can be subsumed under three main points (see Lyster and Saito 2010 for a

1. Long proposes a distinction between *focus on form instruction*, *focus on forms instruction* and *focus on meaning instruction*. *Focus on meaning instruction* refers to communicative instruction (the teaching of language use) while *focus on forms instruction* refers to non-communicative instruction (the teaching of grammatical rules). *Focus on form instruction* is an intermediate type of instruction that is centered on language use but includes focus on form episodes involving corrective feedback and/or metalinguistic comments.

detailed synthesis of existing research): (a) corrective feedback may help the noticing, and therefore the processing, of input; (b) different feedback types may have different effects; (c) factors such as instructional setting, age or linguistic target may affect the efficacy of corrective feedback. An example of corrective feedback, taken from our data, is provided in (1):

(1) CODI DK-A-1

```
   01 The:  oui (0.8) et euh (1.0) j'ai (0.9) conduisé (0.2) beaucoup,=
            yes       and          I AUX      drived         a lot
-> 02 T:    =j'ai  conduit.
            I AUX  drove
-> 03 The:  conduit (0.2) pour        apprendre (1.1) de conduire,
            drove         in order to learn          to drive
```

In line 2 the teacher provides a correction (*j'ai conduit*, 'I drove') by means of what is called a *recast* in the FoF literature. The correction relates to the non-target-language-like past participle *conduisé* used by the student (l.1). It is clearly initiated by the teacher. In CA terms, excerpt 1 shows a case of other-initiated other-repair, since the student's turn does not display any sign of repair initiation (his regular pausing is a pervasive feature of his talk). The teacher's turn reproduces the student's deictic origo (*j'ai*, 'I have', l.2), which precludes a reading of that turn as a clarification request or a display of understanding (contrary to what would be the case, e.g., for *tu as conduit*, 'you drove'). The correction is highlighted by accentuation and the recast occurs immediately after the student's turn (it is latched to that turn, see l.1–2). The student reacts by repeating the past participle *conduit* (l.3), thereby displaying his acceptance of the correction. The excerpt illustrates a clear-cut case of corrective feedback initiated by the teacher which triggers the student's attention to form and appears to result in a joint focus on that form.

Such clear-cut cases, however, are by no means the norm. As we will argue, detailed qualitative analysis – taking into account analytic parameters such as prosody and gaze – is necessary to understand whose attention focus we observe, and precisely which dimension of talk is being focused on. Corrective feedback has been understood as an eminently "complex" (Chaudron 1988: 152) phenomenon: it may not consistently fulfill a corrective function (Lyster 1998; Lyster and Mori 2006) and its efficacy "depends on the learner's orientation to the interaction" (Ellis and Sheen 2006: 596). The complexity of the phenomenon has recently elicited calls for more qualitative research on FFI (Lyster and Mori 2006; Lyster and Saito 2010). A central issue yet remains to be explored: how exactly is focus on form interactionally organized, i.e., how is it distributed among the participants and across the temporal unfolding of talk? The importance of this issue has been pointed out by Seedhouse (2004; see also Hauser 2005): "Whose focus is it? Is it the researcher's etic focus, the etic focus of the teacher's task-as-workplan, or the learner's emic focus?"

(Seedhouse 2004: 249). As Seedhouse further observes: "In order to identify the learners' focus, researchers would have to analyze the classroom discourse and develop an emic perspective in order to ascertain what the learners are focusing on" (Seedhouse 2004: 250).

By "emic perspective" Seedhouse refers to a participant-relevant perspective as advocated for instance in conversation analysis and ethnomethodology, i.e. an analytic stance that attempts to retrace, in the data, how participants themselves orient to each other and to the objects of their concern, rather than concentrating on what the researcher treats (from a so-called etic perspective) as error, or as a teacher's reaction to an error. In the present contribution, we aim to provide the kind of qualitative, case-by-case, bottom-up and emic account advocated by Seedhouse. Such an endeavor raises two fundamental questions:

– How can we identify, on empirical grounds, *what* exactly participants focus on (i.e. how far can their focus be treated as unequivocal)?
– How can we tell, on empirical grounds, that a focus on form initiated by a single participant (e.g., the teacher) actually becomes a *joint* focus?

If there are "degrees of attention focus" (Long and Robinson 1998, quoted supra), if "attention to form and attention to meaning are not always mutually exclusive" (Long and Robinson 1998, quoted supra), and if the efficacy of focus on form "depends on the learner's orientation to the interaction" (Ellis and Sheen 2006, quoted supra), then these questions are key to understanding the possible contribution of focus on form episodes to learning. Yet, they have not been addressed systematically in research so far. Tackling them requires a qualitative micro-analysis that enables us to retrace how participants orient to form in real time across the sequential unfolding of talk. Conversation analysis presents a powerful conceptual and methodological framework for such an undertaking.

2.2. *The organization of repair as studied in conversation analysis*

From the first generation of CA studies on, repair has been a central object of investigation (Schegloff et al. 1977). Repair refers to an interactional practice through which participants deal with troubles in speaking, hearing or understanding. Repair related to linguistic items is only one aspect of this practice; repair may also relate to the contents of talk, or the actions accomplished by talk. A repair sequence minimally consists of a trouble source (l.1, ex.1) and a candidate solution to that trouble (l.2, ex.1). It may be self- or other-initiated, and self- or other-accomplished.

A number of CA-SLA studies have been concerned with repair in second language talk (e.g., Brouwer 2003; Brouwer et al. 2004; Kurhila 2001; Seedhouse 2004). Several studies have shown that repair sequences relating to (L2)

linguistic objects cannot always be explained in terms of lacunae in one of the participants' (L2) linguistic abilities, but may accomplish a range of other actions, such as configuring participation structures or membership statuses (Kasper 2004; Wagner 1998; Pekarek Doehler and Ziegler 2007). A central question that yet remains unanswered in CA work, however, is how repair, and in particular correction, relates to learning.

The specificities of repair in the second language classroom have been discussed in detail by Van Lier (1988) and Seedhouse (2004). Their work has shown that – contrary to what can be observed in everyday L1 conversations, where most of the repair sequences are self-initiated (Schegloff et al. 1977) – repair sequences in the L2 classroom are typically other-initiated by the teacher. The majority of these other-initiated repairs are didactic resources that can be described as corrections; they involve the replacement of a trouble item, oriented to as an error, by another item (Schegloff et al. 1977; Kurhila 2001; Seedhouse 2007). CA studies of other-initiated corrections in the language classroom are hence concerned with empirical phenomena that widely overlap those studied in the FoF tradition under the heading of *corrective feedback*.

2.3. *Reconsidering focus on form through a conversation analytic lens*

2.3.1. *Repair and corrective feedback.* Given what precedes, it may be tempting to directly relate the FoF notion of corrective feedback to the CA notion of correction. However, important differences underpin these constructs and the way they are dealt with in the two research traditions. Most importantly:

– *Corrective feedback* in FoF research is a procedure that is understood to be launched by a teacher as a reaction to a student's error and to be designed to correct that error. The analytic starting point for identifying corrective feedback is a student's linguistic error, as identified by the researcher.
– *Correction* in CA terms is one kind of repair. The analytic starting point for identifying other-correction is not an error as identified by the researcher, but the participants' own orientation toward something that has been said as necessitating a correction. In principle, then, speaker B may produce a more correct form, subsequently to an incorrect form produced by speaker A, in a turn that is not designed for accomplishing the action of correcting, and not oriented to as such by speaker A. Accordingly, central analytic attention is paid to what triggers participants' orientation to a form and how it is interactionally organized. For instance, is the correction solicited by the first speaker (self-initiated repair) by means of repair initiators such as cut-offs, alternative wordings, try-marked intonation, hesitation tokens or a combina-

tion of these? Or is it initiated by the second speaker (other-initiated repair)?

