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# **In Search of Proper Pronunciation: Students' Practices of Soliciting Help during Read-Aloud**

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## Abstract

This article examines Finnish L2 learners' interactional practices of flagging trouble in pronouncing words when reading aloud texts in English. Using conversation analysis, it describes how students employ three repair initiation techniques – direct requests, trying out, and aborting the reading – as methods through which they mobilize teachers' help in the form of a model pronunciation of the target word. By describing the sequential and temporal unfolding of read-aloud, the article presents an empirical way of tracing those classroom practices that students employ to develop their pronunciation skills of English in Finland. CA-based methodology that focuses on the interactional details of how classroom activities are organized provides new insights on what happens in classroom interaction in terms of pronunciation instruction. The findings not only have local relevance to teachers' pedagogical training in Finland, but also more broadly in showing L2 teachers how classroom activities can be organized to promote practicing of pronunciation skills.

**Keywords:** pronunciation; reading aloud; repair initiation; conversation analysis.

**Asiasanat:** ääntäminen, ääneen lukeminen, korjausaloite, keskusteluanalyysi

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## 1 Introduction

Reading aloud is a method used to practice pronunciation in second or foreign language teaching and learning (e.g., Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Goodwin, 2010; Sicola & Darcy, 2015). In fact, a recent survey reports that it is among the most used methods in different second language (L2) classrooms across Europe, including Finland, the context of the present study (Henderson et al., 2012, 2015; Tergujeff, 2013). So, even though read-aloud falls under traditional methods of pronunciation instruction (Hismanoglu & Hismanoglu, 2010), it continues to be a key classroom activity that “offers a frequent and consistent opportunity for **the teacher** to draw students’ attention to pronunciation” (Sicola & Darcy, 2015: 481, emphasis added). In this article, I argue that reading aloud also provides opportunities **for students** to orient to pronunciation.

When learning to read aloud in a L2, students need to learn to recognize written words, i.e. identify their orthographic form (Grabe, 2009: 21–38), and to phonologically decode them, i.e. to pronounce them (Koda, 2004: 33–34). Research on L2 reading suggests that decoding of written words is easier in the L2 when its orthographic system bears resemblance to that of students’ first language (L1, Koda, 2005: 37–43). However, the orthographic system of English, the target language, differs considerably from that of Finnish, the students’ mother tongue. Thus, the ability to decode words in Finnish is not sufficient: students require instruction and practice in oral reading and pronunciation in English to improve these skills. For this reason, it is important to investigate what kinds of problems students encounter in decoding words and identifying their orthographic forms when they read aloud texts in English, and therefore the practices with which they seek pronunciation help from teachers. The knowledge gained by studying students’ ways of practicing English oral reading and learning how to pronounce words in L2 classroom interaction is of essence for pre- and in-service teachers. To that end, the article presents the findings of a small-scale study on the interactional practices that students employ to

develop their pronunciation skills of English in Finland and suggests an activity in which these practices can be applied in teaching pronunciation through read-aloud.

The research question the study answers is what kind of repair initiation techniques students employ to flag trouble in pronouncing the next word in the text read aloud, and thereby seek teachers' help. To answer the question, the theoretical and methodological framework of conversation analysis (CA) is used. It is argued that CA with its focus on the interactional details of classroom activities, and particularly on teachers' and students' methods of making sense of what they are doing moment-to-moment, can shed light on what happens in praxis in the classroom with respect to pronunciation instruction. By describing the sequential and temporal unfolding of read-aloud activities in naturally occurring classroom interaction, this study offers new insights on how repair initiations are used to seek pronunciation help in the L2 classroom and how such practices are accomplished in and through instructional interaction. Overall, the use of CA in the field has slowly gained ground through, for instance, studies on the prosodic and rhythmical features of turns-at-talk and how this knowledge can be used in teaching and learning L2 pronunciation (e.g., Szczepek Reed, 2015).

## **2 Corrective Practices in Pronunciation Instruction in Classroom Interaction**

According to Murphy and Baker (2015: 36), research on pronunciation instruction that examines teachers' and students' actual practices in L2 classrooms is still in its infancy. However, a focal topic of analysis in different areas of L1/L2 classroom research on pronunciation instruction is teachers' practices to correct student errors during classroom interaction. Studies on the topic have mainly employed quantitative, and to an extent experimental methods, by means of coding student errors and teacher corrective moves into different categories and investigating their distribution across lessons, teachers and learner groups (e.g., Allington, 1980; Lyster, 1998; Saito & Lyster, 2012). For instance, Allington (1980) found that teachers corrected primary school children's L1 oral reading, including

pronunciation errors, either during or right after the error was produced. Lyster's (1998) study in a L2 immersion classroom context conveyed that teachers mainly employ recasts to correct students' phonological errors, both decoding errors during read-aloud activities and mispronunciation errors. Similarly, Foote et al.'s (2016) classroom observation study showed that teachers correct pupils' reading errors or miscues via recasts, while explicit corrections and prompts are used to a lesser extent.

