

**Interactionist Dynamic Assessment in L2 Learning:  
A Case Study of Tutoring L2 English Oral Communication**

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## **Abstract**

Interactionist Dynamic Assessment (DA) is a language pedagogical approach that dialectically integrates assessment and instruction to co-construct a future between the learner and the mediator. Interactionist DA, based on a qualitative interpretation of Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), focuses on helping learners perform optimally, which they cannot do independently, and develop to the next level through assistance and interactions with the mediator. The present paper attempts to conduct a case study of interactionist DA in the L2 learning context by tutoring L2 English oral communication to investigate how interactions between a mediator and a L1 Japanese student are negotiated and help develop the learner's performance. The results indicate that interactionist DA in the L2 context is effective in helping the learner overcome problems and perform better through negotiated interactions with the mediator and revealing the learner's actual competence.

## **Introduction**

Interactionist Dynamic Assessment (DA), rooted in the theory of L.S. Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory of Mind (SCT), namely, the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), is a language pedagogical approach in which "assessment and instruction are dialectically integrated as the means to move toward an always emergent (i.e., dynamic) future" (Pohner 2005, p. 20). With integrated assessment and instruction, the mediator tries to help L2 learners perform as well as their actual competence, which they cannot do independently, and to move up to the next level through mediation, interaction and collaboration.

Interactionist DA centers on an qualitative interpretation of the ZPD (Pohner & Lantolf 2005, p. 239), which Vygotsky (1978) defined as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (p. 86). According to Pohner (2008), "the ZPD was Vygotsky's proposal for understanding children's relative proximity to the next age level of development, performing what he referred to as 'diagnostics of development' (Vygotsky 1998)" (p. 32).

In order to further relate the ZPD theory to DA, Pohner and Lantolf (2005) stress the importance of the future by drawing on *present-to-future* models which

concentrate on the future-in-the-making, and cite Valsiner's analysis of conceptualizing the future in developmental psychology. *Present-to-future* models focus on predicting the future "not a priori but on the basis of concrete mediated activity," which enables "researchers and educators to chart out development while it is emerging" and also "to participate actively in the development process itself" (p. 237-238).

Pohner (2008) also points out that sensitivity to the ZPD is what differentiates DA from conventional assessment approaches such as formative assessment (p. 92).

While formative assessment aims to feed back student's information into instruction through tests and teacher observations for the purpose of teaching decisions (p. 11), DA emphasizes "dialogic cooperation between mediator and the learner" (p. 92).

Furthermore, in light of the unification of instruction and assessment, DA questions conventional views on separation of instruction and assessment, such as "high-stakes tests" promoted by the No Child Left Behind policy in the U.S. (p. 4-5).

In addition, DA consists of two frameworks: interactionist and interventionist. While interactionist centers on an interactive and qualitative approach to assessment, interventionist focuses on a scripted and quantitative approach to assessment such as psychometric testing (Pohner 2008, p. 44-45). The present study zeros in on the interactionist DA, which reflects Vygotsky's ZPD more precisely.

The present paper first reviews literatures to illustrate how the theory of DA has first developed in the fields of psychology and education and how it has recently been applied in the area of applied linguistics, in particular, L2 studies, with increasing interest in Vygotsky's theory (Pohner 2008, p. 5). Moreover, the paper attempts to conduct an interactionist DA study of tutoring an English narrative in a L2 context in order to investigate how interactions between a mediator and a L1 Japanese student are negotiated and help develop the learner's performance.

### **Literature review**

Alexander R. Luria first introduced the concept of Dynamic Assessment (DA) in his paper as a Vygotsky's colleague outside the Soviet Union in 1961 (Vygotsky 1978, p. ix; Pohner & Lantolf 2005, p. 234) and presented the difference in assessment between statistical approaches and dynamic approaches (Luria 1961, p. 7). Luria pointed out that statistical approach such as psychometric tests failed to represent a complete picture of learners' capabilities (Pohner & Lantolf 2005, p. 234). In order to get a full picture of learners' capabilities, he argued, that two important pieces of information were required: the learners' performance with help from the mediator and the degree to which they can improve with this help in completing the same task and in transcending this mediated performance to other tasks (ibid.). Luria (1961) further

suggested that “the most important problem is that we have to pay more attention not only to the diagnosis, but also to the prognosis of the developmental potential of these children” (p. 5).