These differences are consequential when it comes to analyzing data. While in the FoF tradition research proceeds by coding phenomena based on previously established categories, within the CA framework analysis seeks to uncover the categories oriented to by the participants themselves by means of a qualitative analysis of how participants' orientations and understandings materialize in the step-by-step unfolding of their turns at talk. While paying close attention to the sequential and multimodal deployment of talk, such analysis, however, puts serious limits on the possibility of quantification (Schegloff 1993).

2.3.2. *CA, attention focus and socially situated cognition.* Repair sequences provide one of the most notable sites where socially distributed cognition becomes observable (Kasper 2009; Pekarek Doehler 2010). Excerpt 2 is taken from a French L2 classroom interaction in a Swiss German high school:

(2) CODI DK-A-1

```
   01 And:  nous avons fait euhm:: (1.1) °euh je ne sais pas°, (0.1)
            we   AUX   did                   I don't know
-> 02       euhm windsurf?
                 +windsurfing ((German))+
-> 03 T:    alors on a  fait du:: .hhh de la:: (0.4) de la planche à voile,
            so   we AUX did  DET.M     DET.F        DET.F windsurfing
-> 04 And:  planche à voile, (0.2) .hh et: °nous avons° (0.2) °(x)°?
            windsurfing                and  we   AUX
   05       (1.4)
   06 And:  oui
            yes
   07 The:  °(x)°
   08       (1.0)
   09 And:  fait:    des promenades et::
            went for DET walks      and
```

The excerpt shows a self-initiated other-repair (Schegloff et al. 1977). At line 1, André engages in a word-search that he publicly displays by means of hesitation phenomena (*euhm:*, pause) and the low-voiced 'I don't know', before presenting (l.2) the tentative candidate wording *windsurf* (with rising, try-marked intonation). At line 3 the teacher reacts by providing a translation[2] into French. André then repeats the teacher's wording (l.4) and pursues his talk.

The quoted features show how the participants' cognitive orientation toward language (and possibly learning) is organized on-line, on a moment-by-moment basis, and therefore becomes observable through the sequential deployment of turns at talk. André's hesitation (l.1) and the try-marked candidate

2. According to FoF research, translations of this type provide corrective feedback, being part of the category "recast" (Lyster and Ranta 1997: 47); see Section 4 below.

wording (l.2), combined with the more explicit *je ne sais pas* 'I don't know' (l.1), index the focusing of his attention on an uncertain linguistic item and a communicative obstacle to be solved. The teacher's alternative wording (l.3) is interactionally occasioned by the very way André delivers his preceding turn: the teacher does not merely react to an error; rather, he reacts to a student's display of trouble with a linguistic issue, which he appears to interpret as a call for help. André's repetition of the teacher's wording (l.4) in turn displays his acknowledgment of the proposed item and its acceptance as appropriate for pursuing his communicative project. Considering the correction here as a teacher's reaction to a student's error would render an oversimplified picture of the socio-cognitive processes at work.

The quoted features demonstrably reflect and enact processes that can be cast in cognitive terms as "attention focus" or "noticing". Cognition and attention focus are here observably situated in what Schegloff (1992: 1338) calls the "procedural infrastructure" of social interaction: a turn at talk projects (i.e. makes conditionally relevant) specific types of next actions and the next turn displays an understanding of the previous one. Therefore, turn-by-turn analysis of talk, on which an emic perspective is grounded, provides a rich analytic resource for observing the sequential pathways of participants' focus on form.

3. Data and methodology

The present study is based on a dataset consisting of ten 45-minute-long French L2 lessons that have been video-recorded in a high school in German-speaking Switzerland. The same teacher and 4 different groups of students (half-classes, consisting of 7 to 10 students) participate in these lessons. The students are 18 years old and have had French L2 instruction for 7 years, 4 to 6 hours weekly. They have a solid mastery of German and Swiss-German, although it is possible that some students do not have Swiss-German as their L1. The teacher is a native speaker of French and had lived in the Swiss-German part of Switzerland for one year prior to the start of the recordings. The activities that we recorded were part of the habitual curriculum and were not implemented for the sake of this study. They were designed for communicative practice and include discussions on social and political issues (4 lessons), riddles (4 lessons), a role-play (1 lesson), and the creation of comic strip dialogues (1 lesson). Some activities contain a preparation phase in small groups, but the lessons were mostly teacher-fronted. Only teacher-fronted interactions were taken into account for the present study. The data were fully transcribed following CA transcription conventions (see annex). Selected transcription excerpts were refined for the purpose of this paper, in particular as regards intonation, gesture, gaze and body movements.

We proceeded by means of two distinct analytic steps. In a first step, we used definitions and coding criteria from the work of Roy Lyster in order to establish a collection of corrective feedbacks across the entire database (Section 4). In a second step, we submitted selected instances of the collection to conversation analytic analysis (Section 5). As mentioned before, this procedure, drawing on two analytic frameworks, was designed to assess the complementary insights that may be gained from these frameworks. It was also designed to critically review the robustness of the coding criteria emanating from FoF research in the light of a detailed understanding of how participants, within courses of joint activities, orient to linguistic forms on a moment-to-moment basis.

4. A general picture of corrective feedback in the data

Definition and objects of corrective feedback. In accordance with the FoF literature, we defined corrective feedback as "any reaction of the teacher which clearly transforms, disapprovingly refers to, or demands improvement of the learner's utterance" (Chaudron 1977: 31, quoted in Panova and Lyster 2002: 574). Following Lyster and Ranta's (1997) procedure, corrective feedback was identified by tracking the errors related to forms made by the students, and by identifying which of these were corrected by the teacher. Errors that were not corrected were excluded from the collection. This procedure yielded a collection of 184 instances of corrective feedback, of which 58 % relate to grammar (n = 107), 26 % to vocabulary (n = 47), 13 % to pronunciation (n = 24) and 3 % were mixed[3] (n = 6). The amount of corrective feedbacks per lesson ranges from 8 to 30 instances.

Types of corrective feedback. We again followed Lyster and Ranta's (1997) classification and its refinement in Lyster's subsequent work (e.g., Panova and Lyster 2002; Lyster 1998, 2004; Lyster and Mori 2006) in order to distinguish between different types of corrective feedback:

(i) The teacher *provides* the correction:
  – *Explicit correction*: the teacher explicitly provides a correction.
  – *Recast*: the teacher implicitly provides a correction by reformulating (part of) the student's utterance, replacing the error by a correct form.
    – *Isolated recast*: the teacher's reformulation contains no additional information.

3. We coded as mixed occurrences that were related simultaneously to at least two of the following: grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation.

  - *Embedded recast*: the teacher provides additional information to the recast by embedding the reformulation into a longer statement or question.

(ii) The teacher *prompts* the student to correct his/her error (by means of metalinguistic cues, elicitation, repetition, clarification request).

