Divergent language choices and maintenance of intersubjectivity: The case of Danish EFL Young Learners

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Language choice and its relation to foreign language teaching and learning has been hotly debated in the last decades. Although this line of research has advanced our understanding of language choices in the foreign language classroom, it has mostly dealt with adolescent and adult learners. From a contextual perspective, then, more micro-analytic research that focuses on language choice at the primary school level is needed. Against this background, this paper presents a case study of a Danish 3rd grade English as a foreign language classroom, in which a pattern of divergent language choices has been observed: the teacher consistently uses English, whereas the learners almost exclusively speak Danish, which might entail trouble in maintaining intersubjectivity and a joint pedagogical focus. Using Conversation Analysis methodology, we found two sequential formats that help ensure student understanding and thus maintain intersubjectivity: (1) learner translations and reformulations for peer support in expansion sequences, and (2) expansions initiated by students requesting information or clarification that display partial or no understanding. We argue that the sense-making practices co-constructed in this classroom context are possible because the teacher encourages shared multilingual meaning-making practices. This research has implications for teaching EFL to Young Learners, and classroom language policies.

Keywords: young learners; EFL classroom discourse; divergent language choices; intersubjectivity; Conversation Analysis

Introduction

Language alternation is a conversational practice that has been extensively studied from grammatical (e.g. Poplack 1980), sociolinguistic (e.g. Myers-Scotton 1993), and interactional (e.g. Auer 1998; Wei 2005; Gafaranga 2001) perspectives. Studies on language choice in institutional settings, and in particular in classrooms, have been dedicated special journal issues including publications in the International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism (e.g. Raschka, Sercombe, and Chi-Ling 2009;
The issue of the use of first language(s) has been hotly debated especially in relation to second/foreign/additional language (henceforth L2) classrooms (see Hall and Cook 2013), due to the special role of L2 as both the medium and the content of instruction (Seedhouse 2004). Recent conversation analytic studies have revealed the positive role of multilingual resources on meaning making processes, both in teacher-fronted (e.g. Ziegler, Sert, and Durus 2012) and student-student interaction (Ziegler, Durus, and Sert 2013; Ziegler, Durus, Sert and Family 2015).

However, conversation analytic research is scarce on the role of language choice in L2 classrooms for young learners, although this is an important issue considering the fact that many countries in the world have lowered the onset of English classes (Enever 2011; Eurydice 2012). The present study aims at contributing to this field of study by looking into a specific case in Danish early English as foreign language (EFL) classrooms, with a specific focus on (1) co-constructing student understanding (e.g. intersubjectivity) and (2) maintaining a pedagogical focus (Seedhouse 2008), as both of these phenomena have been found to be key for language teaching and learning (e.g. Walsh 2002; Waring 2016).

Based on a database of video-recorded classroom interactions and using Conversation Analysis (CA) (Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson 1974), we investigate the divergent language orientations of a teacher and the pupils in a 3rd grade EFL classroom. Our research aims at revealing the interactional resources employed by Danish young EFL learners and their teacher in maintaining intersubjectivity (i.e. shared focus and mutual understanding) and pedagogical foci despite the divergent language choices. Our analyses reveal two different sequential formats that help to ensure student
understanding, and also illustrate different interactional and embodied resources the teacher employs to ensure student turns in English (i.e. the target language).

**Conversation-analytic approach to language choice**

In this paper, we adopt an interactional perspective to study language choices in classrooms by asking “why that, in that language, right now?” (Üstünel and Seedhouse, 2005, p.310). This conversation-analytic approach to studying language alternation is pioneered by Auer (1984; 1988), who called for emic (i.e. from the perspective of the participants, cf. Firth and Wagner 1997; Markee 2013) research on language use. This approach researches *how* participants make use of their bi/multilingual resources, instead of assuming that speakers intentionally use a particular language in order to, for example, express their social identities.

Since Auer’s seminal work, several studies have investigated multilingual practices of language users from a conversation-analytic perspective in a variety of contexts, including bilingual homes (Filipi 2015), institutional settings such as classrooms (Hazel and Wagner 2015; Üstünel 2016) and workplaces (Hazel and Mortensen 2013; Hazel 2015a, b), and computer mediated environments (e.g. Sert and Balaman 2018).