Reuven Feuerstein, a leading interactionist DA researcher and a special educator (Pohner 2007, p. 325), has created the most comprehensive DA model and contributed to popularizing DA (Pohner 2008, p. 52-53). He constructed *Structural Cognitive Modifiability* (SCM) theory as his framework of DA (Pohner 2005, p. 240). In the theory, he argues that “human beings need to be considered as open system, liable to be meaningfully modified by environmental intervention,” which disagrees with “the general hereditary view of achievement potential” that is subject to innate abilities (Feuerstein 1988, p. 5).

Central to Feuerstein’s DA approach is the theory of *Mediated Learning Experience* (MLE) that consists of 11 attributes. Feuerstein (1988) emphasized three in the 11 components: intentionality, transcendence, and meaning (p. 59). *Intentionality* is the mediator’s intended approach to mediation (*reciprocity*) to form a triangular relationship between the mediator, the child, and the stimuli (p. 62). *Transcendence* develops the child’s cognitive structures through meditated interaction to go beyond immediate needs (p. 65). *Mediation of meaning* refers to exposure to “culturally

determined values, allegiances, attachments and relationships” through behaviors whereby the child gives thought to meaning and significance and often responds by asking questions such as “why” and “what” (p. 66).

MLE theory, along with SCM theory, closely resembles Vygotsky’s interpretation of the ZPD concept and mediation, however, Feuerstein denies his knowledge of the ZPD (Pohner 2008, p. 52). While his MLE is appraised as the most theoretically complex model of DA, Feuerstein failed to present “concrete evidence of how mediation is negotiated as interactions unfold” (Pohner 2008, p. 87).

The present paper now turns to an early L2 study of corrective feedback and mediation by Aljaafresh and Lantolf, which is not specifically within the framework of DA, but helped develop interactionist DA procedures (Pohner & Lantolf 2005, p. 242).

Aljaafresh and Lantolf (1994) studied how the negotiation of negative feedback in the context of the ZPD facilitates L2 learning by tutoring essay writing in an ESL course at a university on the east coast of the US (p. 468). Nine L2 learners of English participated individually in eight 45-minute weekly sessions, receiving corrective feedback on their in-class compositions. (p. 469). On the basis of Vygotsky’s concept of the ZPD, the tutor provided appropriate level of help or mediation during tutorial sessions, which is graduated and contingent. Appropriate mediation means “continuous

*assessment* of the novice's needs and abilities and the *tailoring* of help to those conditions" (p. 468). In other words, through constant interaction that "involved mediating moves on the part of the tutor, learner responses and then appropriate adjustments to mediation," the mediator and the learner enable the co-construction of a ZPD (Pohner 2008, p. 99).

Aljaafresh and Lantolf (1994) first defined *Developmental Criteria* in an effort to illustrate the intramental development of the learner's interlanguage in the framework of the ZPD. The criteria aimed to search for "signs of movement away from reliance on the tutor, or other-regulation," by using "five general levels of transitions from intermental to intramental functioning, as the learner moved through the ZPD toward self-regulation" (p. 470).

Moreover, to analyze the mediation moves during tutorial sessions, Aljaafresh and Lantolf (1994) invented *Regulatory Scale*, which lists 13 levels of help, ranging from the most implicit to the most explicit. The scale indicates that the more implicit feedback, the higher in the ZPD as the learner is close to self-regulation, and on the other hand, the more explicit feedback, the lower in the ZPD as the learner relies more on other-regulation, or assistance to perform (p. 471).