Results are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. *Types of corrective feedback*

	%	n
Explicit correction	5	10
Recast	95	174
– isolated recast	72.5	133
– embedded recast	22.5	41
Prompt	0	0
Total	100	184

We did not find any instance of prompts in our data. Corrective feedback typically consists of recasts (95%), and rarely of explicit corrections (5 %). By contrast to prompts, recasts allow the teacher to minimize the interruption that may be created by the feedback. Possibly, therefore, our results indicate a strong orientation, on the part of the teacher, towards maintaining the flow of the communicative interaction while still being concerned with linguistic form. Recasts have been found to be highly frequent in the second language classroom also by Lyster and Ranta (1997) and Panova and Lyster (2002), although the distribution is usually not as extreme as it is in our data (in both studies, recasts make up 55 % of all corrective feedbacks, while explicit corrections range from 2 % to 7 %). The proportion of isolated versus embedded recasts in our data is congruent with Lyster's (1998) findings. The qualitative analysis (Section 5.1 in particular) will show that embedded recasts, in which the teacher embeds the recast for instance within an acknowledgement, a ratification or an evaluation,[4] are particularly tricky when it comes to analyzing what the recast actually accomplishes and how it is interpreted by the student(s) (e.g., as a correction, an evaluation or an acknowledgement).

4. In our data, such interactional moves typically comprise, before or after the reformulation, one or several of the following acknowledgement tokens: *ah* ('oh'), *ouais* ('yeah'), *d'accord*, *voilà* (both meaning 'right', 'that's it' or 'okay'), *exact*, *tout à fait* (both meaning 'exactly'), *c'est ça* ('that's it').

A note on explicitness. The degree of explicitness of a correction is a scalar rather than a categorical issue. In our data, in 9 of the 10 instances that we coded as explicit corrections the teacher introduces the correction by means of the expression *en français on dit/on dira*, 'in French we say/we'll say' and in one case by means of *non* 'no'. However, we also found a number of occurrences where the corrective nature of the teacher's turn was not less highlighted, but which, according to the FoF coding criteria, required coding as recast rather than as explicit correction. These cases consist of recasts that are followed by a metalinguistic comment (3 % of all corrective feedbacks; n = 5) or are accompanied by a translation into the L1 (7 % of all corrective feedbacks; n = 13). These are illustrated in Excerpts 3 and 4 respectively.

(3) CODI DK-B-1

```
   01 Jud:  c'est pas possible que (0.7) tous les: (0.7)
            it is not possible that      all  the
   02       personnes sont (1.8) °iiverstande° (1.2)
            people    AUX.IND    +agree ((German))+
   03       [euh]
-> 04 T:    [alors] que toutes les personnes soient  euh  subjonctif,
            so     that all   the people    AUX.SBJ      subjunctive
```

(4) CODI DK-A-4

```
   01 Cat:  peut-être les (1.2) les taxes?
            perhaps   the       the taxes
-> 02 T:    les ta- les impôts, (0.1) [steuer,]
            the ta- the income tax    +income tax ((German))+
```

It may be argued that recasts followed by metalinguistic comments as well as recasts preceded or followed by translations carry a certain degree of explicitness as regards the correction they entail. As Lyster notes: "explicitness is hard to grasp: how do you know that something you believe is explicit is explicit for the participants?" (LLRT; see also Lyster and Sato 2010: 296). The qualitative analysis presented in Section 5 will show that, in addition to metalinguistic comments and translations, paralinguistic means such as accentuation, as well as gesture, gaze and body orientation may also highlight the corrective character of a recast and are oriented to as such by co-participants. This is an important analytic issue. It implies that, for the researcher to identify the degree of explicitness of a corrective feedback and its recognition as doing a correction by the student(s), close attention to both the verbal and non-verbal conduct of the participants and the sequential unfolding of talk is needed.

Students' reactions to corrective feedback. Recall that we found no prompts in our data. As explicit corrections are rare (5 %, see Table 1 above) and as we did not find notable differences between the students' reactions to explicit corrections and to recasts respectively, we have blended the students' reactions to both types of corrective feedback in Table 2.

Table 2. *Students' reactions to corrective feedback (explicit correction and recast, no prompts)*

		%	n
Observable reaction	Total	65	119
	Acknowledgement (by means of *oui* 'yes', *ouais* 'yeah', *ah* 'oh')	22	40
	Incorporation[a]	20	37
	Repetition (i.e., isolated repetition)	14	26
	Repetition/incorporation + acknowledgement	8	14
	Disagreement[b]	1	2
No observable reaction	Total	35	65
Total		100	184

a Lyster and Ranta call *incorporation* students' repetitions of the teacher's corrected form that are incorporated into longer utterances; they call *repetition* the isolated repetition of the teacher's words.

b This category does not appear in Lyster and Ranta. We found 2 cases in our data where the student who produced the form corrected by the teacher overtly disagreed with the correction.

Table 2 shows that students display a reaction to the teacher's corrective feedback in nearly two thirds of the cases (65 %). This observation contrasts with earlier work that documented a predominance of no observable reaction ("no uptake" in Lyster and Ranta 1997) after teacher-provided corrections (adding the results for recasts and explicit corrections, no reaction was found in 67 % of the cases in Lyster and Ranta 1997, and in 60 % of the cases in Panova and Lyster 2002). In our data, repetition of the correction (either isolated or incorporated) is the most frequent type of reaction, followed by acknowledgement and by a combination of repetition/incorporation and acknowledgement. Most interestingly, we found similar proportions of absence of students' reaction following recasts (35 %; n = 61) as we found following explicit corrections (40 %; n = 4) (not shown in Table 2; due to the low number of explicit corrections in the data, the results for the latter are merely indicative). In line with the abovementioned remarks on explicitness, this suggests that students' orientation to corrective feedback is not a priori determined by the verbally explicit nature of the feedback.

In sum. Overall, our findings are in many regards in line with earlier findings by Lyster and colleagues on corrective feedback in the L2 classroom. Our collection shows two distinctive features, though: (i) corrective feedback exclusively consists of teacher-provided corrections (recasts or explicit corrections;

no prompts); (ii) corrective feedback is most often followed by a student's reaction. We have interpreted the former as possibly indicating an overall strong orientation, on the part of the teacher, towards maintaining the flow of the communicative interaction while still working on formal correctness. The latter, by contrast, suggests an overall strong orientation on the part of the students towards linguistic form.

The first analytic step, as presented in this section, provides a general picture of corrective feedback in the data and opens a window onto the communicative culture of the classrooms under investigation. Yet, it leaves several key issues unanswered: How is focus on form interactionally established as *joint* focus on form? In how far does teacher-initiated focus fall onto the local preoccupations of the students? To what extent can a teacher-provided correct form be unambiguously analyzed as doing the job of correcting a student, rather than some other interactionally relevant job (such as ratifying a student's answer)? In short, what is missing is an account of how participants display to each other what their attention focus is, and in how far they come to accomplish a joint attention focus. In the remainder of this paper, we provide a detailed account of attention focus as an interactionally displayed and organized process.

5. Other-correction and the on-line deployment of talk: What focus? Whose focus?

In this section we submit selected data excerpts to qualitative sequential analysis undertaken within the framework of CA. We show to what extent the attribution of attention focus to a precise participant and the identification of the precise object that is being focused on represent challenging analytic tasks: What is being focused on? Whose attention focus is it? We demonstrate that close analysis of the multimodal and sequential unfolding of talk is necessary to answer these central questions. Roughly a fourth of the cases occurring in our data do not allow unambiguous interpretations of what is being focused on in sequences comprising an other-correction, by the teacher, of a form used by a student in the preceding turn. In many cases it is also far from evident that the teacher's focus on form leads to a joint focus on form.