Pioneered by Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson (1974), CA is a method for studying the sequential organization of talk-in-interaction, and therefore particularly suited for investigating how multilinguals use languages. As stated by Auer (1995, p. 116): “any theory of conversational code-alternation is bound to fail if it does not take into account that the meaning of code-alternation depends in essential ways on its sequential environment”. By this he refers to the conversational turns that sequentially precede and follow the switch. A turn can be produced in one or more codes, and can influence which language a next speaker will use. In general, studies have shown that
there is a preference for same-language talk (Auer 1984; Cromdal 2000; Nevile and Wagner 2011).

Typically, in a bilingual conversation, speakers will use one language, until at some point one of the participants switches to another language, either within their own turn (i.e. code-mixing) or in response to another speaker’s turn, and the other participant will then use the new language as well (‘type I switching’, Auer 1995). However, this preference is not present or relevant in all communities (Auer 1984), as participants may not always orient to using the other code as dispreferred (Cromdal 2005).

A strikingly different pattern is that of divergent language choices. Here, one speaker will exclusively speak language A, while the other only speaks language B (‘type II switching’, Auer 1995, also referred to as ‘parallel mode’, cf. Gafaranga and Torras 2001). While this is not an uncommon pattern, Auer (1995) states that typically, following a language negotiation, one of the speakers will accept the other’s language choice and converge.

The data we present in this paper include examples of the parallel mode of the bilingual medium (e.g. Gafaranga and Torras 2001), in that the teacher consistently uses English, while the students only speak in Danish, and neither language is marked. Convergence in our context is only ensured through so-called designedly incomplete utterances (henceforth DIU; Koshik 2002), in combination with deictic gestures (see the analysis of Extract 4). This is different from the findings of previous studies on language use in foreign language classrooms, as we will outline in the next section.

**Language choice in L2 classrooms**

A recent focus of investigation is the medium of classroom interaction, which Bonacina and Gafaranga (2011, p. 330) refer to as “the linguistic code that classroom participants actually orient—to while talking, as opposed to the policy-prescribed medium of
Investigating code-switching in Turkish EFL classrooms, Üstünel and Seedhouse (2005) found three patterns of codeswitching and described how the practice of teacher-initiated, teacher-induced, and student-initiated code-switching is related to teachers’ pedagogical foci. They find that students can show alignment or misalignment with the teacher’s pedagogical focus through their language choices (ibid.).

Sert (2015) shows three types of student-initiated code-switching: code-mixing, expansions for topic management, and providing an L1 utterance in a response turn. Sert (ibid.) has also identified several ways for teachers to manage learner-initiated code-switching, such as DIUs, displaying compliance in L2 to a request in L1, and embedded repair. He further argues that the successful management of these multilingual resources is part of a teachers Classroom Interactional Competence (CIC), defined as “[t]eachers' and learners' ability to use interaction as a tool for mediating and assisting learning’ (Walsh 2011, p. 153).

What is interesting about the terminology used in the research outlined above is the use of ‘induce’ and ‘initiate’, stressing that both students and teachers work to negotiate the code of the ongoing interaction. These terms build on the finding that participants in an L2 classroom orient to the preference for same-language use, and teachers thus can manage student code-switching. In the same sense, students have been found to invoke micro-level language policies themselves (Amir and Musk 2013; Chimbutane 2013; Oga-Baldwin and Nakata 2014).

While there is research on language alternation practices of young learners in institutional settings, the learning contexts are very different from the one in this study. Much of this research is set either in post-colonial settings (e.g. McGlynn and Martin 2009), or settings where there is diglossia for other reasons (e.g. Unamuno 2008; or Wei
and Wu 2009). Moreover, most studies seem to focus on language alternation by the teacher (e.g. Oga-Baldwin and Nakata 2014) or in peer interaction (e.g. Shin and Milroy 2000), whereas our study focuses on divergent language choices in teacher-fronted classroom interaction.

