

Oral production A2+ in Italian as foreign language: autonomy and repetition tasks

Wypowiedzi ustne na poziomie A2+ w języku włoskim jako obcym
– autonomia oraz powtarzanie zadań

Alberto REGAGLILO¹

Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University (Poland)

Abstract

The aim of this study is to present the oral production in Italian as foreign language (A2+) in the higher education level as a result of some repetition task activities with repetition questions and the autonomy study of the students for the oral preparation. For this research it has been analysed how students answer to the same question in 1:1 conversation after four weeks. The corpus comprises a total of 20 oral answers (10 in the first conversation and 10 in the second) and has been transcribed using the Jefferson method. Through the research it should be highlighted that comparing the total of the first answers with the second, the number of words used were major in the second answers as well as the length of the answer. Furthermore, in the second conversation, the level of autocorrection was higher. In addition, no remarkable differences were found by the use of micro and long pauses, interjectional, cut of words or phrases.

Keywords: Italian, Second Language, Task repetition, autonomous study

Streszczenie

Celem niniejszego opracowania jest ukazanie tworzenia wypowiedzi ustnych w języku włoskim jako języku obcym (A2+) na poziomie szkolnictwa wyższego w świetle zastosowanych powtórzeń zadań oraz samodzielnej nauki studentów w ramach przygotowania ustnego. Na potrzeby badania przeanalizowano sposób, w jaki uczący się odpowiadają na to samo pytanie w rozmowie 1:1 po upływie czterech tygodni. Korpus obejmuje łącznie 20 odpowiedzi ustnych (10 w ramach pierwszej i 10 w ramach drugiej rozmowy) a transkrypcja została przeprowadzona z zastosowaniem metody Jeffersona. Przeprowadzone badanie zestawia ogół pierwszych i drugich odpowiedzi i pozwala stwierdzić, iż liczba użytych słów oraz długość wypowiedzi są znacząco większe w drugim przypadku. Podczas drugiej rozmowy stwierdzono także wyższy poziom autokorekty. Ponadto nie zaobserwowano znaczących różnic w stosowaniu mikro i długich pauz, wykrzyknień, cięć słów lub fraz.

Słowa kluczowe: język włoski, drugi język, powtarzanie zadań, autonomiczne uczenie się

¹  Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw, Faculty of Humanities, Poland

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5766-0064>

 a.regagliolo@uksw.edu.pl

1. Introduction

In the three years of the degree course, philosophy students must acquire a number of language skills and abilities, in particular skills that are part of the CEFR – Common European Framework of Reference for Language Knowledge (CEFR) evaluation system. In addition, the student also takes on other courses, including literature, history, philosophy, among others. The study of one or more languages, accompanied by the respective literature, remains, however, the central pillar of a foreign philology course, which is ultimately aimed at providing specific and practical courses that allow students to achieve an advanced level, usually B2 or C1.

The acquisition of a foreign language, a language not spoken in the country where it is taught/learned, is fed by all the possibilities that the degree course offers and the various opportunities that the city or country has to facilitate such acquisition. For the teaching of foreign languages – and for this study reference will be made to the Italian language – the teacher knows in advance that the time and space they have available during the university lesson will never be sufficient, but will have to be anchored, above all, to the autonomous work of the individual student, who will have the task of integrating and studying on their own². It is nothing to do with the level of effort invested by the teacher. In actual fact, it is a question of recognizing a limit, or rather of recognizing both, so that each student is aware that the teacher's efforts will never be sufficient without their own personal effort. Our reflection starts precisely from this: the university student is by definition a student who has developed a certain degree of maturity and knowledge, which is useful both in terms of working independently and in collaboration with others.

The practical Italian language courses in a philology course are normally divided by skill. Oral production is one of them. Being able to communicate,

² There are some centres, such as the University of Alicante, the University of Salerno, Suor Ursola Benicansa that through the online project Teletándem-Corinei (Chiapello et al., 2015, 2016) organize oral activity outside the normal university lessons. By doing so, a Spanish student studying Italian and an Italian student studying Spanish communicate via Skype. The conversations are recorded and then transcribed by the students themselves. They carry out this activity two or three times during the semester and each time they communicate approximately 15 minutes in their mother tongue and 15 minutes in the foreign language. The conversation activity, via this online collaboration, is for all purposes part of the training plan of the Italian as a foreign language course of the University of Alicante and is mandatory for all students.

understand and be understood is the basis of a foreign language course. Unfortunately, little time is devoted to oral production, in fact, normally in Poland students have approximately 1.5 h per week of conversation and listening. It means, in essence, that the student comes into contact with spoken Italian for a relatively short period of time, with their own production, conversation and communication in a foreign language. It should be noted, however, that the hour and a half is not aimed at a single student. Normally, in fact, conversation and listening classes easily reach a number of 20 students per group. From this it is understood how this single weekly meeting must be calculated and planned in the best possible way, structured to the very last element. For many students, contact with the language ends here. Few, in fact, have contacts with native Italians, and to our surprise teachers, many even in the third year have never been to Italy or encountered experiences with Italians.

2. Objectives

This project aims to study the repetition task within the conversation course to understand whether, through the use of repetition questions, the student produces a broader and more detailed narrative.

In this regard, given the particular position of the conversation course within the Italian philology course, a variable that cannot be defined, but which is of primary importance, is autonomous effort, which for obvious reasons cannot be calculated or quantified. Therefore, although it is identified as a fundamental element for the improvement of the linguistic level, it will not be calculated, however some reflections will be made on the output – if there is an improvement between one task and another.

The aim is to reflect on the output of the student of the Italian philology course in the oral activities proposed by the teacher, thanks also to their level of autonomy in study and research.

3. Literature review

For this study, reference is made first of all to the theoretical and methodological part for learning and autonomous study, where the student broaches an initial study on the topic of conversation and seeks information to expand their argumentative background. In this regard, it is important to emphasize that several research projects encourage the provision of resources for autonomous study and learning outside and inside the classroom (Benson,

2013; Little, 1997). According to Littlewood, an autonomous learner (1996, p. 428) is a person who “an independent capacity to make and carry out the choices which govern his or her actions”. Research and interest in knowledge become essential for autonomous learning (Breen & Mann, 1997) and independent learning is particularly important in language acquisition (Holec, 1981³; Lamb, 2004) as well as the various related elements, such as vocabulary (Almusharraf, 2020). Autonomous effort is also closely associated with motivation. Implicit motivation, as summarized by Dev (1997, p. 13) is based on three essential points: “(a) participation in an activity purely out of curiosity, that is, from a need to know more about something; b) the desire to engage in an activity purely for the sake of participating in and completing a task; and c) the desire to contribute”. In addition, it is useful to consider the Expectancy-Value Theory that describes motivation as “influenced by the relative value of a task along with the likelihood of success in completing that task” (Wery & Thomson, 2013, p. 103). To put it simply, motivation and success are influenced by self-perception of what the student has to do; and self-efficacy, which means confidence in a student's ability to perform specific tasks. These two factors are inevitably influenced by previous experiences and emotional states. However, the role of the teacher does not play a secondary role in terms of motivation. According to Girmus, motivating teachers created a positive, optimistic and compassionate classroom where the emphasis is on learning. The lessons are well planned, meaningful, interesting, and foster the autonomy and cooperation of students (Girmus, 2011, p. 6). It should always be noted that differences in learning among students are sometimes due to social, cultural, cognitive, and socio-economic disparities (Verschaffel & De Corte, 1998). According to recent studies, teachers with motivated and engaging classes have different characteristics and behaviours than teachers whose students' motivation and engagement are low (Girmus, 2011). Teachers have, therefore, the task of being “facilitators and guides rather than directors and moulders of (...) learning” (Santrock, 2006, p. 315, cited in Lazăr, 2013, p. 461).

Improving language skills, according to Samuda and Bygate (2008, p. 111) can be implemented through the use of repetition tasks, which can have an influence on the final outcome. There are four influential factors: 1. familiarity with the task; 2. planning; 3. repetition of the task; 4. attribution of roles. In this particular study we focus on the repetition task and the familiarity of the activity.