5.1. *Ambiguous focus or no focus on form*

Attention focus, of course, does not need to be unique, i.e., centered on a single object, but may relate to several things at once (cf. Long and Robinson 1998: 23; Lyster 1998: 59). The same is true for action accomplishment. As Schegloff puts it, "the doing of *this* action can itself become the vehicle for another" (Schegloff 1996: 199, Schegloff's emphasis). Consequently, what may

appear as a correction on etic grounds (i.e., a target-language-like form produced by the teacher substituting a non-target-language-like form produced by a student) may not be designed in the first place for doing correction, and/or may not be oriented to as such by the student. This raises critical questions particularly with regard to the analytic category "recast" (i.e., implicit correction). In the case of such implicit corrections (but see Section 4 above on explicit vs. implicit), the very identification of the object of attention focus may represent an analytic challenge. In our data, such ambiguous focuses occur with corrections that are embedded either within displays of understanding or within evaluations of a student's preceding turn. In these cases, recasts are typically preceded and/or followed by tokens such as *ah* 'oh', *oui* 'yes', *d'accord* 'okay', *c'est ça* 'that's it'. This is the case for 22.5 % of the corrective feedbacks found in the data (n=41; see Table 1). In this section, we show that teachers' turns comprising embedded recasts, rather than being typically treated by the students as focusing on form, are often oriented to as accomplishing some other action.

5.1.1. *Recasts embedded in displays of understanding.* Excerpt 5 illustrates a recast that is embedded in a display of understanding:

(5) CODI DK-A-1

```
   01 Jav:  *nous avons (0.7) euh visitê: (1.3) euh (1.4) euh: (0.6)
            we   AUX             visited
      %jav  *gazes into space in front of him
   02       des amis    de mon: collègue, (0.4) qui: (1.6) euh (1.0)
            DET friends of my   colleague       who
   03 T:    donc de ton  ami    (ouais).
            so   of your friend  yeah
   04       (1.0)
   05 Jav:  oui qui: qui est (0.4) qui allait (0.7) chez les russes, (1.1)
            yes who  who is        who used to go   to   the Russians
   06       euh (1.8) depuis: (1.2) *°(was ist seit)°
                      for           + what  is  'for' ((German))+
      %jav                          *turns to peer on his right-hand-side
   07 Die:  (depuis)
            for
   08 T:    depuis
            for
   09 Jav:  *depuis:: *deux années.
            for       two  years
      %jav  *gazes in front of him
      %jav            *gazes at teacher
   10       (0.9)
-> 11 T:    ah d'accord un ami   qui vit       en: russie *[de]puis deux ans.
            oh okay     a friend who has lived in  Russia   for     two  years
-> 12 Jav:                                                 *[oui.]
                                                             yes
      %jav                                                 *nods
-> 13 Jav:  *oui.
            yes
      %jav  *nods
   14       (0.9)
```

```
15 T:    ah d'accord, (0.8) oké.
         oh okay            okay
```

Javier here recounts his holidays (l.1–9). His numerous hesitations (pauses, hesitation tokens, repetitions), along with his call for help in his L1 (l.6), suggest that he encounters difficulties wording out what he is about to say. His narrative comes to a close at line 9, and the end of his turn is clearly marked by a falling intonation as well as syntactic and pragmatic completeness (a so-called "complex transition relevance point", Ford et al. 1996). This point coincides with a notable shift of Javier's gaze towards the teacher. Although it may be that the reorientation of his gaze indexes that Javier is asking for a confirmation of the lexical items that he is in the course of producing (*deux années* 'two years'; see the sound stretch on *depuis*, which indicates possible hesitation), it is more likely that this shift of gaze indexes Javier's orienting to an upcoming third-turn evaluation on the part of the teacher (see the falling intonation on *années*, l.9, clearly marking the end of his turn). At this point, the teacher reformulates part of Javier's utterance, thereby replacing several non-target-language-like forms by target-language-like forms (*mon collègue* → *un ami*, which had already been replaced in line 3, *qui allait* → *qui vit*, *chez les Russes* → *en Russie*, *deux années* → *deux ans*).[5]

It is noteworthy that the teacher (l.11) intervenes only once the student has clearly displayed the end of his turn (l.9), and after providing the opportunity for the student to continue speaking (see the 0.9s pause at line 10). More importantly, the teacher's turn starts off with a display of understanding (*ah d'accord*, 'oh okay', l.11), including the token *ah* ('oh' in English), which indexes a change in the speaker's state of knowledge (Heritage 1984). These sequential and linguistic properties of the teacher's turn suggest that the teacher is not simply offering linguistic feedback. Rather, he (i) displays his understanding of what the student just said, (ii) orients to the student's preceding turn as having provided some new information and (ii) submits his own understanding of that turn to the student for confirmation.

The student himself aligns with the teacher's course of action by ratifying the teacher's displayed understanding (see the acknowledgement tokens l.12–13, accompanied by a nodding). This interpretation is corroborated by the further course of the interaction: the student's two *oui* are followed by a renewed dis-

5. The word *collègue* in French refers to a professional acquaintance and cannot be used like the German 'Kollege' for referring to a classmate or a friend; both *années* and *ans* mean 'years', but in the context of the student's utterance, *ans* is the appropriate target-language-like form since it is used to refer to a delimited segment in time rather than to its ongoing progression (for which *années* would typically be used); *allait* is formally correct, but not appropriate in this context, as *depuis* 'since' calls for a static verb like *vivre* 'to live'; this last item also triggers the change from *chez les russes* 'to the Russians' to *en Russie* 'in Russia'.

play of understanding on the part of the teacher (*ah d'accord*, 'oh okay', l.15), in which he prolongs joint orientation toward assuring mutual understanding, followed by the closing of the sequence.

Now, what exactly does this sequential deployment of the episode tell us about participants' attention focus on form? For one thing, the teacher's recast is ambiguous. It may be seen as accomplishing both the action of correcting a student's error and the action of displaying his understanding, and possibly calling for a confirmation of that understanding. But it may also be exempt of any corrective purpose or effect, merely representing a display of understanding. In other words, there is no evidence in the data that would allow us to unambiguously determine whether the teacher's words are designed to be corrective, i.e., whether they reflect the teacher's orientation toward form, or whether his target-language-like forms are the natural correlates of a "native" speaker's rewording of an L2 speaker's turn for the sake e.g., of clarity. For another thing, and more importantly, there is clearly no observable *joint* focus on form: the student ratifies the teacher's preceding display of understanding without showing any observable orientation towards the forms that have been corrected by the teacher. In sum: what formally appears as a corrective feedback of the type recast is not necessarily designed by the speaker or oriented to by co-participants as doing the work of correcting a linguistic form. Recasts can be used for accomplishing a range of locally relevant interactional jobs other than providing corrective feedback – and they are accordingly not necessarily treated by participants as doing correction. This is a recurrent feature of recasts that are embedded in displays of understanding and clarification requests. As we will see in the next Section (5.1.2), this is also the case for recasts that are part of next-turn evaluations.

5.1.2. *Recasts embedded in third turn evaluations.* While excerpt 5 illustrates recasts that are embedded in displays of understanding, excerpt 6 raises similar issues as regards recasts that are embedded in evaluations. While playing a French game called "charade", the participants attempt to formulate a riddle around the sound /ba/, which may refer to either one of two French words: *bas* 'stocking'; *bas* 'low'.