The present case is different from the literature reviewed above, as the teacher in our data consistently uses English, while the students exclusively use Danish (with exceptions, as outlined in Extract 4), and neither display any orientation to these divergent language choices as being marked. When intersubjectivity is broken, for instance when a student displays an understanding problem, however, students use a variety of interactional resources to re-establish it. Earlier research on the link between intersubjectivity and students’ use of their first languages show that L1 use to establish intersubjectivity “allows learners to complete the task efficiently and effectively” (Moore 2013, p. 241). Likewise, DiCamilla and Antón (2012) argue that the use of L1 is necessary to “create a social space that aid the learners in achieving intersubjectivity, an important component of effective collaboration” (p. 165). Given the importance of language choice in maintaining student understanding and intersubjectivity, we present cases in which students establish intersubjectivity when troubles emerge in the parallel mode of the bilingual medium (e.g. Gafaranga and Torras 2001).

Method

Data and Participants
The data for our analysis come from a corpus of classroom interactions that have been collected over one-and-a-half years. The corpus comprises almost 100 English lessons from nine primary schools in Denmark. The present paper focuses on one classroom, as the phenomenon of divergent language choices is specific to this one third grade.
Following the methodological procedures of Conversation Analysis (ten Have 2007), we started by transcribing all lessons from this classroom, then engaged in unmotivated looking, through which we finally observed recurrent patterns regarding the language choices in this classroom. As Seedhouse (2004) states, in conversation analytic research, to justify the adequacy of one's database (if one even choses to do so), one has to “relate the size and nature of the database to the researcher’s stated research aims and methodology” (p. 68). We therefore chose two lessons, one from the end of the first semester and one from the end of the second semester, and found that the practices we have observed endure over time.

The teacher is a native speaker of Danish and has gone through professional English teacher education in Denmark and attended a professional workshop on teaching English to young learners. The students are mostly monolingual Danish speakers who have just started learning their first foreign language, English, in third grade. However, Danish children are typically exposed to some English language media outside of school (such as video games, movies, and music) before formal English classes start (Hannibal Jensen 2017).

Denmark has a national curriculum for primary level English classes in public schools. This curriculum is a list of 90 goals to be reached by 4th grade (EMU 2016). These 90 goals cover the areas “oral communication”, “written communication”, and “culture and society”, but more than half of them belong to the “oral communication” category. English is supposed to be the medium of instruction from the first lesson on, but since there is methodological freedom for teachers in Denmark, this is a strong suggestion rather than a law. The specific classroom we investigate in the present paper is from a semi-private school, which means that they do not have to follow the national
curriculum. However, from interviews with teachers we know that this school voluntarily follows the national curriculum for public schools (aus der Wieschen 2017).

**CA Methodology and Analysis**

We use a conversation analytic methodology with a focus on multimodal aspects of interaction including verbal conduct, gaze, gestures and orientations to classroom artefacts. CA is a research method with roots in ethnomethodology and strives to reveal how co-participants in interaction co-construct social interaction through multimodal conduct, such as (verbal) turn-taking, gaze, and bodily actions. This emic, bottom-up methodology entails a subscription to Garfinkel's ethnomethodological indifference (2002), i.e. our main goal here is not to impose our own moral or political ideas on the practice analyzed; we simply describe and analyze a naturally-occurring phenomenon (divergent language choices in the EFL classroom). However, because this particular practice seems to have important pedagogical implications, we will contribute to the ongoing discussion of whether or not or when languages other than the target language should be used in foreign language classrooms.

The video-recorded interactions have been transcribed using a combination of Jefferson's (Atkinson and Heritage 1984) and Mondada’s (2014) transcription conventions. While the production of such fine-grained transcripts for Conversation Analysis is time-intensive, its micro-analytic approach can reveal the relationship between pedagogy and interaction in the L2 classroom empirically.

**Data Collection and Preparation**

The data was collected as part of an externally funded larger project on early foreign language learning in primary schools (Cadierno and Eskildsen 2017). Permission to video-record had been obtained from all schools and the parents of the students prior to
recording. English lessons were recorded around three times per semester for the duration of three semesters, starting with the second semester of English lessons. Teachers and students were informed about the purpose of the video-recording.

Two wide-angle cameras were placed in opposite corners of the classrooms. The data was transcribed using CLAN (MacWhinney 2000), then adapted to the more commonly used Jefferson transcription system (Atkinson and Heritage 1984) as well as to ICOR conventions for multimodal transcriptions (Mondada 2014).