³ First published 1979, Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

The repetition task had started to be studied in particular over the last few decades and several studies have been carried out (Gass et al. 1999; Bygate, 1996, 2001; Mojavezi, 2014, Hunter, 2017; Lazaro-Ibarrola & Hidalgo, 2017). It is structured in such a way that the first production activity is that of presentation, knowledge of the structure of the activity itself and of the different stakeholders. In proposing the task again, the learner is already familiar with it (Bygate, 2001) and therefore he/she shifts their attention towards linguistic aspects such as syntax, pronunciation, precisely because “most parts of semantic processing do not require as much of the learners’ attentional resources as in the first performance of the task” (Muranoi, 2007, p. 72). Studies confirm on the one hand that there would be improvements in fluidity, accuracy, complexity, production (Lynch & Maclean, 2000, 2001; Kim & Tracy-Ventura, 2013, Ahmadian, 2013) and how it can make more uncertain students more confident (Côelho, 2017). Studies also show that when a task is performed, a student can store part of the information related to conceptualisation, formulation, and articulation of a task on the first performance in his/her memory and that it will be accessible to the speaker on the second performance when the task is repeated (Bygate, 2001, p. 29). It is necessary, however, to emphasize the familiarity with the task. Knowing the structure of an exam, for example, is essential because it eliminates a part of additional stress, as is also confirmed by the use of past papers (Putwain, 2008a, 2008b), which means a simulation of exams sat in previous years that help students to practice. According to the OliveBoard agency⁴, a platform specializing in the preparation of exam tests for the banking and government sector, mock exams 1) provide an idea about the exam, 2) help to understand any weak areas, 3) help to understand the program, 4) allow students to have/create strategies, 5) let students learn tricks and suggestions, 6) help to improve speed, 7) help to study the study topic, 8) track progress, 9) recreate the atmosphere of an exam and 10) increase a learner's sense of confidence. For example, for any foreign language exam, such as the official certificates (CELI, PLIDA⁵) students should familiarize themselves with the tests taken in the past years to know the parts, assess their level, understand the difficulties, as well as the strengths and also to benchmark their performance over time.

⁴ www.oliveboard.in/blog/importance-of-mock-test [Retrieved June 2022]

⁵ Numerous sites offer access to exams taken in previous sessions. The Italian Language Academy (www.acad.it) offers multiple exam tests to practice. In addition, the University for Foreigners of Perugia offers a number of tests that have already been sat: www.cvcl.it/categorie/categoria-104 [Retrieved June 2022].

4. Data and methodology

4.1. Background and Participants

Undergraduate courses in foreign philology in Poland always offer practical language learning, as part of the curriculum. It is a practical course that is normally divided by language skills: grammar, pragmatics, writing, vocabulary, listening and conversation. This block represents the central pillar of the practice of the foreign language; however, it is still supported by other courses of fundamental importance such as phonetics, descriptive grammar, and other specialized courses.

PNJW courses are normally divided into years and levels. In general, this structure is based on the levels of the CEFR:

Table 1. PNJW course: year and level

	1st year	2nd year	3rd year
1st semester	A1	B1	B2+
2nd semester	A2	B2	C1

Sometimes, in the third year, especially for English and Spanish, we can find level C1 in the first semester and C2 in the second. The CEFR, in reference to speech, differentiates competence in foreign language interaction and production (Council of Europe, 2001, 2001a). For level A2+, reference is made to the 2020 updated document (Council of Europe, 2020, p. 173).

As for the Italian language, the name of this block is PNJW and at the UKSW University the part of the conversation is divided as follows within the three-year degree in Italian philology:

Table 2. Conversation course: hours and credits

Year	Course name	Hours per semester	Credits per semester
1 year	Mówienie i słuchanie ⁶	30	1
2 year	Słuchanie i konwersacja ⁷	30	1.5
3 year	Wypowiedź ustna ⁸	30	2

⁶ Speaking and listening.

⁷ Listening and conversation.

⁸ Conversation.

Normally the listening and conversation lessons at the Italian Philology Department take place once a week for an hour and a half and students are generally divided into groups. As for the second year of the three-year degree at the UKSW University 2020/2021, there are 25 students, however, in the current year, at the decision of the Dean, the students were not divided into several groups. The conversation lessons before the pandemic took place in the classroom. With the precautionary and preventive measures implemented by the Polish Government since March 2020, all lessons, including Listening and Conversation, have relied 100% on online teaching.

4.2. Materials and tools

In terms of conversation, the teacher makes available weekly the materials to be prepared on a specific topic that will be taken up during the oral activities⁹. The idea of creating a thematic itinerary that is an interconnection between conversation and listening is first based on the various elements of a given topic to then repeat them several times, such as reading, listening, watching a video, so that there is subsequently a transfer to use the language seen in a given situation in the conversation. Materials are uploaded to Moodle. The MS Teams platform is used for the conversation lessons and for ongoing examinations throughout the course and the final tests. Recorded audio is automatically saved to the Microsoft Stream platform, which is then downloaded and accessible only to the instructor. An identification code is entered for each conversation regarding the identity of the student.

4.3. Methodology

For oral production on this conversation course there are four mandatory phases. It uses both the student's autonomous work and the repetition of the task, as well as repetition of questions within the individual conversation. See the common parts for all students:

1. **I work independently on materials**¹⁰. First of all, there is an autonomous work session with the help of the materials provided by the teacher (audio, reading, linguistic elements). They are uploaded a week earlier via the Moodle platform. The student thus has the opportunity to work and prepare independently by carrying out the listening exercises and doing the research to prepare for phase 2.

⁹ Among the materials given there are some elements also taken from Marin (2005).

¹⁰ The given materials contain questions, photos and pictures, vocabulary, short texts and some audios.

2. **Plenum Conversation 1:** The teacher uses the materials previously given to stimulate conversation. In order, questions and videos viewed are used to go into detail on the topic. Interaction and oral production are practiced (in small groups and in plenum). Indicatively, the first 35 minutes of the lesson are used.
3. **Plenum Conversation 2:** Secondly, in the middle of the lesson the teacher proposes a new video/audio which is however closely linked to the topic, followed by an exercise and a second plenum conversation. Video/audio serves both as a further stimulus for conversation, but also for listening comprehension. Approximately 30 minutes.
4. **Description of some images:** The description of images represents a further stimulus for conversation, bringing into play lexical elements that are useful for describing actions in a more in-depth and detailed way. Approximately 20 minutes.

In addition, given the specificity of the course and the number of students, the teacher decided to offer **individual conversations (1:1)** to allow students to practice further. Despite the structure of the lesson that helps to familiarise students with the activities and the planning, individual conversations entail a repetition of the activity and the questions that are taken up by the teacher in a freeway, so as to focus not just on the weekly topic that is mainly broached during the lesson, but also to revise and go into more depth on past topics through specific questions that touch back on the topic in a purely random way (on which, however, students are always required to prepare). The individual conversation helps to bring the theme back into play but gives the student the opportunity to have a space entirely for themselves. Plenum conversations involve social strategies (Cohen, 2011), in which the learner has an exchange not only with the teacher, but also with other classmates. The conversational input given by the teacher is aimed at achieving feedback from the student and, consequently, the students themselves can support, refute, expand, and criticize the different responses and arguments. Individual conversations, on the contrary, are very useful especially for students who do not like to talk in front of other people, students who sometimes feel judged by their peers or who are afraid of making mistakes in front of their peers. Thus, through the 1:1 conversation, the sessions are more relaxed. Individual conversations fall within those affective strategies defined by Cohan (2011) to regulate their emotions, fears and stress. In fact, the importance of a good relationship between students and teachers is stressed so that a positive form of support is nurtured (Putwain, 2008a). Individual conversations also become mostly a simulation

of the conversation exam, giving the student the opportunity to understand its structure, as previously described. At the end of each individual conversation, the teacher provides feedback to the student in which he/she always emphasizes the positive aspects and those to improve on, taking as an example the activities carried out.

Individual conversations take place every week and each time take up the topics touched on in the previous weeks. They last about ten minutes per person. Out of 25 students, 16 decided to hold weekly individual conversations, which were spread out over two days (Wednesday and Thursday).

Set out below is a summary outline of the structure of the lessons, including individual conversations.