Furthermore, Aljaafresh and Lantolf (1994) discussed that "different learners



often have different ZPDs for the same target language form and will therefore require different levels of help” (p. 473). For instance, when two learners made the same error in terms of omitting the definite article with USA, they needed different levels of feedback (ibid.). While the first learner required all 13 levels of feedback from *Regulatory Scale* until he located the error, the second learner only needed to read the sentence with the error again, which is equivalent to levels 1 and 2 of the scale (p. 474). This example indicates the importance of “linking appropriate forms of correct feedback to the individual learner’s responsive moves” (ibid.).

In sum, despite its limitation to detecting the change in the learner’s level of ability (Pohner 2008, p. 102) due to the nature of its non-dynamic approach, Aljaafresh and Lantolf’s effort has reinforced subsequent L2 DA studies.

Now the present paper discusses an L2 DA study by Pohner. Following Feuerstein’s theories and Aljaafresh and Lantolf’s procedures, his study (2005) is “one of the first attempts to use DA in a L2 context” (p. 3) and the most extensive study of DA principles in the L2 learning context to date (p. 314).

Pohner conducted an empirical DA study of oral communication among advanced learners of L2 French (Pohner 2008, p. 108) to investigate the effectiveness of the application of DA procedures to L2 learning (Pohner 2005, p. 316). The study

recruited six students in an advanced French foreign language course at a university in the northeastern USA (Pohner 2008, p. 107) and conducted seven one-on-one tutoring sessions, including two sets of static assessments (SAs) and dynamic assessments (DAs), an enrichment program, and two transfer tasks (Pohner 2005, p. 151).

The procedures of this DA study is rather complex. In the initial SA and DA, the participants watched short video clips from the movie *Nine Months* and orally narrated the story in French in the past tense form, and only in DAs, the tutor offered appropriate mediation. The enrichment program provided an individualized tutorial, targeting the participants' linguistic problem areas that emerged from the first SA and DA. After the enrichment program, the second SA and DA were carried out just the same way as the first SA and DA. Lastly, in two transfer tasks, with mediation from the tutor, the participants composed a past-tense narrative in French of brief scenes from the movie *The Pianist* and an excerpt from Voltaire's *Candide*, (Pohner 2005, p. 4, p. 151).

Pohner (2005) attempted a two-way analysis by employing typologies of mediation and learner reciprocity to describe interactions between the tutor and the learner (p. 157). These typologies aim not only to discriminate the results of DAs from those of SAs, but also detect progress in learners' performance over time (p. 157-158). *Mediation Typology* intends to study both "the quality and frequency of mediation" with

15 levels of the explicitness of interaction moves (p. 159-160). *Learner Reciprocity*

*Typology* determines the learner's developmental level (p. 182), using nine categories of responsibility that they take for their performance (p. 157, p. 183).

As a result, Pohner (2005) reported that SAs did not always reflect accurate learners' independent abilities, as in some cases their performance was underestimated or overestimated, and that mediated interactions in DAs were more reliable, to the effect that a description of actual degree of learners' difficulties was provided. In SA, for example, two learners, Amanda and Nancy, mainly used the present tense and the PP, instead of imperfect aspect. In DA, Amanda remembered imperfect aspect and used it with some level of accuracy. In contrast, Nancy confessed that she did not know the difference between perfective and imperfective aspect (p. 316). DAs were also effective in detecting additional problems that did not emerge from SAs. For instance, Donna did not use the PP forms of pronominal verbs in SA, but found she was not able to produce them correctly when she was encouraged to try by the mediator during DA (p. 317).

In addition, Pohner (2005) pointed out the effectiveness of the DA procedures in detecting learners' development at a macro level. In the second DA, the participants developed a better control over tense and aspect, and they had a more control over interactions with the mediator, as they requested types of mediation moves that helped

finish their tasks (p. 318). Amanda, for instance, took high levels of responsibility for her performance, as her responses to mediated interactions included ‘incorporating the mediator’s feedback,’ ‘using the mediator as a resource,’ or ‘overcoming problems,’ which are levels 5, 6 and 8, respectively (ibid.), in nine categories of *Learner Reciprocity Typology* (p. 183-184).