(6) CODI DK-B-5

```
01 T:   pour euh trouver le mot    /ba/.
        to       find    the word  /ba/
02      (0.7)
03 T:   au lieu de dire  euh: (0.5)
        instead of saying
04      mon premier  se porte sur les jambes des femmes,
        'my first'   is worn  on  the legs   of  women
05      qu'est-ce qu'on aurait pu dire?
        what could we have said
06      (3.7)
```

```
   07       euh mélissa.
                Melissa
   08 Mel:  euh le  contraire du     haut?
                the opposite  of.DET high
-> 09 T:    le  contraire de haut par exemple exact, (1.1)
            the opposite  of high for example exactly
   10       ce   serait   la même  orthographe, (1.7)
            that would be the same spelling
   11       °euh:::° (1.5) °ouais°.
                           yeah
   12       (2.4)
   13       et  pour /lõ/[6]::: °je pense pas   qu'   y  a   autre chose.°
            and for  /lõ/      I  don't think that there is anything else
```

This excerpt shows an IRE sequence typical of classroom interaction: the teacher asks a question (l.3–5), a student provides a candidate answer (*le contraire du haut?*, 'the opposite of the high', l.8, here with rising, try-marked intonation) and, in a third turn, the teacher evaluates the student's answer (l.9–10), before initiating a next question-answer sequence (l.13). The teacher's evaluative turn replaces the [preposition + determiner] combination *du* used by the student (l.8; *du* amalgamates the preposition *de* and the masculine determiner *le*) by the preposition *de* (l.9), without further highlighting this alternative wording. Formally, the teacher's turn contains an embedded recast. On a praxeological level, however, the teacher's utterance once again accomplishes at least two actions: it offers an evaluation of the student's preceding turn at talk and it provides a correction of the student's non-target-language-like form. It is noteworthy, though, that the student herself seems to treat the teacher's turn as a positive evaluation rather than as a corrective feedback, as indicated by the absence of a reaction on her part. This observation is in line with earlier studies on NS-NNS institutional interactions (Kurhila 2001) and NS-NS conversations (Schegloff 1997), which found that "third turns" comprising corrections are not oriented to by the participants as *doing* correction.

Excerpt 7 provides a further case in point. Here, the class is talking about immigrants who get expelled from their country of residence. The excerpt illustrates that even so-called isolated recasts – and recasts in which the corrected form is highlighted, e.g., by accentuation – are not necessarily heard by students as correcting a linguistic form:

(7) CODI DK-B-4

```
   01 Fab:  ou:ais on a   eu (0.3) un s: un cas  comme ça (0.2)
            yeah   we AUX had      a     a  case like  that
   02       à: genêve.
            in Geneva
   03       (1.4)
   04 Fab:  je crois.
            I  believe
```

6. The teacher here offers a next word for which a riddle has to be created.

```
   05 Fab:  et: (0.4) ouais on:  lui     a   expulsé.
            and       yeah  one  him.DAT AUX expelled
                     'yeah they expelled +him ((dative))+'
   06       (1.0)
-> 07 T:    on     l'     a  expulsé.
            one  him.ACC AUX expelled
            'they expelled +him ((accusative))+'
-> 08       ouais.=
            yeah
-> 09 Fab:  =ouais, (0.7) je crois.
            yeah          I  believe
   10       (2.1)
   11 T:    alors euh: on va   demander à    mélissa euh (0.4)
            so         we will ask      PREP Melissa
```

The teacher replaces Fabio's indirect object pronoun (*on lui a expulsé*, l.5) by a direct object pronoun (*on l'a expulsé*, l.7) and then adds a ratifying *ouais*, 'yeah' (l.8). This provides the third part of an IRE sequence by means of which the teacher possibly displays not only his understanding but also his acceptance of what precedes. Contrary to what we observed in excerpts 5 and 6, however, the teacher here clearly highlights the target-language-like form by means of accentuation[7] (l.7), which suggests that the turn is designed as a correction and that the teacher *is* actually focusing on a formal issue, along with displaying acceptance of the contents of the student's turn. By contrast, the student's reaction (l.9) does not provide evidence for any focus on form. Fabio produces an agreement token that is followed by an incrementally added hedge (*je crois*, 'I believe', l.9). Rather than ratifying the teacher-provided target-language-like form, Fabio here ratifies the teacher's interpretation of his own preceding words: he reconfirms his belief, slightly hedging it, that the person he talks about has been expelled.

Excerpt 7 then shows a case where attention focus on form on the part of the teacher does not lead to joint attention focus. The excerpt strengthens the point made so far according to which a third turn that can formally (from an etic perspective) be read as comprising an implicit correction (i.e. a recast), is regularly not oriented to as such by the co-participant(s) – and this may be the case even when the correction is highlighted by accentuation. The preceding observations suggest that a precise understanding of the socio-cognitive orientation of participants during so-called focus-on-form episodes requires a minute analysis of the sequencing of actions and the multimodal resources put to work by participants.

5.1.3. *On the relevance of action organization and sequential organization for analyzing recasts, and more generally correction.* In the preceding sections, we have shown that the analytic category "recast", and in particular "em-

7. The accentuation is on the auxiliary *a* and not on the proform *l'*, the latter being a consonant.

bedded recast", raises some critical issues as to whose focus is at stake (the teacher's or a joint focus), and whether attention focus is at all directed to form.

Embedded recasts allow the teacher to provide corrections without interrupting the flow of the activity, but they also tend to relegate the correction to a position of secondary importance compared, e.g., to the display of understanding or the evaluation. Even isolated recasts (see ex. 7) may imply ambiguous focus, or may be interpreted by participants as doing something different than focusing on form. Recasts thus share features with non-corrective repetitions, which may make them hard for the students to recognize as corrections. This is a point that has been relevantly made in previous research on focus on form (see Panova and Lyster 2002 and Lyster and Mori 2006 for an overview of several studies arguing that recasts are hard to identify as corrections). Lyster and Mori (2006) go as far as to state that "recasts can serve [. . .] to keep the student's attention focused on content" (Lyster and Mori 2006: 290). If this is the case, then the relation between recasts and focus on form is anything but unambiguous. This all boils down to the fact that while (embedded) recasts are in certain cases designed in the first place to provide correction, they are in other cases primarily designed to accomplish some action of which the correction is a mere epiphenomenon. Also, (embedded) recasts may be ambiguous or indeterminate as to what exactly they focus on, and this in turn may inhibit the convergence of participants' attention to from. While indeterminacy may be "external to the data" (e.g., due to a lack of context available to the researcher), in the cases found in our data the ambiguity is rather "internal to the data" (Schegloff 1997): what their co-participants focus on may be ambiguous for the participants themselves. In the data, many embedded recasts are not unambiguously designed to implement a correction; and many do not trigger the student's focus on form, and hence do not lead to a *joint* focus on form.

Similar cases have been described in the CA literature as *embedded corrections* (Jefferson 1987; Kurhila 2001) or *repair en passant* (Kasper 1985; Kasper and Kim 2007). According to Schegloff et al. (2002), such cases cannot be properly subsumed under the label of *repair*, since repair is not what is being primarily done in interaction: "undertakings to deal with trouble en passant, without stopping the ongoing activity to do so, are empirically different in various respects (cf. Jefferson 1987), and are *distinct from repair organization*" (Schegloff et al. 2002: 7, italics are ours). And Jefferson (1987: 95) notes: "correction occurs, but is not what is being done, interactionally". In other words: there is no evidence that in corrections that are "camouflaged" (Kurhila 2001: 1100) by another activity, there is *for the participants* a focus on form. Rather, there regularly appears to be no empirically observable joint focus on form: the students' reactions (or absence of these, as in excerpt 6) show that they do not observably orient to the corrections entailed in the

teacher's turn, but orient to the action in which the corrections are embedded. Several of the quoted excerpts also suggest that the replacement, by the teacher, of a non-target-language-like form by a target-language-like form, such as it is found in recasts, may be a simple epiphenomenon of repetitions, by a more competent L2 speaker, that does the job of confirming understanding or evaluating a preceding turn at talk, rather than being designed as a correction. This highlights the importance of action organization for understanding what speakers accomplish by means of a turn containing a more target-language-like form than a preceding turn, and for understanding how that turn is oriented to by co-participants. What a recast is doing for the participants centrally hinges on its sequential position, i.e. where it is located in the turn-by-turn organization of courses of actions. This has been highlighted by the particularly sensitive nature of third turns as regards their recognizability as doing correction, and suggests that an analysis taking into account the praxeological and sequential dimension of talk-in-interaction may provide important grounds for a better understanding of the relation between participants' orientation to form and learning.