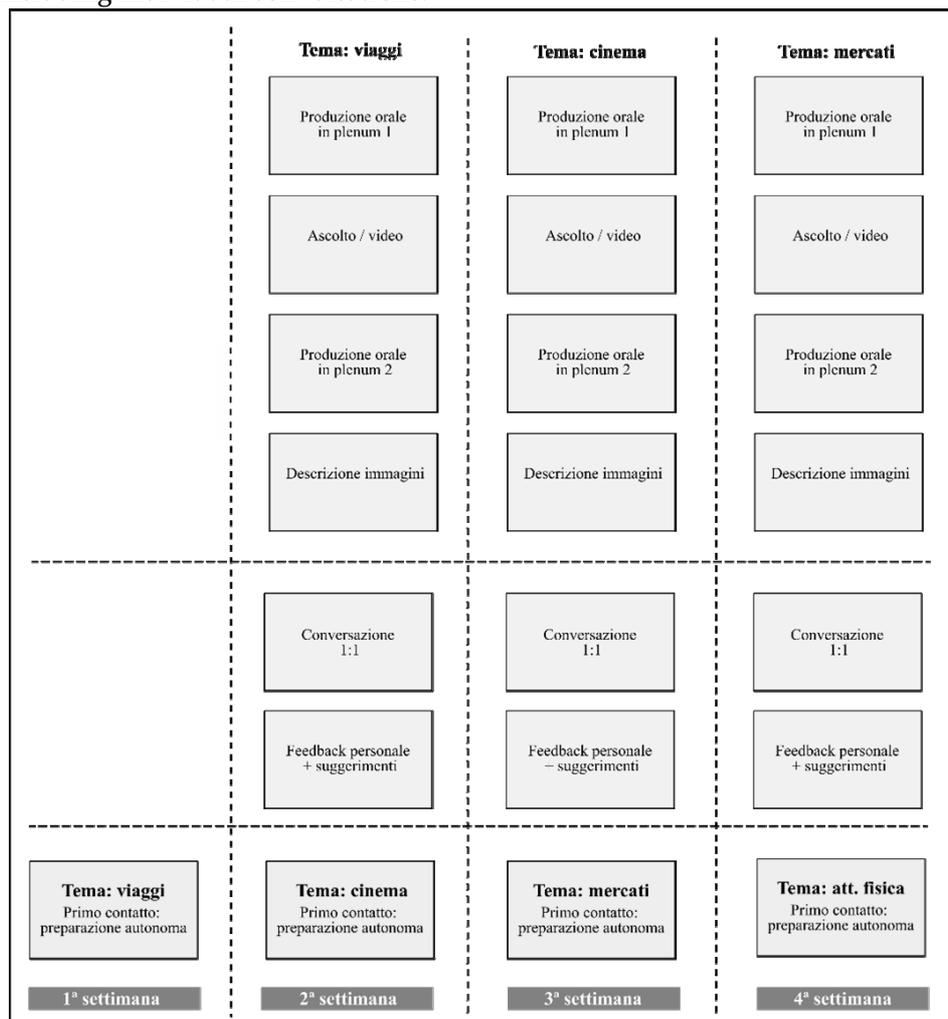


Figure. 1. Oral production cycle

The chart above sets out the cycle of conversations in Italian within a four-week session. In addition, the next topic is also introduced. Students receive all the materials for an initial contact on the new topic in order to prepare themselves independently for production 1 and 2. In the meantime, and at the same time, they revise the previous topics for the 1:1 (non-mandatory) oral production that will take place the following week. In addition to the structure set out above, there are also two conversation tests: one during the course and one towards the end of the course. The decision to include two tests is aligned with the needs of students who usually build up too much stress when there is only one final test, knowing that the ultimate result will be based on a single performance only.

With regard to oral production, the course focused on the articulation of responses, so that in the oral production of the learner there was a richer and more detailed narrative based on the different topics. Articulating an answer means not falling into the usual answer-repetition of the question and also avoiding answering affirmatively or negatively to a closed question, without expecting continuous and multiple questions from the teacher.

The following topics are broached in the first part of the semester:

Table 3. Lessons and Topics

Lessons	Topics
Lesson 1	Travel
Lesson 2	Cinema, TV and theatre
Lesson 3	Markets, supermarkets and shopping
Lesson 4	Physical activity and sport
Lesson 5	Art, music and culture
Lesson 6	Work

5. Presentation of data

For this study, the conversations of 10 students (among the 16 enrolled in individual support) were taken into account, who had both an initial 1:1 conversation and a second (1:1) equal question (repetition question/repetition task). The Jefferson transcription system (2004) was used for the transcription of audio, in particular for responses. The two conversations are held four weeks apart between the first and the second.

Eleven specific elements of oral production were analysed for the analysis of the corpus: the duration of the response, the presence of hesitations (interjection), grammatical errors, self-corrections, pauses (short or long), lexical repetitions, interrupted words, incomplete sentences and the total of the words used to answer the question and, in particular, the narrative. The choice to consider these elements stems from the fact that in addition to the content itself and the quality of the response in terms of narrative richness, there are undoubtedly other elements that can modify a student's output. Indeed, narrative richness must be supported by linguistic accuracy and fluidity. Some of these elements are considered by Clark and Clark (1977) to be errors of oral production, such as: silence, filled pauses, repetitions, false starts, corrections, interjections and/or stammering.

6. Data analysis and results

6.1. Duration

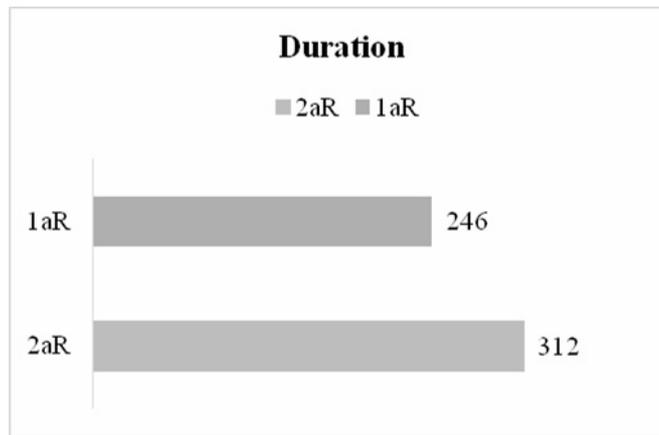
A first benchmark is the length of the answers given by the students (s). Measuring the duration of a response could be reductive because it is not indicative of quality and it is also necessary to take into consideration the different short and long pauses, as well as other elements. We are aware, however, that a broader and more detailed narrative also pours out in terms of time length.

From the responses obtained, it can be noted that the total of the first (1aR¹¹) and second responses (2aR) are slightly different: the duration of the 2aR is slightly longer. Whereas the total duration of the 1aR is 4:10 minutes (246 seconds), the total duration of the 2aR is 5:20 minutes (312 seconds). Only in a few cases is the 2aR more evident in terms of duration, whilst in other cases it is not particularly evident.

Table 4. Total duration of replies

Students	s1	s2	s3	s4	s5	s6	s7	s8	s9	s10	TOT	TOT SECONDS
1aR	0.36	0,35	0.24	0,39	0,47	0,33	0.29	0,37	0,4 2	0,4 8	4.10"	246"
2aR	1.04	0.54	0.49	0.52	0,45	0,35	0.21	0.29	0,3 7	0.5 4	5.20"	312"

¹¹ R stands for answer/response.



Graphic 1. Duration in seconds

6.2. Pauses

In addition to the duration of the responses, the presence of short pauses (micro-pauses) and longer pauses can also be noted. As previously pointed out, duration per se is not always indicative of a quality response in terms of narration, correctness or even lexical quality. Of course, more pauses, in general, in particular longer pauses, allow a learner to think, reflect, coordinate and organize their thoughts and response, but at the same time, frequent or long pauses can make it difficult for the interlocutor to understand them, sometimes making the answer less interesting or incomplete.

Below is set out all the micro-pauses, marked in the transcripts with the symbol (.). They represent very short pauses of less than 0.2” in length.

Table 5. Number of micro-pauses

	s1	s2	s3	s4	s5	s6	s7	s8	s9	s10	TOT
1aR	7	5	5	8	16	6	7	4	7	4	69
2aR	22	6	8	13	13	5	5	8	6	3	89



Graphic 2. Micro-pause number

The number of micro-pauses is almost similar between 1aR and 2aR: in 1aR there is a micro-pause every 3.56 seconds, whereas in 2aR the frequency is one every 3.50 seconds, obviously considering the duration of the responses.