In Finland, Tergujeff (2012) observed Finnish teachers' methods of teaching English pronunciation to Finnish students. She analyzed the focal lessons with a pre-prepared observation form and identified ten different methods, among them activities like 'listen and repeat' and 'read aloud'. However, there were also more specific methods, e.g. correcting students' pronunciation and pointing out errors or typical pronunciation-related issues. Her findings differ from the studies cited above in that she did not consider recasts as addressing pronunciation-related problems and thus she excluded them from the data. In contrast, her findings underline the teachers' frequent use of explicit corrections, while other methods were used less. Interestingly, she did not observe whether during the read-aloud, teachers corrected students' pronunciation errors.

Overall, while there are studies on teacher corrections in pronunciation interaction, research on students' role in seeking help in relation to oral reading and pronunciation issues in L2 classroom interaction is nonexistent. Learning more about how students can become agents of their own learning processes is crucial for the development of all kinds of pedagogical practices, including pronunciation instruction (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010: 362).

### **3 Word Searches and 'Doing Pronunciation' as Forms of Interactional Repair**

In everyday conversations, repair is an interactional phenomenon that deals with participants' problems of hearing, speaking or understanding talk which can compromise participants' establishment of mutual understanding of that talk, i.e. the achievement of

intersubjectivity (Schegloff, Jefferson, & Sacks, 1977). Repair can be initiated by the speaker of the trouble source (self-initiation) or by its recipient (other-initiation) and it can be solved by self (self-repair) or other (other-repair). The problems are referred to as ‘trouble sources’, which can be anything interactants deem in need of repairing so that intersubjectivity is maintained (Schegloff et al., 1977, p. 363). Two types of trouble sources are related to problems of speaking in interaction: word finding difficulties and pronunciation problems. The former concerns situations where speakers try to find a word to incorporate into their talk but are momentarily unable to do so (e.g., Goodwin & Goodwin, 1986; Schegloff et al., 1977), while the latter refers to situations where speakers know the word but do not know how to pronounce it (Brouwer, 2004; Koshik & Seo, 2012). In both cases, the current speaker performs a repair initiation to display trouble in producing the emerging turn. Depending on the situation, the trouble is solved through self- or other-repair.

For the current study, previous findings on self-initiated repair techniques, which indicate to co-participants that their help is sought during word searches, are of relevance. In general, speakers do a great deal of interactional work to show that a word search is in progress and where they are in their search: whether resolution is achieved or not (Goodwin & Goodwin, 1986; Hayashi, 2003). When speakers are not able to resolve the problem, they initiate repair to seek recipients’ help. The mobilization of co-participants’ help happens through both verbal and nonverbal means. Among the verbal techniques are repetitions, revisions, and other explicit word search markers (Brouwer, 2003; Goodwin & Goodwin, 1986; Hayashi, 2003). Speakers also often ask co-participants to provide the searched-for item by wh-questions (Brouwer, 2003; Oelschlaeger, 1999; Radford, 2009). Speaker’s gaze is in such situations directed toward the recipient, whereby it also mobilizes joint resolution to the problem (Goodwin & Goodwin, 1986; Hayashi, 2003; Oelschlaeger, 1999; Radford, 2009, 2010). On other occasions, merely the speaker’s gaze, without accompanying verbal indicators, is effective in inviting help. On the other hand, in interactions that involve the use of books, speakers do not necessarily employ their gaze when seeking recipient’s help

(Oelschlaeger, 1999; Radford, 2009). Instead, speaker's verbal indicators, wh-questions and self-cues, suffice in drawing a candidate solution from co-participants.

To my knowledge, the first CA study on pronunciation is Brouwer's (2004) on participants' interactional practices of 'doing pronunciation' in everyday L2 conversations. For her, 'doing pronunciation' represents a type of repair activity, on account of which she has identified three self-initiation techniques that L2 speakers employ to signal difficulty in producing, and pronouncing, a Danish word, thereby inviting help from the L1 speaker. The first technique entails the use of speech perturbations that include intra-turn pauses, word cut-offs, vocalizations (e.g. uhh, euhh) and sound stretches (see Goodwin & Goodwin, 1986; Hayashi, 2003; Radford, 2009; Schegloff et al., 1977 for different L1 contexts). She shows that these phenomena signal trouble with the progressivity of the emerging turn. The second technique involves the use of rising intonation that locates the trouble source, while the third technique includes the repetition of the trouble item with or without framing practices. These remedial techniques help display that the speaker is initiating repair. The three techniques are used in different combinations and sequential constructions that clearly establish that 'doing pronunciation' is in play. In a more recent study, Koshik and Seo (2012) investigated ESL tutoring sessions and the tutees practices of eliciting help during word searches. With respect to pronunciation problems, the findings show that the tutees employ rising intonation and interrogatives to seek confirmation for the way they pronounce words.