The preceding observations may be understood as putting into question the relevance of the formal category 'recast' as an *a priori* type of corrective feedback. They call for a case-by-case analysis of the interactional import of recasts, based on the sequential organization of actions and the multiples resources (language, gaze, posture, etc.) participants put to use for coordinating the complex architecture of talk-in-interaction.

5.2. *Divergent attention focuses*

The excerpts discussed so far show instances where the teacher's and the student's orientations cannot be unambiguously analyzed as focusing on form. In this section, we discuss a different case, namely the observable discrepancy between the teacher's and the student's attention focuses. Excerpt 8 provides a first illustration.

(8) CODI DK-B-1

```
   01 Jud:  c'est normal, (0.4)
            it is normal
   02       oui- euh (0.2) parce que (1.0) quand on (0.6) fait  un   loi,
            yes            because         when  one      makes a.M  law
   03       (0.9)
-> 04 T:    u- une loi=
            a- a.F law
   05 Jud:  =euhm:: (0.3) c'est pas possible que (0.7) tous les: (0.7)
                          it is not possible that      all  the
-> 06       personnes sont    (1.8) °iiverstande°, (1.2)
            people    AUX.IND        +agree ((German))+
   07       [euh]
```

```
-> 08 T:    [alors] que  toutes les personnes soient   euh subjonctif,
             so     that all    the people    AUX.SBJ      subjunctive
   09      (1.2)
   10 Jud:  euh=
   11 Mau:  =°(x)° °d'accord°
                    agree
-> 12 Jud:  sont     d'accord (0.4) avec le    loi.
            AUX.IND  agree          with the.M law
   13       (0.5)
   14 Jud:  [°(x)°]
   15 T:    [mhm] (0.5) ouais y a       forcément   des: .hh
                        yeah  there are necessarily DET
   16 T:    des gens   qui sont pas d'accord?
            DET people who do not agree
```

The teacher provides two corrections in this excerpt (l.4 and l.8). Both suggest that the teacher focuses on specific linguistic forms. This is evidenced in the first case by the isolated nature of the recast combined with its sequential placement immediately following the target form *un loi*, at a point where Judith's turn is not complete syntactically, pragmatically and prosodically. It is evidenced in the second case by the accentuation on the corrected form and the subsequent metalinguistic comment (*subjonctif*, l.8). By contrast, there is no evidence that the student's attention focus converges with the teacher's. In the first case (l.5), Judith does not display any reaction to the correction, but passes over it pursuing her communicative project, and later re-uses *loi* ('law') with a masculine instead of a feminine determiner (l.12). After the second correction, Judith repeats the verb form using again the indicative mood instead of the subjunctive (*sont*, l.12).

While with the first recast there appears to be a divergence between the teacher's orientation to form and the student's orientation to pursuing her communicative project, in the second case the participants focus on different forms. In line 6, Judith displays a word search regarding the French word for 'to agree': She pauses for 1.8 seconds in mid-turn, and finally whispers *iiverstande* (meaning 'to agree') using her L1 to call for translation, possibly by a peer. This call is passed over by the teacher, who instead corrects the form of the verb *être* (l.8). The subsequent absence of Judith's reaction and the stalling of her talk (see the 1.2s pause at l.9 and her hesitant *euh* l.10) suggest that she treats her call for help as still awaiting an answer. Subsequently, another student provides a translation of *iiverstande* into French (l.11), which is then taken up by Judith at line 12, allowing her to complete the utterance she had started at line 1. In short, the linguistic item provided by her peer falls onto Judith's current preoccupations and is oriented to by her, while the correction provided by the teacher is passed over in silence, despite its relatively explicit character.

Such divergent focuses are by no means an exception in our data. A second example is provided in excerpt 9, where the student's and the teacher's attention

focuses coincide on a first form (l.8–11), but then diverge as to a second form that is corrected by the teacher (l.10–14).

(9) CODI DK-A-1

```
   01 And:  =oui *alors euh (1.1) tu:: °nous° (0.6)
            yes   so              you   us
      %and       *gazes at Diego
   02       tu  as (0.4) dit  à  nous (0.5) que: (0.3)
            you AUX      told to us         that
   03       les parents: sait  quelque chose mais:=
            the parents  knows something     but
   04 Die:  =oui
            yes
-> 05 T:    alors [tu  tu  nous  *tu:]
            so     you you us     you
   06 And:        [ils  ne  sait *rien]
                   they NEG knows nothing
      %and                     *gazes at teacher
-> 07 T:    tu  nous as  dit, (0.5) [*que  les parents savent,]
            you us   AUX told         that the parents know
            'you told us that the parents know'
-> 08 And:                           [*°tu  nous as  dit,°] (1.9)
                                        you us   AUX told
                                        'you told us'
      %and                           *gazes at Diego
-> 09 And:  mais: ils  ne  sait r- ils  dit (0.4) disent que (0.3)
            but   they NEG knows   they says      say    that
-> 10       qu'ils    ne s- sait  rien,
            that they NEG   knows nothing
            'that they don't knows anything'
   11 T:    qu'ils    ne  savent [rien.]
            that they NEG know    nothing
            'that they don't know anything'
   12 And:                     *[savent] *(1.3) rien    et (1.1)
                                 know           nothing and
                                 'know anything'
      %and                    *gazes down
      %and                              *nods smiling (still gazing down)
   13       je crois:: *ça::
            I  believe  that
      %and            *gazes at Diego
   14       (1.8)
   15 Die:  euh est-ce que j'ai  dit: que: (0.5) sa  fête  est aujourd'hui.
                did        I AUX say  that       her party is  today
```

In lines 1 to 3 André addresses a turn to his co-student Diego within a role-play (André is playing a mother talking to her daughter). André self-corrects his initial *tu nous* 'you us' (produced hesitantly and in low voice) by means of *tu as dit à nous* 'you told to us'; he is visibly preoccupied with both the morphological shape (*nous* vs. *à nous*) and the placement of the first person plural indirect pronominal object. After André ends his turn and Diego shortly responds to it (l.4), the teacher provides two corrections, one regarding the placement of *nous* (the same issue André was just orienting to), the other regarding the form of the verb *savoir* 'to know'.

The corrective nature of the teacher's first turn (l.5) is highlighted by the accentuation on *nous*. As André's gaze turns to him (l.6), the teacher repeats the

corrected segment, moving out of overlap (l.7). This change of gaze orientation suggests that André is at least momentarily orienting to the teacher. Also, André then repeats the teacher's wording (l.8), addressing it to his peer (his gaze returns to Diego) and thereby returning to the business of performing the role-play. In this case, the teacher's recast appears to coincide with the current preoccupations of the student, and hence culminates in joint attention focus on form.