As studies using CA do not rely on pre-existing theories for selecting phenomena, we engaged in unmotivated looking (i.e., looking at the data without looking for anything specific such as language alternation practices) in the initial stages of our research. Without specifically looking for language alternation practices, we observed that, almost exclusively, the co-participants in the classroom make divergent language choices (the teacher speaks the L2, English, while the students speak the L1, Danish), and that even though they do so, their language choice is not marked and intersubjectivity is seemingly maintained. Based on this, we have built a collection of cases where intersubjectivity is explicitly broken (e.g. when students initiate repair) and subsequently resolved. The selection criteria for this collection were:

- one or more students had displayed a lack of understanding, e.g. by not answering relevantly to the teacher's question, or by explicitly requesting clarification
- following this, co-participants oriented to resolving this trouble, e.g. by providing translations or reformulating
- the resolution of the trouble, i.e. the establishment of intersubjectivity, was observable, e.g. through the use of a change-of-state token (Heritage 1984a)
Incidentally, what these cases have in common is that the teacher speaks English, while the students speak Danish. Neither teacher nor students display any orientation to these language choices as being marked, and no language negotiation took place. As a second step, we searched our data for moments where elicitation of an English utterance by the students was ensured. We found these rare cases to only occur after designedly incomplete utterances by the teacher in combination with deictic gestures, of which we made a collection as well.

**Analysis and Findings**

In this section, we present our analysis of six extracts that are representative of our collections. We have divided the analysis into three subsections, based on the sequential formats that we found help ensure student understanding. The first two are:

- learner translations and reformulations for peer support in insert expansion sequences
- expansions initiated by students requesting information or clarification that display partial or no understanding

By expansions here we refer to the conversation-analytic notion of sequence expansion (Schegloff 2007). A sequence, in its most basic form consists of an adjacency pair, which in turn is made up of a first and a second pair part. For instance, a question and an answer, or a request for information and an informative answer would be two common examples of adjacency pairs. At times, there will be expansions of these basic sequences in naturally occurring talk. These expansion sequences can come before the first pair part of base sequence (pre-expansions), after a first pair part and before its second pair part (insert-expansion), or after a second pair part (post-expansion) (Schegloff 2007).
What the expansion sequences in this paper have in common is that they represent divergent language choices, i.e. the teacher speaking English and the students speaking Danish, even though there is an obvious trouble source related to students not understanding an English utterance by the teacher. The final subsection presents a deviant case in this specific setting, namely the students speaking English. This is only found after designedly incomplete utterances in combination with deictic gestures by the teacher.

Learner Translations and Reformulations for Peer Support in Insert Expansion Sequences

The extract that follows comes from the beginning of a lesson during which the teacher introduces the topic: the zoo. Due to the length of the episode, and for the sake of readability, we split the extract into two parts (Extract 1a and 1b), with Extract 1b starting at the end of Extract 1a. In Extract 1a, the teacher asks a question, which the nominated student apparently misunderstood. In an insert expansion (Schegloff 2007), i.e. between the teacher's question (first pair part) and the student’s answer to this question (second pair part), some fellow students offer peer support by translating and reformulating the teacher’s question.

Extract 1a
In line 1, the teacher asks a question while pointing at a new word – the zoo. VIL immediately volunteers as can be seen in his production of ah oo::h. This claim is supported by the teacher’s orientation to this; after 0.7 seconds TEA selects VIL by pointing at him and rephrasing his question, designing it in the declarative format which seeks confirmation (Weber 1993). VIL displays that he is thinking in line 6, and after a one second pause, he gives a candidate answer with an in-built question that is a candidate understanding (tr: what there is in a zoo, there is) in Danish, demonstrating his interpretation of the teacher’s question. KAS provides peer support by answering the question in VIL’s candidate understanding through overlap (line 9), producing the word animals (dyr). Note that both students are answering in Danish, while the teacher’s question is formulated in English (lines 1 and 4). The teacher interrupts VIL’s turn (line 10) starting with a no-prefaced evaluation which rejects VIL’s
candidate understanding, and repeats his question as a multi-turn question in which the grammatical form is marked through a restart, and then with suprasegmental modification, this time employing further resources (fig. 1a and 1b); TEA stresses you in line 10 while pointing at VIL and accompanies to the zoo with pointing at the whiteboard (line 12). Extract 1b below is a continuation of this extract.