While Brouwer's (2004) and Koshik and Seo's (2012) studies shed light on the intricate interactional work participants accomplish in achieving shared understanding of the action they are performing in and through their turns-at-talk, this study illustrates how the institutional setting and the ongoing activity framework set boundaries for the range of actions students can perform. Since students read pieces of text aloud, pronunciation practice is established at the start of the task as a goal (also Tergujeff, 2012). Pronunciation problems are thus potential trouble sources students encounter during the read-aloud

activity. In contrast, word search troubles are not amongst them as students have all the words in the text. Despite these differences, this study underlines the similarity of the techniques used by L2 speakers in ordinary conversations (Brouwer, 2004) and L2 learners in classroom interaction to solicit pronunciation help from co-participants.

#### **4 Method and data**

This study draws on the theoretical and methodological underpinnings of CA, which examines everyday social interaction and participants' methods of making sense of the interactions they are part of (see e.g., Sidnell & Stivers, 2012). CA describes how participants produce different social actions (e.g., questions, requests for help, and instructions) and display to each other their understanding of what is happening at any moment in interaction. CA adopts an emic perspective – a participant perspective – into analyzing interaction by examining the audible and visible (i.e. talk and embodiment) means participants utilize in designing, for example, requests for help. Since participants' own understandings of the actions they perform both form the loci of the analysis and drive interaction forward, research can unveil those interactional practices related to pronunciation that participants themselves orient to as interactionally meaningful and consequential as interaction unfolds. For the analysts to be able to describe the details of the verbal and embodied resources participants utilize, the data comprise video-recordings of naturally occurring interactions that enable the repeated viewing and scrutiny of participants' interactional practices. The reported findings are thus based on the rigorous analysis of the data and the description of interactional events from the participants' viewpoint.

The data come from a classroom data corpus collected in co-operation by the Department of Languages and the Center for Applied Language Studies in the University of Jyväskylä, Finland. It consists of 50 video-recorded lessons that range from Year 6 in Elementary school to Year 12 in Upper Secondary School. Both English-as-Foreign-Language (EFL)



and Content-and-Language-Integrated-Learning (CLIL) lessons have been recorded. The CLIL lessons include such subjects as history, physics, biology, religion, chemistry, physical education and English. However, in all the lessons, English is the main medium of instruction and a target of learning. Due to the wide range of lessons, the students' level of English varies a great deal, and thus the level of English used differs. Except for two native-English speaking students in the CLIL biology and religion lessons, the students are native speakers of Finnish. Of the 14 teachers who taught the lessons, three are native speakers of English and the rest are native speakers of Finnish. The participants in the analyzed data extracts are all Finnish-speaking teachers and students, and students' names are pseudonyms.

For closer analysis, classroom tasks in which students read aloud texts written in English have been chosen. The tasks range from checking and doing exercises with the whole class to group work situations, where students report on their written product, often by reading aloud the text to the rest of the class. The length of the piece of text read aloud therefore varies from short clauses to longer paragraphs. What is common to all tasks is that they are teacher-assigned and pedagogically have a dual-focus: there is a focus on accomplishing the ongoing task, whatever that is, and a focus on practicing oral reading. The main aim is not on developing students' oral reading per se, but rather to provide them with opportunities to read aloud and simultaneously practice pronunciation (also Tergujeff, 2012) while another main activity is accomplished. Within the tasks selected for closer examination, the analysis has centered on instances where students audibly and/or visibly flag trouble in reading the text aloud. The resulting collection includes 14 instances across which ten students flag pronunciation trouble, i.e. it is a small collection. However, in most instances, as the analysis will show, there is an agglomeration of techniques which have not been taken into consideration in counting the instances. In addition, all the instances occur in two data sets: in Year 12 EFL lessons and Year 8 CLIL History lessons.<sup>1</sup> Excluded from the collection are teachers' corrections of students' pronunciation errors and instances where students do self-repair (see Extract 5, l. 6). Likewise, excluded are students'

recognition problems, for example not being able to identify and/or pronounce roman numerals (e.g. *Henry VIII*).

## **5 Three self-initiating repair techniques**

The analysis shows that students employ three techniques to flag trouble in relation to reading aloud the next item due in a text. They range from (a) requests of how a word is pronounced, (b) to trying out by phonological cluing and producing different types of speech perturbations, (c) to visibly aborting the oral reading that manifests in the form of a prolonged silence. Through these techniques, students initiate a help seeking sequence, a side sequence (Brouwer, 2004), which consists of an adjacency pair: the student's repair initiation and the teacher's other-repair. The request for help is primarily addressed to the teacher, and thus the teacher is positioned as the more knowledgeable party language-wise, thereby being entitled to provide the pronunciation model (also Brouwer, 2004; Koshik & Seo, 2012).

Next, I shall provide illustrative data extracts of each technique and how they figure into the subsidiary activity of read-aloud and thereby into the primary activity of accomplishing the ongoing task. Although each analytic chapter focuses on a technique, the extracts demonstrate how several techniques are in play in a help seeking sequence, thus explicitly manifesting what a student's problem is. The analysis also delineates how the techniques include both retrospective and prospective practices (Brouwer, 2004; Schegloff, 1979; Streeck, 1995) and how the resolution of the trouble momentarily delays the progressivity of the reading activity, after which it is resumed.