By contrast, the teacher's second correction (replacing the student's third person singular *sait* by the plural *savent*, l.7) is not oriented to by André. In fact, it is overlapped by André's next turn (l.8), and is produced exactly at the moment when André turns his head toward his peer and re-engages into the role-play. The verbal and non-verbal conduct of the participants here indicates that there is divergent attention focus as well as divergent participation structure, the teacher orienting toward form and addressing André, and André orienting toward pursuing the role-play and addressing his peer. This interpretation is corroborated by the further course of the interaction, where the teacher's correction is passed over, and André's gaze does not return to the teacher. André also re-uses twice the singular verb form in combination with a plural subject (l.9 and 10). It is only after a further correction (again a recast) by the teacher (l.11), who this time accentuates the corrected form, that André repeats the teacher-provided plural form (l.12), and acknowledges it by nodding. His own accentuation on that very form is an additional indicator of his acknowledgment.

In sum then, we see André's attention focus shift subtly between linguistic form and other business. We also observe that an initial joint focus on a first formal element then splits up into two divergent orientations between teacher and student, both in terms of the issue that they are dealing with (form vs. accomplishing the role-play) and the participation structure they engage in (teacher – student; student – student).

In this section we have shown that the participants' attention focuses may diverge between two different forms (ex. 8), or between orientation to form and the pursuit of some other interactional business (ex. 9). The precise sequential location of the corrective feedback is decisive for what it actually does in the interaction and for how it is treated by the participants. It is this location that reveals whether and how the teacher's correction matches the observable current preoccupation of the student. Also, the quoted excerpts indicate that the process of establishing and shifting focuses is not a direct function of the degree of implicitness or explicitness of a correction. Divergent focuses may occur with corrections which are highlighted as such e.g., by means of accentuation, metalinguistic comments (ex. 8; see also ex. 7) or translations into the L1.

Here again, an emic perspective becomes centrally relevant (see also Section 4 above). Schegloff (1996) highlights the consequentiality of this issue in the following terms:

> We must recognize that, for understanding the production of the talk, the relevant senses of "explicit" and "implicit" or "inexplicit" are not those of the professional student of logic, semantics, pragmatics, or rhetoric, but those of the participants themselves; and the level of detail worth working out is given by the concerns of the participants' lives, not those of professional students. (Schegloff 1996: 191)

Schegloff here refers to the analyst's need to get at the participants' own sense of explicitness, such as it is contingently configured and made relevant for this particular moment of interaction: What to the researcher may appear as explicit or implicit may not necessarily be so for the participants.

Joint attention focus, then, is not a direct function of the degree of implicitness or explicitness of a correction. Rather, focus on form is an interactional process that is organized in a locally contingent way through the moment-by-moment deployment of talk. As a local accomplishment focus on form is an integral part of how participants achieve a shared understanding of their mutual actions and secure the grounds for the very possibility of maintaining their interaction.

6. Discussion and conclusion

In this paper we have set out to appraise to what extent the conceptual and analytical apparatus of CA can be fruitfully employed to enrich our understanding of how participants' attention focus is interactionally occasioned and organized across the temporal unfolding of talk. Qualitative analysis has raised critical questions as to what is being oriented to in so-called focus on form episodes and as to how far participants' orientations converge or diverge. Concentrating on episodes involving the type of corrective feedback that is by far the most frequent in our data (as well as in many L2 classrooms), namely recasts (i.e. implicit corrections), we have shown that these questions call for a detailed analysis of how participants, within courses of joint activities, orient to linguistic form on a moment-to-moment basis. While in this paper we have been concerned exclusively with participants' orientation to linguistic form, we believe that some of the empirical observations presented in what precedes are more generally relevant for research into the development of second language interactional competence (cf. Hall, Hellermann, Pekarek Doehler 2010).

Our findings depict participants' *focus on form as a joint accomplishment.* There is no straightforward relation between teachers' recasts and students' occasional shifts of attention toward form. Joint attention focus results from

participants' mutual adjustments in the course of the sequential deployment of talk. Participants' attention focuses shift rapidly between dealing with linguistic forms, with informational contents, with the organization of mutual actions, and with multiple and complex intersections between these. Attention focus, along with other cognitive processes related to learning, is a locally contingent process – a process that is shaped on-line, within the turn-by-turn organization of talk: it is configured within the procedural infrastructure of the interaction, and it is there that it is observable, accountable, i.e. available for empirical analysis (Kasper 2009; Pekarek Doehler 2010).

These empirically based observations appeal for a reconsideration of what we call focus on form and of how we account for it analytically. On the one hand, the findings indicate that apprehending sequences of interaction comprising correction exclusively in terms of participants' orientation to form leaves out a central part of the picture, failing to identify what other actions these sequences entail. Most often, participants' orientation to language form does not exist independently of the accomplishment of these actions and is contingent on how participants interpret them. We have shown that "third turns" are particularly delicate places for the recognizability of recasts as doing the work of correction. Even if such turns comprise normatively correct linguistic forms that 'replace' normatively incorrect forms occurring in a preceding turn, they may not be designed for doing correction. This is the case for instance for the third turn in IRE sequences, for teachers' displays of understanding or for comprehension checks which expand question-answer sequences. On the other hand, the findings show that teacher-provided corrective feedback cannot relevantly be understood as a mere reaction to a student's error. Rather, a key question is whether the correction is in some way solicited or triggered by the student or not, i.e. whether the correction is self- or other-initiated. This precise issue can provide important cues as to how a correction offered by the teacher relates to current preoccupations of the student. It is exactly in this regard that an emic perspective on the data becomes paramount for understanding the relation between social interaction and learning: it is a necessary requirement for assessing how correction (or: corrective feedback) falls within the current socio-cognitive preoccupations of the L2 speaker. Accordingly, a close description of the process of attention focus as it unfolds in real time represents an important step towards a better understanding of why some focus on form episodes result in better learning outcomes than others.

What is needed, then, is a detailed qualitative, multimodal investigation into *how* joint attention is established, negotiated and sustained between participants to social interaction, i.e. a praxeological analysis that is based on the sequential organization of actions and takes into account both the verbal and non-verbal resources (gaze, posture, gesture, etc.) by means of which partic-

ipants display to each other what their current undertakings are and to what features of their interaction they are orienting to.

A final point must be raised. While we insist on an emic perspective, we believe that our understanding of how social interaction contributes to the learning of a second language may significantly be enhanced by apprehending the phenomena under investigation at different levels of granularity: on the one hand, we need analytic procedures that are fine-grained enough to understand the details of human conduct such as it is identifiable in single instances of social interaction; on the other hand, we need procedures that allow for generalization, accounting for the cumulative effect of given types of human conduct on learning. CA-SLA and FoF research provide such complementary analytic tools. Beyond the epistemological divide that separate these two research traditions, the complexity of the empirical phenomena with which both are concerned compels us to ask whether these can be combined. How exactly this is possible is an open question at this point. In our understanding, however, fine-grained qualitative analysis needs to ground the necessary recalibration of some of the coding criteria used in FoF research. It is our hope that the conversation analytic work presented in this paper offers concrete suggestions for such a recalibration. In turn, while CA-SLA research provides relevant insights into the process of learning, it needs to be dealing more systematically with the recurrence and the cumulative effects of these processes in order to understand how they relate to learning outcomes. A relevant balance is thus to be found between the requirements of case-by-case micro-analysis, and the necessary simplification entailed by coding and quantification.