However, Pohner’s study (2005) has a limitation to analyzing accurate learners’ performance at a micro level due to its methodological shortcomings (p. 327). The main problem was an oversight of the coding, which mixed up interaction moves between the mediator and the learner in DA and transfer sessions (ibid.). This failed to differentiate between “learners’ mediated and non-mediated production of verbal form” (p. 328).

In sum, although Pohner developed and conducted DA procedures in the L2 learning context and illustrated learners’ development at a macro level, he failed to provide a detailed description of how the mediator and the learner interacted during DA and transfer sessions, which is the core of interactionist DA study.

The present study now attempts to investigate how interactions between the mediator and the learner are negotiated and help develop learners’ performance, as it is of importance to study those interactions in DAs. The study addresses the following four research questions.

## **Research Questions**

1. How do the results of Session 1 (static assessment) differ from those of Session 3 (dynamic assessment) in terms of judging the learner's language ability?
2. How much development of learner performance can be identified over three sessions at macro and micro levels, in particular, linguistic features?
3. How does mediation moves help the learner to improve his/her performance?
4. How can learner's improvement in performance relate to his/her internalization of mediation moves?

## **Method**

### **Participants**

The present research has two L1 Japanese participants: a tutor (mediator) and a learner. The researcher recruited a volunteer, Keiko, from L1 Japanese students who are currently learning English as their L2 at an English language program in a US state university in the Pacific. Keiko is in her early 20s and has studied English in the program for eight months at the time of the research. The purpose of her English study is to enroll in an art program at a US university. She had no overseas experience prior to attending the English language program except for a trip to the US once as a small child. Her education background is middle and high school and 1-year technical school to study 2D animation in Japan. She received formal English instruction for six years in

middle and high school. Her current English proficiency level is intermediate according to the English program. The role of the tutor was played by the researcher. In addition, for participation in the research, a small compensation was paid.

## **Procedures**

The procedures for the study is a simplified version of Pohner's study. The researcher conducted a one-on-one tutorial session with the learner three separate times and tape-recorded all three sessions for the purpose of transcription. The researcher acted as the mediator and asked the learner to watch a short video clip from the movie *Handsome Suit* (a Japanese comedy) in Japanese with English subtitles for about 10 minutes and retell the story in English in the past tense form. Only in the second session, when retelling the story, the learner received mediation from the tutor (mediator) when necessary. In each session the learner took a note while watching the movie clip.

Session 1 (static assessment) was used as a pretest to search for the learner's grammatical competence and potential problem areas of grammatical features, by observing her solo performance without assistance from the mediator. In Session 2 (dynamic assessment), the mediator provided individualized mediation and assistance, including prompts, hints, suggestions, explanation, etc. in an appropriate and meaningful manner, where necessary. The mediator paid attention to the problem areas

from Session 1 and additional problems that the learner revealed through interactions in Session 2. Through DA, the mediator tried to help the learner perform optimally with the help of mediation. In Session 3 (static assessment), the mediator observed how much the learner has developed over the three sessions and if the learner could internalize solutions to some of the problems that she had in the previous two sessions.

**Table 1. Description of Three Sessions**

<b>Session 1</b>	SA (static assessment)	Independent
<b>Session 2</b>	DA (dynamic assessment)	Mediation
<b>Session 3</b>	SA (static assessment)	Independent

## **Analysis**

All three tutorial sessions were transcribed for analysis and the data of each session was analyzed accordingly. In Session 1 (SA), the mediator analyzed the learner's language ability, such as problem areas, by looking at the transcript of her solo performance. The analysis of Session 2 (DA) zeroed in on the learner's errors and struggles, the quality and frequency of mediation, the learner's reciprocity moves and new findings. Regarding the quality of mediation, Pohner's Mediation Typology was employed, which has 15 levels of help in the order of implicit to explicit interventions that the mediator provides. In Session 3 (SA), the analysis focused on learner's

development over the three sessions and internalization of solutions to some of the problems in Sessions 1 and 2.