### **5.1 Request for Help**

The request for help is performed verbally through an interrogative (also Koshik & Seo, 2012). The interrogative form both locates and indicates the nature of the student's

problem, i.e. that there is a pronunciation problem with the next item due. The request can be performed in Finnish (Ex. 1) or in English (Ex. 2), although the text is in English and the ongoing activity is conducted mainly in English.

Extract 1 is from a Year 12 EFL lesson, from a whole class activity of checking a homework exercise on numerals, in which the students had to fill a text in English according to Finnish prompts. At the beginning of the activity, the teacher has instructed the nominated students to read aloud the whole sentence instead of just the target form, i.e. practice oral reading and thus pronunciation.

#### Extract 1\_EFL English\_crucial

1 T \*an' the last one?  
\*T GAZE AT HER BOOK

2 (19.6) T LOOKING AT HER BOOK  
GLANCING AT CLASS  
LOOKING AROUND AT CLASS

3 T anyone?=*Katja*  
\*T GAZE SHIFT TOWARD TRANSPARENCY

4 *Katja* »since then rock an' roll has been a« (0.4)

5→ miten tuo lausutaa;=  
how that say+PASS  
how do you say that

6 T \*=crucial.  
\*T GLANCES TOWARD CLASS/KATJA

7 *Katja* \*»crucial part in musical experience in (x)  
\*T GAZE DOWN AT TRANSPARENCY

8 twenty first century (x) remains to be seen«

9 T hm+m

Although the teacher waits for a long time for the next respondent (l. 2), she is able to select *Katja*<sup>2</sup> (l. 3), who begins to read the sentence from her book (l. 4). However, shortly after, she stops in the middle of the sentence and a silence emerges. It is followed by the request of how the next item due is said, produced in Finnish (l. 5). The teacher immediately provides the model (l. 6) so that her repair turn latches *Katja*'s (see Appendix for

transcription conventions). Katja repeats the item by incorporating it into the sentence as she continues the reading (l. 7).

The student here pre-emptively invites help from the teacher on the proper pronunciation of the word ‘crucial’ before she has tried to say it herself. By producing the request, and by doing it in Finnish, she not only signals trouble but also locates the trouble source to be the next item in the sentence through the demonstrative pronoun ‘tuo’ (Eng. that). Although the 0.4s pause in line 4 can be seen to indicate potential trouble in terms of the progressivity of her reading, it does not yet serve to specify the nature of the trouble, or that there is trouble, while the request does this explicitly.

Extract 2 differs from Extract 1 slightly as the interrogative is produced in English and the student first tries to say the word before she seeks help. It comes from a Year 8 CLIL history lesson from a quiz activity on Stuart period in Britain.

#### Extract 2\_CLIL History9\_puritans

1 T           ↑okay (1.3) and (.) we can conti↑nue  
2           (0.4) T GAZE DOWN AT DOCUMENT CAMERA  
              ESTERI GAZE AT BOOKLET  
3 Esteri    »the rise of the (1.1) (pur:)« (0.5)  
4→           >ho+w do you s[ay (that)<  
              +ESTERI GAZE SHIFT TOWARDS T  
5 T                                    [puritans.  
6 Esteri    »puritans. (0.3) during James' reign  
7           <radical (.) pro-testing> (.) groups called (0.3)  
8           Puritans began to gain a sizable following. (.)  
9           Puritans were- (.) Puritans wanted to pur- pur- (.)  
10           purify the church by ↓paring down church riche- ritual. (0.3)  
11           educating (0.6) the (0.3) cler-ç (0.3) gy: (0.4) cler« (1.4)  
12 T           mhm

Prior to the extract, the teacher has elaborated at length on a historical event related to Guy Fawkes and the Gunpowder Plot. In line 1, the teacher indicates that she is done with the

explanation and that the activity can continue. Esteri, who has been assigned to read the text, recommences from where she left off before the teacher's explanation (l. 3). Shortly after, however, she stops and a silence emerges (l. 3). The silence is followed by a try from Esteri to pronounce the next item due, after which another silence follows. It is at this point that Esteri requests for help (l. 4). Again, the pronoun 'that' indicates that the next item due is the trouble source. Her request is also visibly directed to the teacher as Esteri raises her gaze from the text toward the teacher. The teacher provides the model partly in overlap with Esteri's interrogative (l. 5). As Esteri resumes the reading activity, she incorporates the trouble item into her reading.

A crucial difference between the extracts is that in Extract 1 the request is forward-oriented since Katja does not try to pronounce the word beforehand, while in Extract 2 it is backward-oriented as Esteri first tries out the word before she initiates repair (see also Brouwer, 2004; Schegloff, 1979; Streeck, 1995).<sup>3</sup> Despite the difference in the temporal orientation of the repair initiations, the sequence unfolds similarly in both extracts as the teacher's turn is produced immediately after or partly overlapping the request and both students incorporate the trouble source item into their reading as they resume the activity. However, in Extract 2, the fact that the teacher produces the model partly in overlap with the end of Esteri's request suggests her orientation to the rather lengthy silences and the trying out (l. 3) as indices of pronunciation trouble. Yet, she provides the model only after Esteri has begun to request help.

