

Body, grammar, prosody, and materiality in (the development of) L2 IC

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Organized by Taiane Malabarba & Søren Eskildsen

Program

Marta García García (Göttingen University)

“No estoy de acuerdo” – Managing (dis-)affiliation in Spanish L2 online interactions

In this data session I will present some extracts taken from a dataset of Virtual Exchange interactions and online Conversations for Learning in L2 Spanish. In the Virtual Exchange, three to four students from different countries discuss about high-current topics; in the Conversations-for-Learning, two fellow students practice the discussion task of the high-stakes final oral exam. In both settings there is a tension between the specific nature of the topics, which encourages discussion of controversial issues, and the participants limited familiarity with each other, which makes them reluctant to threat social harmony.

Building on the work of Stephenson & Hazel (2024) and Çimenli Olcars (2025), my focus will be on sequences of disagreement and instances of conveying (dis-)affiliation, in order to analyse how participants manage the interactional resources at their disposal, and to consider the extent to which Virtual Exchange and Conversations-for-Learning are favourable contexts for the development of Interactional Competence.

Alexandra Gubina & Anna Carolina Oliveira Mendes (Leibniz Institut für Deutsche Sprache, University of Potsdam)

Evolving Social Relations in L2 Classrooms: A Longitudinal Study of Routine Weekend Inquiries

Recent research has begun to explore how the development of interactional competence is intertwined with social closeness (see Eskildsen and Wagner, in press; Skogmyr Marian and Pekarek Doehler in press/b; Pekarek Doehler and Berger 2019). This study investigates how social relations between teacher and students develop in a recurrent classroom activity: the lesson-opening inquiry “How was your weekend?”. Unlike studies focusing primarily on student participation (Waring, 2013), we examine how both teacher and students’ conduct evolves and how these shifts reflect and contribute to the construction of interactional histories and social relationships (cf. Konzett-Firth, 2020). The analysis draws on ten recorded sessions from a longitudinal corpus of 93 hours of video-recordings of two German A2 classes for exchange students, using CA-for-SLA methods (Kasper & Wagner, 2011).

Our findings show how the teacher gradually expands her management of the warm-up activity: from asking a single question per student to incorporating follow-up questions, less prominent use of students’ names in turn allocation, building on shared knowledge from prior interactions, sharing more personal information and shifting from a task-oriented stance to a more conversational, relational orientation. On the students’ side, we observe increasingly elaborated responses, more finely tuned turn design, and more frequent moments of shared laughter. By tracing these changes over time, the study demonstrates how interactional competence and social closeness co-develop in classroom settings. These findings underscore the importance of relational dynamics in L2 learning environments and point to implications for the design of classroom practices and for teacher education.

Teppo Jakonen (University of Turku)

Developing professional L2 IC with the help of virtual reality simulation and its digital participants and material resources

This session features data from a new project that will investigate the use of VR in an English-medium (EMI) nursing program in Finland. I will show a video clip in which a student is using a VR headset to interact in L2 Finnish with a virtual patient avatar in a simulated hospital environment, onlooked by a (nursing) teacher and the student’s peers who are copresent in the same real-world space. I’d like us to explore 1) how participants resolve troubles involved in interacting with a pre-scripted, rule-based conversational AI, and 2) how they manage the virtual and real-world interactional spaces. Any other observations are, of course, also much appreciated.

Carmen Sabine Konzett-Firth (Innsbruck University)

Resources for students' sequence initiations in L2 plenary student-teacher talk

I propose a data session to study resources that L2 learners deploy to initiate sequences during plenary teacher-class talk. The data is taken from a larger longitudinal video corpus containing recordings of French lessons in two school classes over five, respectively six, years of instructions. In the data session I want to focus on plenary sessions that are meaning focused, involving topical talk with the whole class.

The sequence initiations I have identified are primarily delivering epistemic actions, either repair initiations to clarify comprehension or epistemic searches to find target language resources. Their common denominator is that they require learners to signal their desire to take the floor and project the format of their upcoming turn. From a theoretical perspective, initiating actions are highly relevant as they demonstrate learners' agency, which has been identified as a key factor in learning processes. Although I have only identified a few instances in the data so far, I would expect there to be a development in learners' deployment of L2 resources over time. However, the development seems to be less pronounced on the level of grammatical form; rather, changes seem to concern prosodical aspects or bodily-spatial affordances.

Maxi Kupetz (Leipzig University)

Working with AI-based tools in the L2 classroom: Meta-comments as dimensions of L2 interactional competence

Large language model (LLM)-based artificial intelligence (AI) products such as ChatGPT have become an integral part of the daily lives of teenage language learners, and presumably, they will soon play a major role in language classrooms. Therefore, we need a better understanding of their role in classroom interaction and in language-learning activities. In my data session, I will share video data from a pilot study on digital tools in a German as a Second Language (GSL) support program at a German high school. We will analyze instances of learners' meta-comments on their use of the tool 'KI Chat'. This will allow us to discuss 1) the role of meta-comments and critical-reflective skills in developing L2 interactional competence, 2) methodological issues regarding the analysis of combined face-to-face and digital learning interactions.