Note the examples of micro-pauses within two responses:

E.g., 1. Examples of micro-pauses

s1 1aR

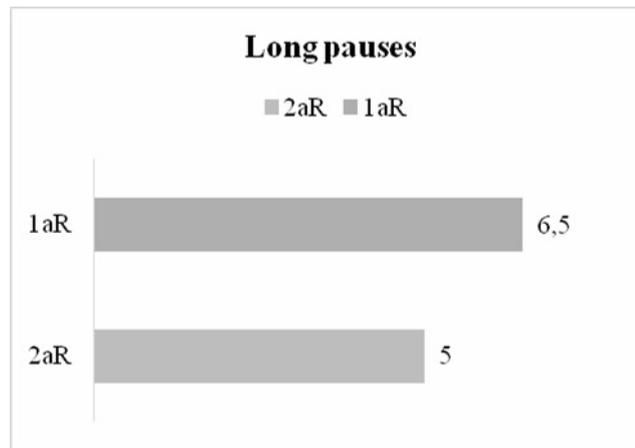
E(eh): dipende:, eh da piccolo: (.) ero: dipendente:
ehm:: <dalla> tv (.) eeh: guardavo:

It depends, when I was a child (.) I was addicted
to tv (.) I used to watch

Regarding long pauses, the table below details the number of pauses and the total duration for each answer is in brackets. For example, s4 has 2 long pauses in the 1aR, of the total duration of 0.5" each, whilst the 2aR does not have any.

Table 5. Number and duration of long pauses

	s1	s2	s3	s4	s5	s6	s7	s8	s9	s10	TOT
1aR	0	0	0	2 (1")	1 (0.5")	0	0	3 (2")	3 (2".5)	1 (0.5")	10 (6.5)
2aR	0	0	1 (1.5)	0	2 (1")	0	0	1 (0.5")	2 (1".5)	1 (0.5)	7 (5")



Graphic 3. Duration of long pauses in seconds

The total duration of long pauses in the 1aR has a total duration of 6.5 seconds, while in the 2aR the total duration is 5 seconds. Although the difference in duration is not significant, the number of long pauses in responses is relevant, which is slightly higher and more frequent in the first than in the second.

Note the examples:

E.g., 2. Examples of long pauses

s4 1aR

Eh: (0.5) o forse: non >ho abbastanza tempo< pe:r per praticare: (.) lo sport (.) ma: eh: eh ho giocato a calcio: quando:: eh >da da bambino<

[Eh (0.5) or maybe I had not enough time to practice sport but I played football when I was a child]

6.3. Hesitations (interjection phenomena)

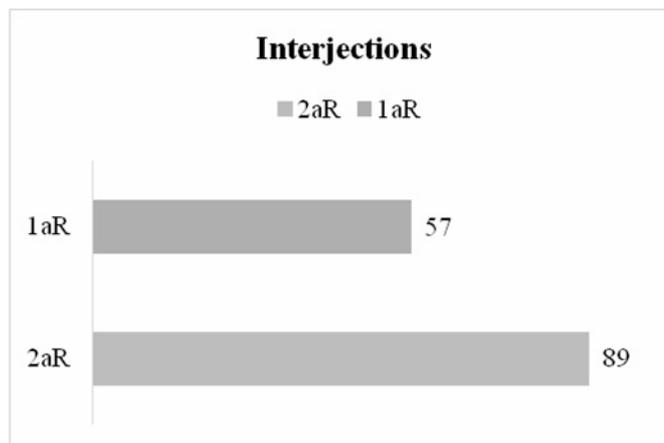
Interjection phenomena are very common in communication. Here we have taken into account the proper interjections¹² which, even if they lack their own meaning, have a holographic value, meaning that they convey the meaning of an entire sentence.

¹² Ah!, eh!, oh, ehi!, ih!, ahimè!, urrà!, ehm..., uhm..., beh.

In both cases, 1aR and 2aR, there are several examples. In the 1aR there are a total of 57 hesitations, while in the 2aR the total is 89. The interjections analysed and found within the answers are: eh, ehm, ehm (nasal).

Table 6. Hesitations (interjection phenomena)

	s1	s2	s3	s4	s5	s6	s7	s8	s9	s10	TOT
1aR	8	7	4	7	6	2	5	7	3	8	57
2aR	22	9	9	10	6	2	2	7	6	16	89



Graphic 4. Total interjections

Although the difference is minimal, in 1aR an interjection is used on average every 4.31 seconds, while in 2aR every 3.50 seconds. This phenomenon of hesitation in the 1aR is slightly less frequent.

Note the examples:

E.g., 3. Examples of hesitation

s1 2aR

Ehm: per esempio: (.) ehm: sono abituato (.)
recentemente ehm (.) perché guardo: la stessa serie
con mia x quasi ogni giorno (.) eh:: è una commedia

[Hmm for example hmm recently I got used to
hmm because I watch the same tv-series with my x
almost every day eh it is a comedy]

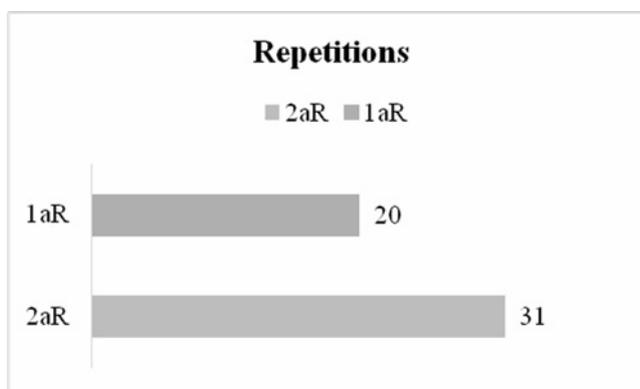
6.4. Repetitions in vocabulary

Vocabulary repetition is a fairly common phenomenon in the spoken language and frequent in spontaneous communication (Deese, 1984). Repetition can be the form used by the speaker, for example, because he/she does not know how to proceed with communication.

As regards repetition, it can be noted that in both the 1aR and the 2aR there are several repetitions. The difference is not so significant considering that the total minutes of 2aR is higher. Note, however, that repetition increases by more than half of the responses. For example, s1 or s7 do not make use of repetitions in the 1aR but have two in the 2aR.

Table 7. Repetitions

	s1	s2	s3	s4	s5	s6	s7	s8	s9	s10	TOT
1aR	0	1	0	5	4	1	0	1	3	5	20
2aR	2	0	1	8	4	5	2	2	3	4	31



Graphic 5. Repetitions

Repetition does however help to reflect on the answer to possibly correct or modify it, lengthen it, etc. Here are some examples from the answers:

E.g., 4. Examples of repetitions

s9 1aR

tutti possono **sentire**: **sentire** la guida anche xxx buona condizione fisica perché si deve **camminare**: (.) **camminare** tanto ogni giorno.

[Everyone can **listen listen** to the tour guide, also a good physical condition because s/he has to **walk walk** a lot everyday]

s4 2aR

:< ho giocato:: uhm: per (.) per tanti anni: a calcio e: (.)
mi piace: mi piace: incontrarmi: eh con i miei amici e
 >giocare a calcio< infatti (.) eh: e adesso **non è** (.) **non è**
non è: possibile (.) diciamo

[I played football **for for** lots of years and I **like I like**
meeting with my friends and playing football, as a
 matter of fact now **is not is not is not** possible, let's say]

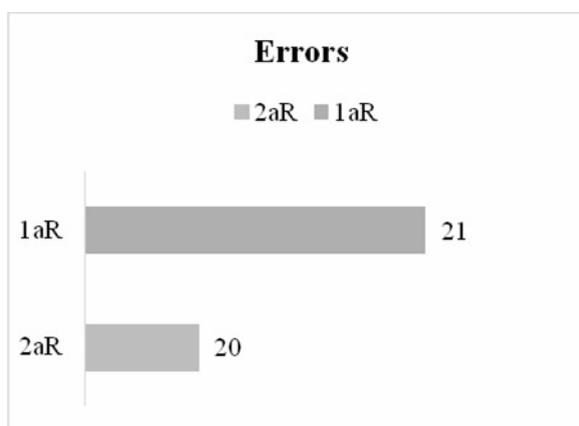
6.5. Grammatical errors

This study also analyses the grammatical errors contained in answers. Grammatical error often does not necessarily compromise the comprehension of the other interlocutor; however, it is nonetheless an interesting element. For the purpose hereof, the frequency of errors has been taken into account, not the type of error.