Both extracts reveal the importance of the institutional context and the goals of the ongoing activity framework with respect to how trouble is flagged and help is requested during read-aloud in L2 classroom interaction. In Brouwer's study (2004) no such requests were deployed, while in Koshik and Seo's (2012) study they were used as the last resource to indicate a pronunciation problem. The trouble was then dealt with through an extended repair sequence. Since here the ongoing activity is related to practicing pronunciation through read-aloud, it is natural that the most likely trouble students encounter is related to

decoding the target words. In such instances, the participants' interactional work and the disruption of the ongoing activity is minimal, an adjacency pair, which is produced quickly, after which the main line of activity is resumed. The requests are thus quite an efficient way to solve the problem.

Interestingly, there is a difference in the language with which students initiate the repairs. While Katja uses Finnish in the EFL lesson, Esteri requests help in English in the CLIL lesson. The use of the two languages may reflect the English-only policy that the CLIL teacher imposes in her lessons (see Jakonen, 2016), while English and Finnish are both legitimate languages in the EFL lessons. However, more empirical evidence would be needed to argue whether this really is the case.

## **5.2 Trying Out**

The second technique involves a process of trying out, i.e. attempting to pronounce the word. The technique resembles what Radford (2009, 2010) has identified as phonological self-clue strategy used by speakers with language impairments. In phonological cluing the speaker produces the first sound of the troublesome item (Radford, 2010: 85). In the present data, the trying out through phonological cluing can range from the first sound of the word (Ex. 3) to the first syllable of the word (Ex. 4) to almost the whole word (Ex. 3). Likewise, different speech perturbations such as cut offs, vocalizations and sound stretches along with silences occur when students try to pronounce the trouble item, but fail. Extracts 3 and 4 illustrate how the teachers orient to the trying out as an indication of pronunciation trouble. Hence, the cluing and the speech perturbations suffice in displaying to the teacher the nature of the student's problem.

Extract 3 comes from an EFL lesson from a whole class activity in which the teacher says a piece of text in Finnish and the students need to find an English translation from the textbook and to read it aloud.

### Extract 3\_EFL English\_mirth

1 T \*<twelve?> (.)  
\*T GAZE DOWN AT HER BOOK

2 »joka on mutkikas mielikuvituksesta ja hilpeydestä pudottu juo↑ni«  
which is complicated fantasy and mirth woven plot

3 (7.0) T GAZE DOWN AT HER BOOK  
AT 2.9s GAZE SHIFT TO CLASS

4 T \*Moo\*na  
\*T GAZE TOWARDS MOONA  
\*T GAZE SHIFT DOWN AT BOOK

5 Moona »which is a (.) complicated (0.2) plot,  
6→ woven of fantasy an' m- (.) mir-«=  
7 T =mirth.=  
8 Moona =>mirth«=  
9 T =hm↑m (0.5) that's ↑right.

The teacher selects Moona as the next respondent in line 4. As Moona reads the text, she tries out the last word of the phrase twice (l. 6). She first utters only the first sound of the word, which is followed by a brief pause. She then retries to pronounce the word, but aborts. At this juncture, the teacher produces the model so that her turn latches Moona's (l. 7). Moona resumes the reading by repeating the word, and thus finishing the phrase. Neither of them gaze toward each other during the reading; rather they gaze down at their books.

Extract 4 comes from the same CLIL history lesson as Extract 2, i.e. from the quiz activity.

### Extract 4\_CLIL History9\_anonymous

1 Esteri »the (.) Gunpowder Plot. (.)  
2 James was a firm protest- (.) protestant  
3 and in six↑teen o': f:our,  
4 he expelled all catholic priests from the island. (0.3)  
5 this was one of the factors, (.)  
6 which led to the Gunpowder Plot of sixteen o' five. (.)  
7 a group ↑of catholic plotters (0.3)  
8 planned to blow up parliament when it opened on November fifth.  
9→ (0.6) >ho'ever< an: (1.2) an:[::«  
10 T [uh anonymous  
11 Esteri »anonymous letter betrayed the plot, (.)  
12 and one of the plotters (.) Guy F:awkes (.)  
13 was captured in the cellars of the house (.) of parliament  
14 wi- with enough (0.6) gunpowder to blow the place sky ↓high.«

Akin to Extract 3, Esteri tries to pronounce the next item due in line 9. Already when she reads the indefinite article 'an' she slows down and stretches it. After this, a long pause unfolds, during which the participants gaze down at their texts. Esteri then tries out the target word by stretching the beginning of the second syllable as if it was the first. The teacher provides the model in line 10, partly overlapping Esteri's try. Next, Esteri continues the reading by incorporating the word into the sentence (l. 11). Throughout the sequence, both the teacher and Esteri gaze down at their texts.