## **Discussion**

Session 1 (SA) served as a pretest to analyze the learner's linguistic ability and potential problem areas of grammatical features. Keiko managed to retell the whole story in English in the past tense form, although she tended to make short, monotonous sentences, accompanied by connectives of "and" and "then," and often repeated the same phrases. She took the task seriously, as she jotted down English subtitles (e.g. a trial customer), and asked about the word "manager" before starting a narrative.

From the transcript of Session 1, two focus areas were apparent: usage of verb and "something." Keiko failed to produce transitive verbs correctly. These examples include "forced" in "The manager and the sale person forced to wear a handsome suit" and "surprised of" in "Takuro was very surprised, surprised of the looks of the manager." She also used the form of something+noun, such as "something characters," and "something layer." Thus, these two problems were selected as the focus areas to pay attention to in Session 2.

Session 2 (DA) aimed to analyze the problem areas that emerged from Session 1 and additional problems in Session 2, and look at how interactions between the



mediator and the learner were negotiated, in particular, mediation moves that the mediator provided.

The first problem is the form of something+noun, which Keiko used to describe a noun phrase (e.g., something layer) in Session 1. In Session 2, she produced the same phrase “something layer” again to mean “a handsome suit.” After many interactions, Keiko could understand “something layer” is not grammatical. The following protocol is an excerpt of the interactions.

106. M: Well, so you mentioned that the manager took off something layer. You want to, you are talking about the handsome suit itself?
107. K: Yes.
108. M: What do you want to say? Like a layer, or some layer or a handsome suit? Do you understand what I mean?
109. K: No, really.
110. M: Okay, so. There is something wrong in this sentence. The manager took off something layer. Would you like to change the sentence?
111. K: You mean some layer or something layer?
112. M: Yeah, what do you think? Can you see the difference between some layer or something layer?
113. K: Yeah, some layer, some can be adjective. Something is usually a noun.

In line 112, when the mediator provided a metalinguistic clue by asking the difference between some layer and something layer, Keiko finally got the point and explained the word class, which presumably made her clear about the difference between “some” and “something” at least, and after these interactions, Keiko never produced the form of something+noun again.

Another problem in Session 1 was the incorrect use of transitive verbs. In Session 2, Keiko produced “be surprised + preposition” incorrectly again. The mediator tried to elicit the right preposition from her until providing the correct answer to see if phrasal verbs or preposition usage might be another possible problem area, as in her earlier attempts (lines 32-40), Keiko failed to produce “look at” correctly to describe a scene in which a woman looked at Takuro, and instead gave wrong utterances including “look on” and “look up.” The following protocol shows interactions about the problem of “surprised + preposition.”

125. K: Takuro was so surprised about the real manager.
126. M: So Takuro was very surprised?
127. K: ...Surprised of?
128. M: Close.
129. K: (Laughing) ..Surprised on?
130. M: Good try.
131. K: (Laughing) ....Surprised... surprised in.....surprised about..
132. M: Takuro was...
133. K: Surprised of?
134. M: Good try.
135. K: (Laughing) ... still ..surprised.....
136. M: Takuro was... Pass?
137. K: Pass.
138. M: Okay, what's next? Surprised.. mm.. what's next?
139. K: The real manager.
140. M: The real appearance of the manager or look.
141. K: The real appearance (writing)
142. M: So the answer is Takuro was surprised by..
143. K: By?

After getting the correct preposition *by* in line 143, Keiko wrote it down along with the subsequent phrase “the real appearance of the manager” and orally repeated the phrase a few times. This helped her produce correctly “Takuro was surprised by...” later in line 226 when she remembered skipping some part and repeated this scene again.

Session 2 served as a good opportunity for Keiko to identify and overcome the two problem areas that emerged from Session 1. While the mediator could identify these problem areas in Session 1, Keiko first noticed them through interactions with the mediator in Session 2.