Extract 1b

13  
14  CLA:  
15  TEA:  
16  VIL:  
17  TEA:  
18  VIL:  
19  KAS:  
20  TEA:  
21  VIL:  
22  JAN:  
23  TEA:  
24  VIL:  
25  TEA:  
26  VIL:  
27  TEA:  

After 0.6 second silence following the repeated teacher question, CLA informs the teacher about her interpretation of the teacher's question in Danish (line 14), perhaps providing peer help in the form of accounting for why VIL (and KAS) delivered an incorrect answer. Her interpretation of the question was apparently wrong, as we can see from the teacher's explicit negative assessment no: in line 15. The teacher
attempts to solve this interactional trouble by reformulating the trouble source (replacing the past participle *been* with *walked*), embodying ‘walking’, and pointing at VIL (lines 17-18; cf. also aus der Wieschen and Eskildsen 2016).

VIL is displaying that he is participating (line 19) already before the teacher has finished asking. Two students then translate the teacher’s question to Danish (lines 20 and 22). This is an expansion (Schegloff 2007) that is inserted between the teacher's first pair part and VIL’s second pair part in line 23. A similar pattern has been observed by Appel (2010) with the difference being that the helping student in his data was whispering. Their translations are interesting in that KAS translates TEA’s *been* to from line 17 and stresses *inde* (English: in/inside) thereby seemingly focusing on *to* as a trouble source (‘to’ being a preposition that has multiple potential translations in Danish, depending on the context; here it would be ‘i’). JAN's contribution, on the other hand, draws on TEA’s embodied *walked* (‘gået’) but adds the Danish preposition ‘i’ which may be a modification of KAS’ *inde* or a sediment of TEA's original *been* to which translates to *været i*. VIL replies with *yes* already before JAN is finished, and in line 27 we can see that he now understands the question, as he elaborates on his reply from line 23. This is followed by TEA's invitation to continue (*ye::s*) by giving a concrete example in Danish, which is accepted by TEA in line 28. It is interesting that TEA is stepping away from VIL’s desk right after KAS’ translation (line 21), as he thereby allows for VIL to direct his attention to his peers.

Peer help is generally encouraged by this teacher throughout our corpus, either by him directly asking the class to help a certain student, or by giving positive feedback to students who volunteer to help, such as in the extract that follows.

In Extract 2, we show that after a student's clarification request of an English word, another student offers the Danish translation, which then leads to understanding.
Extract 2

01 TEA: remember?
02 (0.4)
03 TEA: +not last week, +but the week+ +before+?
    tea: +...........................................................................+--------+--------+--------+
04 TEA: +we had something about< +the body
                  +hands palm-down on chest-->  
05 (0.5)
06 CLA: hvad er body?
       what is
07       +{0.5)
    asl   +turns towards CLA/TEA-->>
    tea -->+lifts hands off of chest, looks at chest--->
08 ASL: +krop
               body
    tea -->+touches and looks at his chest and stomach+
09 CLA: +nå: os=--
          oh and
    tea +nods and points at ASL with both hands-->>
10 TEA: +ye: s, good. you remember.

1: moves hand to his left, tracing an invisible arch

From lines 1–4, the teacher refers to a past learning event (Can Daşkın forthc.) using deictic gestures, pointing at different places of an imaginary timescale. However, in line 6 CLA’s learner initiative (Waring 2011), preceded by 0.5 seconds of silence, demonstrates trouble of understanding: she asks for a translation in Danish. Two people respond to CLA’s request, her peer ASL (lines 7–8) by translating to Danish krop, and the teacher (lines 7–8), by touching and looking at parts of his body. This helps CLA to understand the meaning of body, as evidenced through the change-of-state token nå: (Nielsen 2002, Heritage 1984a) in line 9, although it is still a claim of understanding rather than a demonstration of it (Sacks 1992). The teacher reacts to ASL’s volunteered translation by nodding, putting him on stage, and verbally praising him (ye:s, good) in lines 9–10.

In this section, we looked at one specific sequential format that helps ensure student understanding: learner translations and reformulations for peer support in expansion sequences. In all of these episodes in our collection, as represented by the analysis of the first two extracts, some students have demonstrated that they have trouble understanding the teacher’s (English) utterances. While the teacher attempts to
solve this trouble by reformulating in English, other students take the initiative to translate or reformulate the teacher’s utterance in Danish. This leads to solving the conversational trouble.