Both extracts bring forth interesting phenomena related to dealing with pronunciation trouble in classroom interaction as the phonological cluing, and the sound stretches, cut offs and silences clearly display that the students are experiencing trouble with the next word due. Consequently, these indices also serve to locate the trouble source to be the tried-out item and indicate that the problem is related to pronunciation. In this respect, they are also specific examples of backward-oriented techniques to flag trouble (Brouwer, 2004; Schegloff, 1979). Moreover, the teachers' other-repairs are performed in latching or in overlap with the second try of the word. Thus, the resolution of the trouble is quickly dealt



with when the teacher provides the pronunciation model. No further explanation or interactional work occurs at this point, and the student can resume the reading.

### **5.3 Silence after aborting the reading**

The third technique consists of an emerging, prolonged silence that audibly manifests that a student has aborted the reading. The silence is what teachers seem to orient to as a primary indicator of a problem, although a range of other features such as students' embodied actions (Ex. 5) and vocalizations (Ex. 6) can further the interpretation. Extract 5 comes from an EFL lesson from an activity where the class is beginning to discuss a piece of poetry by Edgar Louie Masters and a student, Eeva, is requested to read the introduction to the theme.

Extract 5\_EFL English\_equivalent

1 T \*Eeva \*could you give it a try?  
 \*T GAZE AT EEVA  
 \*T GAZE SHIFT DOWN AT HER BOOK

2 (1.2) T GAZE SHIFT UP TOWARDS EEVA  
 EEVA GAZE DOWN AT HER BOOK

3 Eeva \*mm »by the way of introduction.  
 \*T GAZE SHIFT DOWN AT HER BOOK (UNTIL L. 10)

4 American Edgar Louie Masters was:: originally a lawyer  
 5 but after practising law for several (0.6) years he established  
 6 his repsta- repu[tation as a] poet.« (0.7)

7 T [reputa+tion]

8 Eeva »he is best known for the spoon river anthology  
 9 nineteen fifteen (0.5)

10→ which he intended as a modern« (- -+ - - \*- -)  
 +EEVA RAISES HEAD SLIGHTLY UP  
 \*T RAISES GAZE TOWARD EEVA

11 T equivalent.

12 (0.5) T GAZE SHIFT DOWN AT HER BOOK  
 EEVA GAZE SHIFT DOWN AT HER BOOK

13 Eeva »equivalent (0.3) of old Greek epitaph. (0.8)  
 14 it is a series of poetic monologues by the (0.9)  
 15 two hundred an' forty-four inhabitants of spoon river.«

As Eeva reads, we can see that in line 10 she suddenly stops, after which a silence of 0.6 seconds emerges. During it, Eeva raises her head slightly up from the text, but does not shift her gaze toward the teacher (also Radford, 2009). The teacher, in contrast, raises her head from her book and directs gaze toward Eeva. Next, she produces the model (l. 11). It is followed by a short silence, during which both the teacher and Eeva lower their gazes at their books. When Eeva resumes the reading (l. 13), she incorporates the trouble source item into it. It seems that in addition to the emerging silence, Eeva's slightly raised head invites the model from the teacher, as it visibly manifests that Eeva has aborted the reading activity and is not oriented to the book as intently as before.

Extract 6 comes from a CLIL history lesson from an activity, in which the class is checking a quiz the students have done on Queen Victoria and her reign.

### Extract 6\_CLIL history\_jubilee

1 T .hh okay. Inka:  
2 (2.0) INKA GAZE AT HER ANSWER SHEET  
T GAZE SHIFT DOWN AT HER ANSWER SHEET  
3 T number sixteen.  
4 (1.0) INKA GAZE AT HER ANSWER SHEET  
T GAZE AT HER ANSWER SHEET  
5 Inka ↑uhh (0.2) »when Victoria had been in power for fifty years,  
6→ she held her« +(1.2) ↓euhh+ (0.3)  
+INKA RAISES EYEBROWS+  
7 T jubilee.  
8 (0.5) INKA GAZE TOWARD ANSWER SHEET  
T GAZE AT HER ANSWER SHEET  
9 Inka »£jubilee£ (0.3) wearing a red dress an' drove through  
10 London where people cheered her.«

As Inka reads the true-or-false sentence from the quiz sheet, she suddenly stops (l. 6). A silence emerges, during which she continues to gaze at the sheet. Although her face is visible only diagonally (the camera is behind her), it appears that she raises her eyebrows, as if to display surprise of what the next word is. The facial expression is accompanied by the vocalization that is produced in lower pitch. However, at this point the teacher gazes toward the answer sheet in front of her and does not see Inka's facial expression. This demonstrates that she orients to the silences and the vocalization as indication of trouble and produces the model pronunciation accordingly (l. 7). After another silence, Inka smilingly pronounces the target item and resumes the reading (l. 9).

In Extracts 5 and 6, the silence is a strong indicator for the teacher to realize that the student is experiencing pronunciation trouble in relation to the next item due, i.e. that the silence is not only a momentary break from reading. The extracts, however, differ from one another in that in Extract 5, the activity sequence contains a prior instance of pronunciation trouble, where the teacher performs an other-correction by modelling the word 'reputation' (l. 7) in overlap with Eeva's self-repair (l. 6). In addition, the silence that emerges during Eeva's

reading (l. 10) is notably shorter than in Extract 6, where there is no such prior trouble. In Extract 6, the prosodically marked vocalization that Inka produces further underlines the next item as a trouble source.