The number of errors without self-correction is set out in the table below.

Table 8. Number of grammatical errors

	s1	s2	s3	s4	s5	s6	s7	s8	s9	s10	TOT
1aR	1	3	3	0	2	5	2	2	1	2	21
2aR	3	4	0	1	3	2	2	3	1	1	20



Graphic 6. Errors

Note some errors:

E.g., 5. Examples of grammatical errors

S6 1aR

perché i miei genitori non possono uscire spesso per colpa di (.) **pandemia e situazione**

[correct form: per colpa della **pandemia e della situazione** = because of the pandemic and the situation]

S3 1aR

devi:: ehm: dividere >il tuo tempo< (.) <nel:le due:> **molto: importante cose**

[correct form: **nelle due cose più importanti** = the two most important things]

The total number of errors also based on the duration of the responses is lower in the 2aR. Despite this, it can be noted that the background situation to errors being made is not very clear: some learners make mistakes in 1aR, whereas others only make mistakes in 2aR, some answering make fewer mistakes and others more.

6.6. Self-correction

Self-correction, the ability to correct oneself whilst communicating orally, requires a high degree of recognition by a student of their error. It is also known that with the advancement of a student's level hence with their studies, linguistic correctness also improves. As the data analysis shows, self-correction is present 11 times in the 2aR, whilst in the 1aR it is present only once. It turns out, therefore, to be more common, also given the fact that between one conversation and another, a student normally progresses with their studies and their learning of linguistic elements in Italian.

Table 9. Self-corrections

	s1	s2	s3	s4	s5	s6	s7	s8	s9	s10	TOT
1aR	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
2aR	2	1	1	1	1	0	2	0	1	2	11



Graphic. 7. Self-corrections

Look at the examples. In the first, the student self-corrects using a verb along with the female plural direct pronoun *le*. In the second case, the student self-corrects the pronunciation. In the third, the student uses a relative, which they had studied precisely in those weeks.

E.g., 6. Self-correction examples

s3 2aR

come dividere queste due < cose ins: eh: **legare:** (.)
legarle ↑insieme ehm: perciò: (.) qualche volta:
 >questo potrebbe essere difficile↑ <

[the verb is: **to tie them**, the first form without 'le'
 (legare) means 'to tie']

s4 2aR

diciamo (.) **percé** per **perché:** eh: abbiamo: tutta
 la ↑pandemia:

[**perché** is the correct form 'because']

6.7. Broken words and phrases

Interrupted words and phrases can be considered errors within oral production. Sometimes they can interrupt speech and make sentences more confusing, other times however they can be an aid in correctly reformulating speech. From the analysis of the data, there is a minimal difference also with regard to the words or phrases that are interrupted within the first and second responses.

Table 10. Broken words and phrases

1aR	s1	s2	s3	s4	s5	s6	s7	s8	s9	s10	TOT
Broken Words	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	4
Incomplete Phrases	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1

2aR	s1	s2	s3	s4	s5	s6	s7	s8	s9	s10	TOT
Broken Words	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	3	7
Incomplete Phrases	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	4

Within the answers there are some examples of interruptions that then lead to the correct word or phrase formulation. Note these two examples:

E.g., 7. Examples of broken words and phrases

s7 1aR

in questo lavoro↑ (.) mi pia: eh: mi piacev: (.) mi
 piaceva lavorare con le persone aiutare e anche: eh:
 s:pendere (.) s̀ qualcosa

s10 1aR

[here the correct form is 'mi piaceva' (I used to like)]

6.8. Total words

It was initially observed that the total 2aRs in total last longer than the 1aRs. This is also highlighted by the number of words used in the responses. In some responses the difference is definitely more marked such as, for example, in s1, s2, s3, s4 or s6. Others have a fairly similar length:

Table 11. Total Words

	s1	s2	s3	s4	s5	s6	s7	s8	s9	s10	TOT
1aR	43	45	24	53	59	62	45	41	45	57	474
2aR	134	75	48	81	57	74	44	40	51	59	663

6.9. The narrative

Producing a detailed, articulated, and interesting narrative is one of the objectives of the Conversation course. Shorter answers do not give the teacher ample opportunity to gauge the student's level thoroughly. Shorter conversation is also limiting for the speaker, who effectively restricts his/her production not showing essential points that could be critical in passing

an exam. Indeed, passing an exam means the achievement of some minimum requirements for a specific language level.

From the analysis of the data, it is first emphasized that in some cases, a student has developed a much more complete and interesting narrative, incorporating some tricks in self-correction¹³.

In s1 the narrative is more articulate and richer in detail; however, there is a certain degree of repetition and several micro-pauses, which does not necessarily make it more fluid. However, there are two different answers to the same question.

E.g., 8. Conversation s1

Answer – 1st conversation

Answer – 2nd conversation

Guardi spesso la tv a casa? [Do you often watch the television at home?]

E(eh): dipende:, eh da piccolo: (.) ero:
dipendente: ehm:: <dalla> tv (.) eeh:
guardavo: ehm: la televisione: ogni
giorno tantissime ore (.) adesso ehm:
devo dire, ehm: che non la guardo più (.)
così tanto perché non ho (.) così tanto
tempo (.) ma: (.) ancora: ci sono dei
momenti quando ehm: vado a >guardarlo
con i miei<

*[It depends, when I was a child I was
addicted to tv. I watched the television
many hours every day. Now I have to say
that I do not watch it too much but there
are still moments when I watch it with
my parents]*

Ehm: per esempio: (.) ehm: sono abituato
(.) recentemente ehm (.) perché guardo:
la stessa serie con mia x quasi ogni
giorno (.) eh:: è una commedia (.) e:
quindi: è un momento: eh: quando
>posso rilassarmi< un po' ((sospira))
ehm: (.) ehm: <tra tutte le cose che devo
fare> ogni giorno sì >quindi è< il mio
momento: ehm:: (.) di riposo (.) di riposo
sì, eh (.) >questa serie di chiama x<
((ride)) è: >una versione polacca di x<
eh:: la nuova: la seconda: (.) eh parte (.)
e l'hanno: eh: >fatto dopo< dieci anni (.)
eh di pausa eh: quindi eh: adesso >è il
mio momento< (.) >non< dura molto
perché eh:: ci sono solo: (.) eh: venti
minuti ma (.) ma eh (.) guardo solo: (.)
questa serie >anche ci sono dei giorni
quando< guardo le notizie perché (.) eh
mi interessano che cosa sta succedendo
(.) le cose che stanno succedendo eh: nel
nostro mondo↓ in nostro mondo (.) eh:
nel nostro mondo sì eh: no (.) no (.) non
è in in nostro mondo↓

¹³ All personal information has been marked with an x in whole conversations. X is not to be confused with xxx used in the Jefferson system for omitted words.

[For instance, recently I got used because I watch the same tv-series with my x almost every day. It is a comedy, and this is a moment where I can relax a bit among all the things that I have to do every day; so, this is my relaxing moment. This tv-series it is called x, the new, the second part, and they did it after ten years break. So now it is my moment. It does not last a lot, but I only watch this tv-series. There are also days where I watch the news because I am interested in what it is happening in our world.]

Even s2 has a 2aR much richer in detail than the previous one. It includes, in fact, a personal reflection at the end, planning a hypothetical future. Both narratives present some micro-pauses, hesitations and some repetitions.

E.g., 9. Conversation s2

Answer – 1st conversation

Answer – 2nd conversation

Lavori attualmente? [Do you work at the moment?]