Another specific sequential format that we found in our data are insert-expansions initiated by students, requesting information or clarification in Danish. In these cases, the teacher successfully establishes intersubjectivity without resorting to the use of L1.

*Expansions Initiated by Students Requesting Information or Clarification*

Understanding task instructions is crucial in a classroom setting (Markee 2015; Somuncu and Sert forthcoming), so students who are not sure about what they have to do might request clarification. In L2 classrooms where the L2 is the medium of instruction, there is an additional challenge: students not only have to understand instructions for task types that they have possibly never encountered before, they also have to understand instructions in the L2. In Extract 3, the teacher is trying to explain a task that the class completed many times before: walk-and-talk (‘free movement’). In the analysis, we show how students display which parts of the instruction they have (not) understood, and how this trouble is subsequently resolved. We divide Extract 3 into two parts to maximize readability.

Extract 3a
The teacher is giving instructions for an upcoming walk-and-talk task both verbally and through the use of gestures. The students have to take one or two cards from their desk, stand up, walk through the classroom, talk to a peer, and move on to talk to another student. Following the teacher’s demonstration of the task (lines 1-14), after a 0.4 second pause at the transition relevance place (TRP), CLA initiates a repair that requests clarification in line 16. Note that CLA’s turn in Danish is not just a repair initiation, but also a display of understanding, which receives a suprasegmentally marked confirmation in English from the teacher (YES:, line 17), also positively assessing the student performance, that is aligned with CLA’s return gesture (de Fornel
1992; Eskildsen and Wagner 2013). In line 19, CLA demonstrates understanding by picking up two cards and holding them as displayed by the teacher (fig. 3a), at the same time asking for approval in Danish.

The teacher confirms and instructs CLA to choose two cards, which is taken up by CLA, and is approved with a minimal agreement token by TEA in line 22. The teacher reformulates his instruction in line 23, while illustrating having one card in each hand through his gestures. This is followed by 0.3 seconds of silence.

Extract 3b

```
24    MIK: (0.3)
25    TEA: ("hm hvo:s")
26    TEA: okay.
27    (0.3)
28    AUG: hva er det for nogen to vi ska ta?
          what are these two we have to take
29    (0.5)
30    TEA: +you #decide
          tea +shakes head slightly then points at AUG-->
            #fig 3.b
31    (0.5+)
          tea -->+
32    AUG: +"nå:" +oh
          aug +moves RH towards her cards
33    (0.5)
34    TEA: you choose.
35    (0.3)
36    MIK: "jeg ta /but/" (to neighbor))
          I take (butt)
```

The teacher completes this part of the instruction (okay., line 26), which is followed by 0.3 seconds of silence. Following this instruction in English, AUG asks in Danish which cards they have to pick up (line 28). Only after the teacher specifies that the students should decide which (line 30-31), in combination with a deictic gesture (pointing at AUG (fig. 3.b), cf. also aus der Wieschen and Eskildsen 2016) can we see a change-of-state token (°nå : : °) in AUG's turn in line 32. MIK, too, displays
understanding in line 36 by announcing that he will take the card with a “butt” on it (°jeg ta /but/ °). Note that these turns by the students are in Danish. Although the teacher’s turns are in L2, the students are displaying understanding and are resolving understanding issues.

What the extracts analysed have in common is that the teacher consistently speaks English and the students consistently speak Danish. In line with prior findings, one would have expected the teacher to comply with the students’ language choice (i.e. by speaking Danish to create intersubjectivity) or the students to speak English. However, we have shown that the co-participants in this classroom make use of other successful trouble-solving resources, namely learner translations and reformulations for peer support in expansion sequences and expansions initiated by students requesting information or clarification that display partial or no understanding.

In our data, we found only few instances of students speaking English apart from choral singing. We found a pair of interactional resources for the teacher to elicit student replies in English: designedly incomplete utterances (Koshik 2002) in combination with deictic gestures.

**Designedly Incomplete Utterances in Combination with Deictic Gestures**

In Extract 4 we show how the teacher successfully elicits an English vocabulary item (neck) from the students through the use of designedly incomplete utterances (this is my:::) in combination with deictic gestures (touching and pointing at his neck).

Extract 4
Line 1 starts with TEA’s embodied elicitation turn, during which he puts his hands on his neck (fig. 4.a-b) and produces a DIU (Koshik 2002; Sert 2015).