#### **5.4 Summarizing discussion of analysis**

Out of the three repair-initiation techniques, the request for help explicitly seeks the teacher's involvement in the resolution of the trouble through an other-repair (cf. Brouwer, 2003; Oelschlaeger, 1999; Radford, 2009). Unlike in Seo and Koshik's (2012) study, the request is not used as the last resort (although see Ex. 2). The main reason for this is that the request provides the most precise way of indicating, locating and resolving the trouble, and thus can be conducive to the progressivity of the reading activity when the side sequence remains short. Overall, the request is used in five cases out of the 14 in the current collection. Curiously, trying out, which comprises phonological cluing alongside different speech perturbations, is the most used practice (7/14). Potential explanation is that participants prefer self-repair over other-repair, in a similar manner as Schegloff et al. (1977) have proposed for everyday conversations.<sup>4</sup> However, in these instances, the students are not able to perform the repair, so the teachers provide the model, thereby helping students achieve their 'zone of proximal development' (Vygotsky, 1978). In contrast to the request, trying out indicates the nature of the trouble through its backward-oriented nature and locates the trouble by disrupting the progressivity of the emergent reading. The prolonged silence, on the other hand, manifests audibly as the abortion of the reading that locates the trouble, but does not specify the nature of the trouble. Perhaps due to this, the prolonged silence by itself is the least used practice in the current data (2/14). The understanding that the silence indicates pronunciation trouble is invoked mostly by the larger activity framework of the read-aloud activity (Ex. 6) or by an earlier occasion of pronunciation trouble (Ex. 5). Additionally, the silence can be accompanied by different embodied actions, such as raising one's head slightly in an expectant manner that provides a visible clue to teachers that their help is needed. As far as gaze is concerned, the analysis

highlights that students' help seeking practices in the analyzed context do not involve participants' gaze contact (also Radford, 2009). Although one of the participants can shift their gaze toward the other (Ex. 5), participants' orientation is mostly directed to the texts. The intensity with which the text is oriented to can then function as a resource, which mobilizes co-participants' help.

Overall, all the audible and visual resources used display participants' finely tuned orientation to the interactional relevance of the analyzed techniques for organizing classroom interaction. So, even though only 14 instances were found in all the read-aloud activities, the techniques form a 'practice' that teachers recognize as interactionally consequential since they model the pronunciation. Moreover, it is a practice that is used in two different data sets that were recorded seven years apart in different cities in Central Finland.

Although the analysis introduced the three techniques separately, they are generally produced in a range of combinations, akin to Brouwer's study (2004). For instance, in several extracts, a silence precedes either the request (Ex. 1) or the trying out (Ex. 4). This indicates the interactional work participants do to establish that there is a trouble source and that the trouble source in this sequential and temporal position manifests a pronunciation problem. However, since the subsidiary goal of the ongoing task is to practice pronunciation, participants' orientation is more readily and demonstrably directed towards pronunciation problems, unlike in other settings (e.g., Brouwer, 2004; Koshik & Seo, 2012; Radford, 2009). Consequently, the participants understand the nature of the trouble quickly and orient to solving it as efficiently as possible. This is visible in that the repair is resolved through an adjacency pair (i.e. student request for help and the teacher modelling). Although there is a clear disruption in the read-aloud activity, it is only momentary. Immediately after the trouble has been solved, the reading is resumed.

When the reading is resumed, most often than not students incorporate the trouble source into their reading. The incorporation manifests that students imitate the teacher's pronunciation model, whereby they practice its pronunciation (also Koshik & Seo, 2012). An interesting question is why in some cases students can incorporate the trouble source immediately into their reading, while in others a silence emerges before the reading is resumed. In Extract 5 Eeva lowers her head first, which may be the cause of the delay. However, in Extract 6, Inka gazes at the sheet for 0.5 seconds and then pronounces the word with a smiling voice. This raises the question whether 'jubilee' is an unfamiliar word, which she can neither decode phonologically nor identify orthographically, nor above all, understand its meaning.<sup>5</sup> An opposite example is Esteri's pronunciation of 'anonymous' (Ex. 4), which is produced immediately after the teacher's modelling. Its pronunciation embodies familiarity with and recognition of the word and its meaning. Whether there is something to these trouble sources, in terms of (un)familiarity with word meanings, when students resume the reading is a topic for future research as the current data collection is too limited. But what can be claimed is that, to an extent, the analyzed student practices create particular kinds of learning opportunities for students in how to decode and pronounce English words. These opportunities are something the students have themselves instantiated by seeking help from the teacher. The findings thus highlight that teachers need to be made aware of the importance of such practices for students' learning, whereby they can become more sensitively tuned to students' divergent actions and help create a sense of agency for students in their own learning process (e.g., Celce-Murcia et al., 2010: 362).