Eh adesso: no: non eh lavoro >perché c'è la pandemia< e: (.) £studio£ e non (.) ho molto tempo libero↑ ma: per due anni: eh al eh (.) <estive> >stagioni estive ho lavorato come la commessa↑< in un ristorante↑ e mi è piaciuto molto:: mh:: ho trovato: (.) ho trovato: eh: i nuovi (.) amici:, eh:: £si£

[Now I do not work because of the pandemic situation, and I study, and I do not have a lot of free time, but I worked as waitress in a restaurant for two years during the summer season. I liked it very much and I found new friends, yes]

Eh no, non lavoro perché: studio: (.) molto non ho molto: tempo: per questo ma: ho lavorato: uhm: >in vacanza< eh: ho lavorato come cameriera↑ in un una ristorante che si chiama £X£ eh: è mi è piaciut mi: (.) mi sono piaciuto <questo:> lavoro: molto perché eh: (.) i miei compagni sono molto simpatici: e adesso abbiamo anche: eh: un buon contatto: ehm: e anche↑ uhm:: (.) questo lavoro: (.) mi ha dato un'esperienza: quindi: nel futuro forse: uhm: (.) sarà più facile di trovare un altro lavoro

[Eh no, I do not work because I study a lot and I do not have time for that, but I have worked as waitress in a restaurant

called x and I liked this job very much because my colleagues were very friendly and now, we have a good contact. This work gave me some experiences so in the future maybe it will be much easier to find another job]

In s3 the narrative is richer and there are some details not present in the 1aR. The speaker also uses new elements, such as the conditional that was being revised at that time.

E.g., 9. Conversation s3

Answer – 1st conversation

Si può studiare e lavorare contemporaneamente?

[Is it possible to study and work at the same time?]

Sì <si può:> (.) ma: è:: mh <molto difficile> perché: uhm:: (.) devi: ehm: dividere >il tuo tempo< (.) <nel:le due:> molto: importante cose↑ (.) ah: uhm (.) e secondo me è difficile↓

[Yes, it is possible, but it is very difficult because you have to divide your time between two very important things and in my opinion, it is difficult]

Answer – 2nd conversation

Sì è possibile ma: devi essere: (.) uhm: ordinato, eh: devi: uhm:: pensare: eh: (1.4) come: uhm (.) come dividere queste due: eh: (.) >come dividere queste due< cose ins: eh: legare: (.) legarle ↑insieme ehm: perciò: (.) qualche volta: >questo potrebbe essere difficile↑< per molte persone: (.) e: devono: ehm lasciare il lavoro oppure↓ l'università (.) perché non (.) non hanno abbastanza tempo↓ >è difficile<

[Yes, it is possible, but you have to be organized and you have to think how to divide these two, how to link these two together, for this reason sometimes this could be difficult for lot of people. And they have to leave the job or the university because they do not have enough time. It is difficult]

In other cases (s4) also in the 2aR, as already seen previously, the narrative still presents a number of repetitions, interjections and pauses. In these cases, the narrative, despite the presence of a few brief details more,

does not undergo a huge change. A positive element is definitely the self-correction in the second answer:

E.g., 10. Conversation s4

Answer – 1st conversation

Answer – 2nd conversation

Pratichi sport? [Do you practise sport?]

Eh: (0.5) o forse: non >ho abbastanza tempo< pe:r per praticare: (.) lo sport (.) ma: eh: eh ho giocato a calcio: quando:: eh >da da bambino< diciamo Ho giocato: a calcio pe:r eh: (0.5) pe:r per x anni (.) eh: <mi sembra> e (.) quando: quando: ho: (.) del tempo oggi: cerco >di di< fare qualche attività (.) eh: se posso (.) qualche passeggiata o: (.) >qualcosa del genere<

[Maybe, I do not have enough time to practise sport, but I have played football when I was a kid. I have played for x years, I think, and now when I have time, I try to find some activities to do, if I can, a walk or something else]

Sì cerco di: di (.) praticare uno sport non è (.) non è così: (.) facile: adesso: (.)<perché> uhm (.) diciamo non si può:, eh forse eh: >ho giocato:< ho giocato:: uhm: per (.) per tanti anni: a calcio e: (.) mi piace: mi piace: incontrarmi: eh con i miei amici e >giocare a calcio< infatti (.) eh: e adesso non è (.) non è non è: possibile (.) diciamo (.) perché per perché: eh: abbiamo: tutta la ↑pandemia: (.) eh: >ma cerco di fare< qualche: uhm: >cerco cerco di fare< degli esercizi che posso: (.) che posso: fare: eh a casa↑

[Yes, I try to practise sport, but it is not easy now because, let's say, it is not possible. I played football for lot of years. I like meeting with my friends and playing football with them. Now it is not possible because there is the pandemic, but I try to do some exercises that I can do at home]

In other cases, s5, with the same length of answer, in the 2aR the interlocutor proposes a more confused narrative in the information provided, which makes it more difficult to understand:

E.g., 11. Conversation s5

Answer – 1st conversation

Answer – 2nd conversation

Ti piace comprare i souvenir? [Do you like buying souvenirs?]

Uhm: (.) s::icuramente no (.) perché secondo me (.) una cosa più importante (.) uhm: <durante> il viaggio (.) è (.) è questo

Credo di no perché (.) uhm: penso che (.) comprare queste cose↑ (.) uhm:: (.) significa (.) eh spendere: spendere i i

che (.) possiamo (.) uhm conoscere qualcuno↑ e: (.) uhm: e creare un ((suono del cellulare)) o mi scusi↓ (.) e creare un (.) eh nuovo rapporto (.) >e secondo me questo è ↑meglio< invece comprare una (.) una cosa che che certamente (0.5) uhm: che (.) semplicemente costa più (.) quindi: (.) >no secondo me non ha non ha senso<

[Surely not, because in my opinion an important thing when travelling is creating a new relation (sorry, my phone – ringing) instead of buying something that surely costs more and so in my opinion it does not have sense]

soldi in un modo (.) direi esagerato (.) cioè (.) uhm senza >non ha senso s< (.) spendere più soldi (.) per esempio dobbiamo <possiamo> (.) uhm comprare la stessa cosa↑ (.) eh: <nell'altro> nell'altro posto (0.5) e avere la stessa esperienza di usare questo↑ (.) e anche: più soldi (0.5) co:n con con noi

[I do not think so, because I think that buying these things means spend money in an exaggerated manner, I would say. It does not have any sense to spend money, for example, if we can buy the same thing in another place and having the same experience and save money]

In another narrative S6 presents two different answers. Most likely, the second answer shows that the student is talking not about grocery shopping, but shopping in general. Both narratives include different details, however, the second narrative does not incorporate much more elements or details than the first. In addition, the 2aR shows more repetitions than the first narrative, but fewer grammatical errors.

E.g., 12. Conversation s6

Answer – 1st conversation

Answer – 2nd conversation

Fai spesso la spesa? [Do you usually do the grocery shopping?]

Faccio: faccio spesso (.) eh: principalmente: adesso perché i miei genitori non possono uscire spesso per colpa di (.) pandemia e situazione (.) e: adesso quando ho la mia patente di guida↑ posso fare la spesa >senza problemi< e: mi piace anche cucinare tanto e (.) quasi ogni giorno faccio il pranzo (.) che significa che devo quasi £ogni giorno devo uscire e comprare da qualcosa£ uhm (.) qualche ingredienti_

Adesso: eh ((ride)) £non faccio la spesa così: così tanto come sempre↑£. Eh qualche volta xxx io cerco qualcosa su Internet (.) però: non mi piace comprare le cose: (.) che (.) <vedo> solo su Internet >perché non sono sempre sicura↑< c'è davvero co:si: in in reale e che mi piace o sulla foto è bellissima però in realtà è una cosa >che che< è brutta (.) cioè preferisco sempre fare la spesa in: in tempo reale (.) non non su Internet↓.

[I do it often, mainly because my parents cannot go out due to the pandemic and the situation and now, I have my driving license I can go shopping without any problems. And I also like cooking a lot and almost every day I prepare lunch. It means that almost every day I go out to buy something, some ingredients]

[Now (laughing) I do not do the shopping as much as usual. Sometimes I look for something on the Internet, but I do not like buying things that I only see on the Internet, because I am not always sure that the thing is really like in reality, or that I like it. Or in the picture it is beautiful but in the reality the thing is awful. I mean, I prefer to do the shopping on the site and not on the Internet]

Sometimes the interlocutor provides a similar and underdeveloped narrative compared to the previous conversation (s7, s8, s9 and s10).