The turn-final my::: is stretched while the teacher is demonstrating what is expected in the second pair part of the adjacency pair. Following 0.9 second silence, TEA starts moving his fingers toward his neck while at the same time scanning the class. While doing it, in line 3, TEA initiates a recognition check (You 2015), which first receives a minimal contribution from some of the students, indicating that they are trying to remember (line 5), and then receives a correct response in Danish by SIM (line...
6. SIM employs a return gesture, thus embodying and demonstrating his response. What follows is an embodied disagreement by ALB in the subsequent turn, a turn that is embodied through a lateral headshake. This response, however, is not oriented to by the teacher and the peers, and the teacher goes on to enact his pedagogical goal, to elicit the target word in English. In line 8, in fact, TEA again starts producing a DIU, this time only producing the initial sound of the L2 (i.e. English) word by lengthening the consonant while still touching his neck. A first candidate answer is offered by JON, referring to head, which is marked as a dispreferred response by TEA as he re-initiates his DIU, stretching the word-initial sound even stronger in line 10. This embodied DIU (Sert 2015) proves to be a successful interactional resource to elicit the L2 item, since in lines 11 and 12, the correct answer is produced in English by two different students. In line 13, TEA assesses the student responses as correct and points to the student who pronounces the word correctly (line 13). In line 17, he finalizes the sequence by producing a bilingual turn, mixing codes, and using the Danish translation hals to clarify meaning.

This extract has shown how the teacher's use of DIUs in combination with deictic gestures led to the successful elicitation of English responses from the students. In what follows, we will discuss the findings of this paper and give implications for research and practice.

**Discussion and Conclusion**

Relying solely on empirically observable verbal and non-verbal conduct, we uncovered how young learners collaborate to achieve intersubjectivity through and despite their divergent language choices. The findings have shown two sequential formats that help ensure student understanding:
1. item translations and reformulations for peer support in insert expansion sequences and
2. item expansions initiated by students requesting information or clarification that display partial or no understanding

As the analyses of Extracts 1 and 2 demonstrate, learners can offer peer support through translations and reformulations. In Extract 1, VIL fails to provide a relevant answer to TEA’s question. Two learners then self-select and translate or reformulate TEA’s questions to Danish, which results in VIL finally providing the answer in English. In Extract 2, CLA takes the initiative to ask for clarification in Danish. While CLA looks at TEA and for reasons of moral order it is TEA’s obligation to respond to CLA’s learner initiative (and he does so through his embodied response), CLA’s fellow student ASL steps in and provides the Danish translation, which forms part of the co-construction of intersubjectivity. In both Extract 1b and 2, the supporting students are, using Waring's terms (2011, p. 210), “shifting into the teacher identity”, and at the same time demonstrating their understanding of TEA’s English turn, even though they are using Danish. While these contributions were student-initiated, TEA encourages or rewards these learner initiatives; in Extract 1b by stepping away from VIL’s desk, thus removing himself from the center of VIL’s attention and giving space to VIL’s peers, and in Extract 2 by pointing at ASL with both hands, putting him on stage. By creating an environment in which peer support in the learners’ L1 and thereby divergent language choices are, albeit not actively solicited, definitely not obstructed, the discourse co-constructed by the co-participants in the classroom creates intersubjectivity and thus allows for the activity at hand to progress.
Another sequential format that leads to the achievement of these goals are expansions initiated by students requesting information or clarification that display partial or no understanding, which we demonstrated in Extract 3a and 3b and will be discussed below.

While what the practices in Extract 3a and 3b achieve might seem similar to the accomplishments of the practices discussed above, what makes these cases different from Extract 1 and 2 is that the focus here is not on a fellow student taking the initiative to help another student, but on a learner requesting information or clarification in Danish and thereby displaying partial and no understanding of the teacher’s instruction that was delivered in English.

In Extract 3a, CLA verbally requests confirmation of her candidate understanding of a task in Danish (tr: shall we have one in each hand), and after TEA confirms her candidate understanding in English, CLA mirrors TEA’s embodied instruction in the form of a return gesture, asking for confirmation again in Danish.

A few moments later, in Extract 3b, another student (AUG) requests clarification in Danish (tr: what are these two we have to take), displaying that she understood that she has to take two (cards), but also that she does not know which two cards. TEA then clarifies in English, and what follows is a change-of-state token by AUG in Danish.