University of Neuchâtel
⟨virginie.fasel@unine.ch⟩
⟨simona.pekarek@unine.ch⟩

Appendix I: Transcription conventions

T:	indicates the speaker: teacher
And:	indicates the speaker: student's name
%and:	indicates a participant deploying non-verbal conduct
[ ]	overlap, and, if relevant, end of overlap
=	latching
(0.5)	measured pause, in seconds
coul-	cut-off
ce:	lengthening of preceding sound
chemin?	rising intonation
temps.	falling intonation

train,	level intonation
besoin	accentuation
NON	louder than surrounding talk
°ça fait tout°	softer than surrounding talk
.h	in-breath
h.	out-breath
⟩enfin⟨	faster than surrounding talk
⟨mais⟩	slower than surrounding talk
(a confu; est confu)	alternative hearings
((laughing))	transcriber's comment
+	start of the stretch of talk to which a transcriber's comment refers
/ba/	phonetic transcript in IPA
*	indicates of the beginning of a gesture or change of gaze orientation; the gesture or change of look is written in the line below the translation

Appendix II: Glosses

ACC	accusative
AUX	auxiliary
DAT	dative
DET	determiner
F	feminine
IND	indicative
M	masculine
NEG	negation
PREP	preposition
REFL	reflexive
SBJ	subjunctive

References

Brouwer, Catherine E. 2003. Word searches in NNS-NS interaction: opportunities for language learning? *The Modern Language Journal* 87(4). 534–545.

Brouwer, Catherine E., Rasmussen, Gitte & Wagner, Johannes. 2004. Embedded corrections in second language talk. In Rod Gardner & Johannes Wagner (eds.), *Second language conversations*, 75–92. London: Continuum.

Chaudron, Craig. 1988. *Second language classrooms. Research on teaching and learning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Doughty, Catherine & Long, Michael H. (eds.). 2003. *The handbook of second language acquisition*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Doughty, Catherine & Williams, Jessica (eds.). 1998. *Focus on form in classroom second language acquisition*. New York: Cambridge.

Ellis, Rod & Sheen, Younghee. 2006. Re-examining the role of recasts in L2 acquisition. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 28. 575–600.

Firth, Alan & Wagner, Johannes. 1997. On discourse, communication, and (some) fundamental concepts in SLA research. *The Modern Language Journal* 81(3). 285–300.

Ford, Cecilia, Fox, Barbara & Thompson, Sandra. 1996. Practices in the construction of turns: the 'TCU' revisited. *Pragmatics* 6(3). 427–454.

Hall, Joan Kelly. 2007a. Redressing the roles of correction and repair in research on second and foreign language learning. *The Modern Language Journal* 91(4). 511–526.

Hall, Joan Kelly. 2007b. The devil's in the details: A response to Seedhouse. *The Modern Language Journal* 91(4). 534–536.

Hauser, Eric. 2005. Coding 'corrective recasts': The maintenance of meaning and more fundamental problems. *Applied Linguistics* 26(3). 293–316.

Heritage, John. 1984. A change of state token and aspects of its sequential placement. In J. Maxwell Atkinson & John Heritage (eds.), *Structures of social action: Studies in conversation analysis*, 299–345. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

International Review of Applied Linguistics (IRAL) 47(3–4). 2009.

Jefferson, Gail. 1987. On exposed and embedded correction in conversation. In Graham Button & John R. E. Lee (eds.), *Talk and social organization*, 86–100. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Kasper, Gabriele. 1985. Repair in foreign language teaching. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 7(2). 200–215.

Kasper, Gabriele. 2004. Participant orientations in German conversation-for-learning. *The Modern Language Journal* 88(4). 551–567.

Kasper, Gabriele. 2009. Locating cognition in second language interaction and learning: Inside the skull or in public view? *International Review of Applied Linguistics* 47. 11–36.

Kasper, Gabriele & Kim, Younhee. 2007. Handling sequentially inapposite responses. In Zhu Hua, Paul Seedhouse, Li Wei & Vivian Cook (eds.), *Language learning and teaching as social inter-action*, 22–41. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Kurhila, Salla. 2001. Correction in talk between native and non-native speaker. *Journal of Pragmatics* 33. 1083–1110.

Language Learning Round Table (LLRT) on interaction and second language acquisition. 2010. *EUROSLA 20 conference*, University of Reggio Emilia, September 1, 2010.

Lier, Leo van. 1988. *The Classroom and the language learner*. London: Longman.

Loewen, Shawn. 2005. Incidental focus on form and second language learning. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 27. 361–386.

Long, Michael H. 1981. Input, interaction and second language acquisition. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 379. 259–78.

Long, Michael H. 1991. Focus on form: A design feature in language teaching methodology. In Kees de Bot, Ralph B. Ginsberg & Claire Kramsch (eds.), *Foreign language research in cross-cultural perspectives*, 39–52. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Long, Michael H. & Robinson, Peter. 1998. Focus on form: Theory, research, and practice. In Catherine Doughty & Jessica Williams (eds.), *Focus on form in classroom second language acquisition*, 15–41. New York: Cambridge.

Lyster, Roy. 1998. Recasts, repetition, and ambiguity in L2 classroom discourse. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 20. 51–81.

Lyster, Roy. 2004. Differential effects of prompts and recasts in form-focused instruction. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 26. 399–432.

Lyster, Roy & Mori, Hirohide. 2006. Interactional feedback and instructional counterbalance. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 28. 269–300.

Lyster, Roy & Ranta, Leila. 1997. Corrective feedback and learner uptake. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 19. 37–66.

Lyster, Roy & Saito, Kazuya. 2010. Oral feedback in classroom SLA. A meta-analysis. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 32. 265–302.

The Modern Language Journal (MLJ) 81(3). 1997.

The Modern Language Journal (MLJ) 91(s1). 2007.

Mackey, Alison (ed.). 2007. *Conversational interaction in second language acquisition: A collection of empirical studies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Panova, Iliana & Lyster, Roy. 2002. Patterns of corrective feedback and uptake in an adult ESL classroom. *TESOL Quarterly* 36–4. 573–595.

Pekarek Doehler, Simona. 2010. Conceptual changes and methodological challenges: On language and learning from a conversation analytic perspective on SLA. In Paul Seedhouse, Steve Walsh & Chris Jenks (eds.), *Conceptualising 'learning' in applied linguistics,* 105–127. Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.

Pekarek Doehler, Simona & Ziegler, Gudrun. 2007. Doing language, doing science and the sequential organization of the immersion classroom. In Zhu Hua, Paul Seedhouse, Li Wei & Vivian Cook (eds.), *Language learning and teaching as social inter-action*, 72–86. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Sacks, Harvey. 1992. *Lectures on conversation*. Cambridge: Blackwell.

Schegloff, Emanuel A. 1992. Repait after next turn: The last structurally provided defense of intersubjectivity in conversation. *The American Journal of Sociology* 97(5). 1295–1345.

Schegloff, Emanuel A. 1993. Reflections on quantification in the study of conversation. *Research on Language and Social Interaction*, 26(1). 99–128.

Schegloff, Emanuel A. 1996. Confirming allusions: Toward an empirical account of action. *American Journal of Sociology* 102(1). 161–216.

Schegloff, Emanuel A. 1997. Practices and actions: Boundary cases of other-initiated repair. *Discourse Processes* 23(3). 499–545.

Schegloff, Emanuel A., Jefferson, Gail & Sacks, Harvey. 1977. The preference for self-correction in the organization of repair in conversation. *Language* 53(2). 361–382.

Schegloff, Emanuel A., Koshik, Irene, Jacoby, Sally & Olsher, David. 2002. Conversation analysis and applied linguistics. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* 22(3). 3–31.

Seedhouse, Paul. 2004. *The interactional architecture of the language classroom: A conversation analytic perspective*. Malden: Blackwell.

Seedhouse, Paul. 2007. On ethnomethodological CA and 'linguistic CA': A reply to Hall. *The Modern Language Journal* 91. 527–533.

Wagner, Johannes. 1998. On doing being a guinea pig – A response to Seedhouse. *Journal of Pragmatics* 30. 103–113.