Moreover, additional problem areas emerged in Session 2. One example is in the scene where after Takuro tried on a handsome suit in the clothier, he was getting thinner and taller and became a different person. When Keiko described it as “Takuro’s look changed dramatically,” the mediator asked her to elaborate on the scene, as she made an incomplete sentence with the word \*thinnier earlier. This brought up another problem area of verb tense among others. When Keiko finally produced “Takuro was thinner” after many interactions including an explanation in Japanese by the mediator, she was asked to explain the difference between the following three sentences, as the mediator wanted to confirm the level of her understanding of verb tense: (1) Takuro got thinner, (2) Takuro was getting thinner, (3) Takuro was thinner.

190. K: Takuro was getting thinner is past continuing..
191. M: Yes, that's right.
192. K: Takuro became..got thinner is...still that action was finished but emphasizing thing is changed.
193. M: Good, good.
194. K: Takuro was thinner, ... it's also.... finished something.. not active?
195. M: Not really. Yeah. So you understand the differences between the three. In this case, in this movie clip, which one do you want to use?
196. K: Was getting thinner.

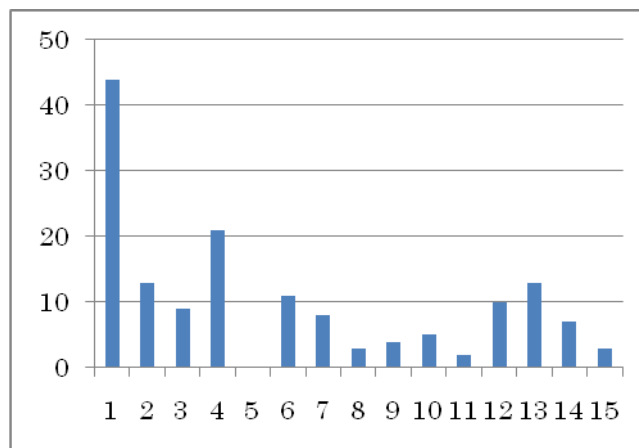
In line 196, Keiko finally seemed to grasp the difference and chose the correct answer “was getting thinner,” however, she switched back to “got thinner” immediately after this interaction and during the rest of Session 2. This situation explains that development is not linear, as Vygotsky’s argument noted that “development in the ZPD is not a smooth and predictable process but is ‘revolutionary’ in the sense that it entails both progress and regression” (Pohner & Lantolf 2005, p. 245).

In addition, mediation moves in Session 2 was analyzed by Pohner’s *Mediation Typology* (Figure 1) to describe the frequency of those moves in Figure 2. Figure 2 shows that the mediator predominantly used Mediation Move 1 “Helping Move Narration Along.” It is the most implicit move among the 15 categories and includes back-channelling and acknowledgement of utterances to facilitate interaction. This high frequency is regarded as a natural consequence, given the nature of the conversational setting like this tutoring session. However, there is a limitation to interpreting the results

of mediation moves, as the typology failed to categorize all the moves that the mediator used. In fact, “elicitation” was often used to try to elicit ideas from the learner and to identify the level of her understanding, especially in the problem areas. “Elicitation” does not seem to fall into any categories in the typology, although it was grouped into Mediation Move 1, as it seems the most suitable among the 15 mediation moves.

1. Helping Move Narration Along
2. Accepting Response
3. Request for Repetition
4. Request for Verification
5. Reminder of Directions
6. Request for Renarration
7. Identifying Specific Site of Error
8. Specifying Error
9. Metalinguistic Clues
10. Translation
11. Providing Example or Illustration
12. Offering a Choice
13. Providing Correct Response
14. Providing Explanation
15. Asking for Explanation

**Figure 1. Mediation Typology by Pohner (2005)**



**Mediation Moves**

**Figure 2. Frequency of Mediation Moves during Session 2 (DA)**

Session 3 (SA) served as a posttest to analyze the development of the learner’s linguistic performance. Keiko performed best in Session 3, she elaborated on the story, composing longer sentences and using more vocabulary (e.g., “confidence” and “crowded”), while new errors such as \*collapting emerged. The following protocol is the beginning scene of the movie clip.