What is interesting in both extracts is the high specificity with regards to the trouble source (Schegloff, Jefferson and Sacks 1977). This finding is in line with the results of Liebscher and Dailey-O'Cain's (2003) study on repair practices in a university CLIL setting, where students were explicitly encouraged to use their L1. Their study found that the most commonly used forms of student-initiated repair are requests for
definition, translation, or explanation, and candidate understandings. They argue that this preference for specific repair initiation techniques is a way of ‘doing’ being a student, which entails “show[ing] that they follow the classroom discourse by providing a candidate understanding, making sure that their understanding is the right one” (2003, p. 388).

What is maybe most surprising about our findings is that they do not align with the findings of other conversation analytic studies of language use in specific classroom contexts. Seedhouse (2004) for instance, found that especially in procedural contexts (e.g. when providing instructions for an upcoming task, such as in Extracts 3a and 3b in the present paper), teachers tend to use the students’ L1, in order to maximize comprehension and to ensure the progressivity of the current task at hand (e.g. explaining an upcoming task). As his research showed that teachers tend to use the L2 in task instructions mainly with older or more proficient learners (Seedhouse 2004; see also Seedhouse 1996), it is interesting to see that the co-participants in this 3rd grade beginner EFL classroom have developed local practices for the co-creation of intersubjectivity. The empirically observable differences between Seedhouse’s Norwegian setting and ours clearly underline our point of departure for this study, which was that top-down language policies and theories about which languages should be used in the foreign language classroom are highly questionable and cannot replace empirical studies of local practices.

While the divergent language choices in the instructions in Extracts 3a and 3b may not be very time-efficient, they allow for the co-participants in the classroom to turn what might have been a short teacher monologue in a different classroom into an L2 learning space (Eskildsen and Theodórsdóttir 2017) in which the students display precisely what they have (not) understood, and the teacher is able to evaluate on-line
what his students understand in the L2. This L2 learning space is built for learning-in-interaction, rather than just a space for giving instructions.

The focus in this paper was on how students in an EFL classroom display their understanding of the teacher’s turns in and through the use of L1-Danish where the teacher exclusively speaks the L2. Another, maybe more prototypical, way for students to demonstrate and for teachers to evaluate their students’ language proficiency is for teachers to elicit student responses in English. While this happens rarely in our database, our analysis of Extract 4 shows that when the teacher uses DIUs (Koshik 2002) combined with deictic gestures, elicitation in English from the students is ensured.

The use of DIUs deserve special emphasis here. In previous research, Sert and Walsh (2013) showed that DIUs can be useful interactional resources to elicit student contributions in English language classrooms especially after students claims insufficient knowledge. When initiated in sequentially appropriate positions by the teachers, they may help a student move from a state of not knowing to a state in which they contribute to ongoing interaction. In another study, taking a developmental perspective, Balaman and Sert (2017) documented that DIUs are one of the resources that are increasingly used to accomplish epistemic progression in online L2 interaction. In the present paper, as was also documented in Sert (2015), DIUs elicit L2 contributions especially when coupled with gestures, which then become visual resources to help learners use L2 forms, which may in long run be conducive to language development.

The results have important implications for teaching English to young learners as well as for informing micro and macro level language policies. The present study
adds to the growing body of emic research that uses actual multilingual practices to inform teacher education and practice (Sert 2015; Üstünel 2016).

The practices described in the present paper were only possible because the teacher has given the students interactional space and encouraged them to engage in shared meaning-making practices, which include the use of languages other than the target language. As proposed by Sert (2015, see also 2011), the successful management of displays of insufficient knowledge and of code-switching are important phenomena to be considered part of L2 Classroom Interactional Competence (CIC). Teacher educators should be made aware of such interactional resources and include these concepts in their curriculum (i.e. SETT (Walsh 2006) or IMDAT (Sert 2015; 2018)).

One of the limitations of our study is the number of classes that were analysed, since expansion of the collection of the phenomenon under investigation would possibly have brought additional interesting findings. One may also argue that a focus on only teacher-fronted interaction in this paper might be a limitation, as this is just one way to view interactional and multilingual repertoires of these students. Further ethnographic research may be required to have a more complete picture on the classroom behaviours of young learners in Denmark and beyond.

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