## **6 Conclusion**

Recent studies on pronunciation instruction have provided overviews of the methods with which pronunciation is taught and addressed in the L2 classroom (e.g., Foote et al., 2016; Henderson et al., 2015; Tergujeff, 2012). This article has approached the topic by adopting a qualitative, descriptive perspective to examining students' and teachers' classroom practices in non-elicited data, whereby it answers the call for more empirical-based

research (e.g., Baker, 2014; Derwing & Munro, 2015; Foote et al., 2016; Tergujeff, 2012) that helps “expand the knowledge base of L2 pronunciation instruction” (Baker & Murphy, 2011: 31).

To that end, the study set out to show how CA with its focus on the temporal and sequential organization of naturally occurring classroom activities can enhance our understanding of how students take an active role in practicing English pronunciation through read-aloud. It argues that by analyzing what students do in and through classroom interaction, we can become more aware of how many of the actions teachers perform are in fact occasioned by students’ actions. By concentrating on the interactional practices students employ to seek pronunciation help from the teacher, the findings evince that seemingly simple repair initiation techniques that indicate trouble in producing emerging speech are effective in mobilizing teachers’ response in a similar manner as various word search techniques are effective in inviting recipients’ help in other settings (Brouwer, 2003; Goodwin & Goodwin, 1986; Hayashi, 2003; Oelschlaeger, 1999; Radford, 2009, *inter alia*).

The knowledge gained by this study is of value when providing pedagogical training for pre-service teachers or further education for in-service teachers in Finland, but also elsewhere. In Finnish, the pronunciation and reading of words is based on the close letter-to-sound correspondence (Suomi, Toivanen, & Ylitalo, 2008: 141). When learning English, students need to learn how to decode, and therefore to pronounce, words since there is no one-to-one correspondence between the letters and sounds of English. Learning to decode can be done via explicit instruction on phonetics, but also through recurrent practicing of reading aloud texts in English that renders a more meaningful context for training one’s pronunciation skills. That is, it caters for a broader approach to learning pronunciation, beyond the segmental focus (e.g., Celce-Murcia et al., 2010; Tergujeff, 2012).

The findings thus provide valuable insights on the kinds of pronunciation issues that teachers could address not only during the read-aloud activity, but also more explicitly after

the activity. This is important, as students have brought these issues to teachers' attention instead of teachers choosing to address specific issues beforehand (Sicola & Darcy, 2015: 475). Furthermore, the practicing of English pronunciation in this study was accomplished as a by-product of another classroom activity. Students in EFL lessons in Finland are often requested to translate textbook chapters to Finnish in pairs and to read the texts aloud. During such activities, students can be instructed to tune in to one another's repair initiation techniques and identify when their partner is facing pronunciation trouble. Afterwards they can discuss the specific problems together and thus help one another. To that end, the study offers an insight on how teachers can design their classroom activities in ways that bring off multiple goals. Preferably this ought to be done in a manner that affords students different occasions to negotiate how particular words are pronounced, whereby they can benefit from the read-aloud activity the most. These kinds of 'multiple goal' activities can be used alongside more focused instructional activities on pronunciation and the phenomena therein (e.g., phonetics) to provide a more rounded approach to learn how to pronounce English words.

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<sup>1</sup> Although the read-aloud activity was practiced in several subject lessons in the corpus, there were no student-produced repair-initiations viz. pronunciation in the other lessons.

<sup>2</sup> Katja is not in either of the cameras that were used to record the lesson, so it is difficult to say whether she raises her hand to volunteer.

<sup>3</sup> According to Schegloff (1979: 273–275), different turn design features indicate whether repair is forward or backward-oriented.

Features like pauses and ‘uhh’s generally precede the repair initiation and are thus forward-oriented, while cut-offs manifest backward-oriented repair. This is because the trouble source item has been / is being produced already.

<sup>4</sup> The preference for self-repair is further attested by the vast number of self-repairs that students perform during read-aloud and that teachers do not orient to as requiring their help. However, I have not counted the students’ self-repairs as they outnumber dozen, most likely more, times the number of other-repairs.

<sup>5</sup> Although notice how the teacher does not orient to the word as being unfamiliar since she does not explain it.

## TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

## APPENDIX

Following CA methodology, the participants' talk has been transcribed according to the Jeffersonian transcription notations.

.	downward/stopping intonation
,	continuing intonation
?	interrogative intonation
ː	slightly interrogative intonation
↑	rising intonation
↓	falling intonation
<u>what</u>	word emphasis
>what<	quick speech
<what>	slow speech
°what°	quiet speech
wha:t	a sound or a syllable is extended
(1.9)	silence (approximately)
(.)	micro pause
(-)	one tenth of a silence
(what)	dubious hearing
(x)	unidentifiable item
ye-	a cut-off word
[what]	overlapping speech
[what]	
=	contiguous utterances or units of talk
»what«	piece of text read aloud

In addition to verbal annotations, participants' focal embodied actions have been transcribed in capital letters underneath the spoken representation.

Teacher's embodied actions are indicated by an asterisk (\*) and students' by the plus (+) sign (when they have been captured in the camera view).