In s7 and s8 the narratives are poorly presented and there are few details in both answers.

E.g., 13. Conversation s7

Answer – 1st conversation

Answer – 2nd conversation

Lavori attualmente? [Do you work at the moment?]

Eh: ora no ma ho lavorato: (.) eh: la: come la commessa↑ (.) in un negozio con i vestiti eh si chiamava X ((ride)) in (.) centro commerciale (.) e: ho: avuto tante colleghe: ((sogghigno)) in questo lavoro↑ (.) mi pia: eh: mi piacev: (.) mi piaceva lavorare con le persone aiutare e anche: eh: s:pendere (.) sì qualcosa

No, in questo momento no_ (.) ma: lavoravo: lavoravo in un: uhm: ho lavorato in un negozio↑ con i vestiti↑ per tre mesi e anche in: (.) una: (.) ((sospira)) come si dice (.) un negozio con le £torte£ (.) con i dolci eh: mi piacciono tante, tanti tanti dol tanti £dolci£

[Now not, but I have worked in a cloth shop called (laughing) x in a mall and I had lots of female colleagues (laughing) in this job. I liked to work with the people, helping and also spending something]

[No, in this job not, but I worked in a cloth shop for three months and also in a, how do you say, in a shop with the cakes, I really like cakes, a lots of cakes]

E.g., 14. Conversation s8

Answer – 1st conversation

Answer – 2nd conversation

In un futuro dove ti piacerebbe andare? [In the future, where would you like to go?]

Eh: (.) in: (0.5) in futuro mi piacerebbe andare in Italia magari a: x (.) perché voglio visitare i miei amici: voglio provare vera pizza italiana↑ napoletana↑ (0.5) eh: (.) voglio: eh visitare: eh i:l Vesuvio↑ e: eh (.) dei Pompei eh: e magari andare anche a: eh:: (1.0) e: visitare: la: Costiera: >Amalfitana<

£Bo, >sicuramente all'estero<£ Eh: (.) eh: eh: recen recentemente: eh: penso molto spesso di di x (.) perché (.) voglio (.) <andarli↓> >per visitare i miei amici< e anche: perché (.) uhm: sto: pensando: di: (.) eh: (0.5) iscriver(.)mi eh: al e: Erasmus (.) e: e x è una città che >dove voglio andare<

[In the future I would like to go in Italy because I want to visit my friends and I want to try the real Neapolitan Italian pizza and visit the Vesuvius and maybe go to the Amalfi coast]

[I do not know, surely abroad. Recently I often think about x, because I want to go there to visit my friends and also because I am thinking to join the Erasmus programme and it is a city where I want to go]

Even in s9, although the interlocutor communicates his/her ideas well, the narrative is not richer or more articulated than in the 2aR.

E.g., 15. Conversation s9

Answer – 1st conversation

Answer – 2nd conversation

Dunque, non lavoreresti mai come guida turistica?

[So, would you never work as tour guide?]

Uhm: (0.5) stiamo parlando di (.) di una guida turistica: (.) museale (1.0) eh (.) ovviamente xxx sa: uhm:: dell'arte, la storia come come ho detto prima, e: (.) anche: (1.0) un gran voce (.) così: (.) tutti possono sentire: sentire la guida anche xxx buona condizione fisica perché si deve camminare: (.) camminare tanto ogni giorno.

Eh: (.) in Italia (.) penso di sì, perché (0.5) eh: anche questo può essere un lavoro: molto interessante (.) però però ci vuole tanto sforzo fisico e io non sono (.) non sono una persona che (.) a cui piace (.) lo sforzo fisico purtroppo (1.0) perché ci vuole: ci vuole: eh: camminare tanto ah: vedere i monumenti i muse:i eh: eh sì.

[We are talking about a museum touristic guide. Obviously, s/he knows about the

[I think yes in Italy, because also this can be a very interesting job, but it is

art, the history, as I have said before, s/he has a great voice so that everybody can listen to the guide. And s/he has also a good physical condition because it is necessary to walk a lot every day]

necessary a lot of physical effort and I am not a person that likes doing physical efforts, unfortunately, because one needs to walk a lot and see monuments and museums]

In s10 the two narratives are really very similar even if there is the addition of a more refined vocabulary (*antipatici, mi umiliavano*) and sometimes even an interesting change of verb: from *incoraggiare* to *raccomandare*.

E.g., 16. Conversation s10

Answer – 1st conversation

Answer – 2nd conversation

Lavori attualmente? [Do you work at the moment?]

Attualmente non lavoro, perché c'è: la pandemia purtroppo (.) ma: so:no: ma sono hostess: eh: raccomando: una trattoria x↑ eh: sì sono fuori eh: fuori della trattoria↑ e (.) eh: (0.5) e incoraggio >per esempio< stranieri↑ pe:r eh: per provare↑ eh: i nostri piatti. Non mi piace questo lavoro: perché è ((sospiro)) è molto (.) molto eh: noio: noioso↑ (.) e eh: le persone: >non tutte le persone:< sono: sono simpatiche.

[At the moment I do not work because of the pandemic situation, unfortunately, but I am a hostess and I recommend a restaurant. Yes, I am outside, and I encourage the foreigners, for example, trying our dishes. I do not like this type of job because it is very boring and not all the people are nice]

No, non lavoro: e: sono molto contenta£ ((sorride)) eh perché eh mi sento libera eh: il mio lavoro eh prossi eh eh scorso non mi non mi piaceva: eh: (.) facevo l'hostess (.) eh raccomandavo eh la trattoria eh una trattoria x e eh: il lavoro era era terri £terribile£ ((soggigna)). No no £non mi piaceva£. Uhm: dovevo eh: stare:↑ eh fuori tu tutti i giorni (.) e uhm: molte persone: eh:: erano antipatici e:: (0.5) e mi: eh: mi umiliavano↓

[No, I do not work, and I am happy, because I feel free. The last job I had I did not like. I was a hostess, and I recommended a restaurant. The work was terrible. No, I did not like it. I had to star outside of the restaurant every day and lot of people were not nice and humiliated me]

7. Discussion and conclusion

The repetition task with the repetition of questions aims to improve the oral production and the narrative of the foreign language student, as well as to improve the fluidity, accuracy and complexity of responses. Autonomous effort, however, is of paramount importance in achieving this objective. In fact, the role that the subject of conversation has within practical exercises as part of a course of Italian philology (1.5 hours per week to be divided even with the listening ability), does not leave much room for practice, which although guided and targeted, is, however, extremely limited.

The choice to introduce autonomous work is necessary to compensate for the lack of time, due in particular to the structure of the course content and schedule. In fact, although the study plan in terms of its practical aspects includes various credits and hours, they must always be divided between the various skills such as grammar, writing, pragmatics, vocabulary and listening. Autonomous work plays a considerable part in this course; however, for obvious reasons it could not be studied or quantified, precisely because it is difficult to calculate how many hours a student has effectively studied and how much he/she essentially put into practice each week.

The conversations within the course are developed in such a way as to be able to deepen a specific topic, which is always assigned a week in advance. Students therefore have the opportunity to learn about the vocabulary, carry out the assigned readings and the listening activities (and watch the videos), as well as try to prepare to answer questions on the subject. In class there are several specific activities: the conversation in plenum (and with it the review of vocabulary and structures), watching a video and/or listenings, followed by another conversation on the same subject, but not prepared for in advance, to round up with the description of images related to the relevant subject. In addition to this, as mentioned, there are also non-compulsory 1:1 conversations, in which 16 out of 25 students participated voluntarily. In these individual conversations, the teacher has the opportunity to deepen the conversation in relation to items regarding the various topics previously seen, using various questions that are taken up during the 1:1 conversations (repetition question / repetition task).

The study saw the analysis of a total of 20 recordings divided respectively into 10 recordings concerning a first conversation and 10 recordings a second. Within the conversations, only the questions (with the answers) that from a first to a second recording were the same were selected (e.g., lavori

attualmente? [Do you work at the moment?]). The repetition task affects several elements such as the familiarity of the activity, precisely because the student recognizes and becomes familiar with the aspects (such as, for example, the parts of an exam), as well as the student becoming familiar with the repetition, trying to understand how to deal with the questions, all of which is supported by feedback from the teacher.