Session 1:            There’s a person who’s very ugly and his name is Takuro. And he’s going to, he was going to a suit store. The name is Aoyama,... Aoyama Suit Store. And then.. uh, he went to the store for his friends’ wedding celebration.

Session 3            There was a man, ugly man, Takuro, uh, who Takuro was,.. Takuro was ugly, short height and he didn’t have ...confidence, confidence on, by himself. Takuro, one day Takuro was on the bus. The bus was a little bit crowded. Takuro was so Takuro was standing. A woman next to Takuro was, was, was, was,...was \*collapting into him, into Takuro. When she looked at Takuro, Takuro, she frowned her face. Because Takuro was too ugly for her. He, her, her face made Takuro very sad. Takuro got to a clothiers.

In addition, regarding the problem of “surprised of” which was apparent in Session 1 and the beginning of Session 2, Keiko produced “surprised by” correctly in Session 3. She also remembered the phrase of “the real appearance of the manager” in Session 3, which she learned along with “surprised by” in Session 2.

Session 1            Takuro was very surprised, surprised of? the looks of the manager.  
 Session 2            ...Surprised of? (line 127)  
 Session 3            Takuro was very surprised by the real appearance of the manager.

Lastly, the additional problem in Session 2 is verb tense, which Keiko struggled to solve in the sentence “Takuro was getting thinner and taller.” The following sentences are from Sessions 2 and 3, as she did not produce it in Session 1.

Session 2	174.	K: Takuro was thinner
	196.	K: [He] Was getting thinner.
	216.	K: He got thinner.. his height.. he got taller and he got a difference face, a handsome face

Session 3		Takuro got thinner, taller, much better face.
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After Keiko produced the correct sentence in line 196 once, she switched to “got thinner...” for the rest of Session 2 and in Session 3. As I mentioned earlier, the development is not always linear and involves both progress and regression.

## **Conclusion**

The present study has indicated that negotiated interactions in the L2 learning context help not only the learner solve problems and perform better than she performs independently, but also the mediator judge the learner’s ability better. The mediator found that the learner revealed her ability in Session 3 better than in Session 1, as she could compose longer, more detailed sentences with more vocabulary. The learner’s performance also developed over the three sessions. At a macro level, elaboration including incorporation of additional information and reduction of pauses were obvious



improvements. At a micro level, the learner overcame some of the problems such as “surprised of,” even though this did not always lead to solving all other problems of transitive verbs and phrasal verbs.

In addition, the move of elicitation seems to be most effective in helping improve the learner’s performance. The constant elicitation served as opportunities for her to think, notice and identify her problems, which entailed her overcoming problems including “surprised of” in Session 2. Equally importantly, for the mediator, elicitation also functioned as a means to search for the upmost level of her competence.

Moreover, problems such as “surprised of” and the form of “something + noun” that the learner overcame relate to internalization, as she correctly produced them or stopped using them after negotiated interactions. This is not a momentary improvement, as it continued from Session 2 to Session 3. In contrast, other problems such as verb tense of “got thinner” are unlikely to relate to internalization, as she continued to give the wrong utterance after successfully choosing the right answer once.

However, the present study has a limitation to fully investigating interactionist DA, as it attempted only SA and DA sessions. In order to observe the learner to further develop and transfer to the next level, an extended study with different tasks from SA and DA should be done, as it is important to track the development of L2 learners over

time. It is also interesting to conduct a DA study of all four skills to explore appropriate methods and tasks, as different approaches may be needed for those different skills. In addition, integration of feedback from learners into DA sessions might be instrumental in making both instruction and assessment more efficient and effective, in particular, for adult learners, who can tell their learning preference. When the learner gave impromptu feedback on the study after Session 3, she suggested that the use of the white board to show correct forms would help her get a better grasp of her problems, as she seems to be a visual learner. Thus, this feedback should be taken into account and the mediator should respond to the learner's learning style and preference and integrate them into instruction to create a better student-centered learning environment to facilitate learning.

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