From the analysis of the collected data, on the one hand it emerges that some 2aRs last longer and contain a more detailed narrative than the 1aRs. There are richer responses and others that include more information than the previous input. On the other hand, however, it was observed that a number of responses did not significantly change with respect to the narrative, indeed sometimes the 2aR are slightly shorter and sometimes less understandable, others with more repetitions.

The overall words used in responses within the second conversation are higher. Despite this, there is no substantial difference in the input of the student. According to the data collected, in fact, there is a more or less similar use of hesitations through interjections, as well as the repetition of the lexicon and a not particularly substantial difference in terms of the presence of grammatical errors. There is an albeit minor positive response in terms of pauses, which are less frequent than the longer ones in the 2aR. In addition, there is a minimal difference between the words or phrases interrupted. One element that stands out is certainly the greater presence of self-correction in the 2aR, which leads to the good output of the correct input.

The result obtained from this study is for obvious reasons restrictive given the number of students taken into consideration, therefore the limited number of project participants analysed. In addition, autonomous study has a considerable impact on a student's production and is not measurable by a teacher. It has been noted that some students have independently developed a richer description, while others have stayed with the production levels they had previously achieved, proposing a narrative that was very similar, confirming how stored production can be reused at a later date (Bygate, 2001, p. 29) or in some cases how it can be studied and planned (Gonzalez & Chiapello, 2020, p. 1156).

Future field studies with research that includes a broader, richer and more varied participant basis, will provide further answers regarding the quality of the oral production of students of Italian as a foreign language with the use of the repetition task and specifically of the repetition question. In particular, it would be interesting to understand how to study and evaluate

a student's autonomous work in terms of the impact on the improvement and richness of the narrative.

REFERENCES

- Almusharra, N. (2020). Teachers' perspectives on promoting learner autonomy for vocabulary development: A case study. *Cogent Education*, 7(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2020.1823154>
- Benson, P. (2013). Learner autonomy. *TESOL Q.* (Vol. 47), 839-843.
- Breen, M. P., & Mann, S. J. (1997). Shooting arrows at the sun; perspectives on a pedagogy for autonomy. In P. Benson, & P. Voller (Eds.), *Autonomy and Independence in Language Learning (Applied Linguistics and Language Study)* (pp. 142-149). Longman.
- Bygate, M. (1996). Effects of task repetition: Appraising the developing language of learners. In J. Willis & D. Willis (Eds.), *Challenge and change in language teaching* (pp. 136-146). Oxford: Macmillan.
- Bygate, M. (2001). Effects of task repetition on the structure and control of language. In M. Bygate, P. Skehan, & M. Swain (Eds.), *Task-based learning: Language teaching, learning, and assessment* (pp. 23-48). London: Longman.
- Chiapello, S., González Royo, C., Mura, G. A., & Regagliolo, A. (2015). Teletándem y CORINÉI: las nuevas tecnologías para el aula de I/LE en la UA. En: M. T. Tortosa Ybáñez, J. D. Álvarez Teruel, N. Pellín Buades (coord), *XIII Jornadas de Redes de Investigación en Docencia Universitaria. Nuevas estrategias organizativas y metodológicas en la formación universitaria para responder a la necesidad de adaptación y cambio* (pp. 1897-1911). Universidad de Alicante. <http://hdl.handle.net/10045/49520>
- Chiapello, S., González Royo, C., Mura, G. A. & Regagliolo, A. (2016). En: M. T. Tortosa Ybáñez, S. Grau Company, J. D. Álvarez Teruel (coord), *XIV Jornadas de Redes de Investigación en Docencia Universitaria, Investigación, Innovación y enseñanza universitaria: enfoques pluridisciplinarios* (pp. 1651-1666). Universidad de Alicante. <http://hdl.handle.net/10045/59775>
- Cohen, A. D. (2011). Second language learner strategies. In E. Hinkel (Ed.), *Handbook of research in second language teaching and learning* (Vol. II) (pp. 681-698). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Council of Europe (2001). *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, assessment*. Cambridge University Press.
- Council of Europe (2001a). *Quadro comune europeo di riferimento per le lingue: apprendimento, insegnamento, valutazione*. La Nuova Italia-Oxford [Trad. R. C. S. Scuola].
- Council of Europe (2020). *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment – Companion volume*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing. <https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages>
- Dev, P. C. (1997). Intrinsic motivation and academic achievement. *Remedial & Special Education* 18(1), 12-19. <https://doi.org/10.1177/074193259701800104>
- Gass, S., Mackey, A., Alvarez-Torres, M.J., & Fernández-García, M. (1999). The effects of task repetition on linguistic output. *Language Learning*, 49, 549-581.
- Girmus, R. L. (2011). *How to Motivate Your Students*. ERIC. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED534566>
- Holec, H. (1981). *Autonomy and foreign language learning*. Oxford: Pergamon.

- Hunter, A. M. (2017). *Fluency development in the ESL classroom: The impact of immediate task repetition and procedural repetition on learners' oral fluency* [PhD thesis, St Mary's University]. University of Surrey. <https://research.stmarys.ac.uk/id/eprint/1868>
- Jefferson, G. (2004). Glossary of transcript symbols with an introduction. In G. H. Lerner (Ed.), *Conversation Analysis: Studies from the First Generation*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Lamb, M. (2004). 'It Depends on the Students Themselves': Independent Language Learning at an Indonesian State School. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 17(3) 229-245.
- Lazăr, A. (2013). Learner Autonomy and its Implementation for Language Teacher Training. *Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 76, 460-464. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.04.146>
- Lázaro-Ibarrola A., Hidalgo, M. (2017). Procedural repetition in task-based interaction among young EFL learners. *ITL – International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 168(2), 183-202. <https://doi.org/10.1075/itl.16024.laz>
- Little, D. (1997). Responding authentically to authentic texts. In P. Benson, & P. Voller (Eds.), *Autonomy & Independence in Language Learning* (pp. 225-236). London: Routledge.
- Littlewood, W. (1996). "Autonomy": An anatomy and a framework. *System*, 24(4), 427-435. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0346-251X\(96\)00039-5](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0346-251X(96)00039-5)
- Lynch, T., & Maclean, J. (2000). Exploring the benefits of task repetition and recycling for classroom language learning. *Language Teaching Research*. Special issue, *Tasks in language pedagogy*, 4(3), 221-50.
- Lynch, T., & Maclean, J. (2001). A case of exercising: effects of immediate task repetition on learners' performance'. In M. Bygate, P. Skehan, & M. Swain (Eds.), *Researching pedagogic tasks: second language learning, teaching and testing* (pp. 141-162). Harlow: Pearson Education.
- Marin T. (2005). *La Prova Orale 2. Materiale autentico per la conversazione e la preparazione agli esami orali*. Edizioni Edilingua.
- Mojavezi, A. (2014). The relationship between task repetition and language proficiency. *Applied Research in English* 3(1), 29-40. <https://doi.org/10.22108/are.2014.15478>
- Muranoi, H. (2007). Output practise in the L2 classroom. In R. DeKeyser (Ed.), *Practice in a Second Language Perspectives from Applied Linguistics and Cognitive Psychology* (pp. 51-84). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511667275.005>
- Putwain, D. W. (2008a). Supporting assessment stress in key stage 4 students. *Educational Studies*, 34 (2), 83-95. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03055690701811081>
- Putwain, D. W. (2008b). Examination stress and test anxiety. *The psychologist*, 21(12), 1026-1029.
- Samuda, V. & Bygate, M. (2008). *Tasks in second language learning*. Palgrave Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230596429>
- Santrock, J. W. (2006). *Educational Psychology*. Boston: McGraw-Hill Higher Education.
- Verschaffel, L., & De Corte, E. (1998). Actief en constructief leren binnen krachtige onderwijsleeromgevingen [*Active and constructive learning in meaningful learning environments*]. In L. Verschaffel & J. D. Vermunt (Eds.), *Onderwijskundig Lexicon III: Het leren van leerlingen* (pp. 15-27). Samsom; Alphen aan den Rijn.
- Wery, J., & Thomson, M. M. (2013). Motivational strategies to enhance effective learning in teaching struggling students. *Support for Learning*, 28(3), 103-118. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9604.12027>