Christl Langer (University of Potsdam/Leipzig University)

Practices of establishing word meanings in a German L2 preparatory classroom: the case of the focal learner Danja

In this presentation, I investigate how word meanings are established in L2 classroom interaction from a CA/IL perspective. Drawing on 21 hours of video-recorded data from a German L2 preparatory classroom, I examine how a focal learner participates in interactional practices through which lexical meanings are negotiated and made relevant. After a short presentation of the theoretical and methodological framework, I present initial findings on the practices employed by the focal learner, with a focus on their multimodal organization, which will then be discussed in the format of a data session.

Taiane Malabarba & Søren Eskildsen (University of Potsdam, University of Southern Denmark)

Third-person Reference and Interactional Histories in L2 English Video-Mediated Tutoring

In this session, we present data from Zoom-mediated and recorded tutoring sessions of English as an additional language, conducted weekly with the same participants over the course of a year. We are interested in how a third party, unknown to one of the participants, is referred to and talked about over time. Our initial exploration of the data suggests changes in several areas: turn design (i.e., the use of referential terms), sequence organization (i.e., when the references occur), action accomplishment (i.e., what the references help to achieve), and topic management (i.e., what topics the references help to sustain or develop). We will discuss the role of multimodal resources and the participants' interactional history and show how their methods for establishing reciprocity and intersubjectivity change over time.

Taiane Malabarba & Christl Langer (University of Potsdam, University of Potsdam/Leipzig University)
Digital Transformation of Language Teacher Education with Data-Informed Evidence (DigiLTE)

We will present a digitally supported learning environment through which pre-service teachers of English as a second language (L2) can access selected video data of classroom interactions. This catalog of video data was created as part of the multinational project “Digital Transformation of Language Teacher Education with Data-Informed Evidence (DigiLTE)”, funded by the Erasmus+ program. The samples are incorporated into training activities within a digital platform, serving both as a pool of materials for teacher trainers to enrich their lessons and as a self-study resource for pre-service teachers. To showcase these materials, this presentation will focus on one set of practices and actions, which we term 'dealing with (potential) trouble', including, among others, teacher-initiated repair, student-initiated word searches, understanding checks and clarification requests. In addition to providing examples of the activities developed within the project, we illustrate how CA findings on the 'specialized work of teaching' (Hall & Looney, 2019) are translated into pedagogical activities, demonstrating both the potential and the limitations of using CA as a basis for teacher education. Methodological challenges include balancing analytical depth with pedagogical usability, selecting representative clips, and dealing with cross-linguistic and ethical considerations in working with video data from multiple countries.

Simona Pekarek Doehler (Université de Neuchâtel) (online)
Why study SLA multimodally? – the development of L2 interactional competence

The fact that face-to-face communication is fundamentally multimodal in nature has for long been established in a variety of research paradigms. Surprisingly, however, the complex ways in which language and the body interface in second language (L2) *development* have largely remained unexplored. Although many studies show that L2 learning is also a bodily process, these typically focus on observable gesture-language constellations ‘in the moment’; a *longitudinal*, developmental perspective is missing. Bringing together insights from multimodal conversation analysis and usage-based linguistics, this presentation addresses the following question: What can longitudinal multimodal analysis tell us about how people use and develop their L2 interactional competence?

Sam Schirm (University of Bielefeld)
L2 Interactional competence in the pharmacy: Recommending over-the-counter medications in L2 German

This data session will explore how two pharmacists who speak L2-German combine bodily, material and linguistic resources when consulting customers seeking an over-the-counter pharmaceutical treatment of their symptoms and complaints. The session will begin with a brief presentation on the role of pharmacies and pharmacists in the medical system, including the regulations governing pharmacists' consultations of their customers. The excerpts for the data session will come from a corpus of 41 video-recorded spontaneous sales encounters in a pharmacy in northwestern Germany.

Carmen Taleghani-Nikazm & Haley Grubb (Ohio State University)
Managing Moments of Uncertainty in a Digital Space: A Multimodal Study of Self-Initiated Repairs by L2 German Learners

Our presentation reports on the preliminary findings of a longitudinal conversation analytic study centered around two L2 German language learners participating in video mediated conversations-for-learning over the course of three university semesters. We focus on the verbal and embodied practices that these learners develop to signal to their L1 co-participant that they are engaging in a word search (head tilt, eye gaze shift, hand movements, self-grooming, and self-talk). As their language skills and interactional competence develop, we predict that these embodied practices will decrease in frequency and duration.

František Tůma (Vienna University of Economics and Business)
How to build a staircase: Depictive gestures in multilingual workplace meetings

In this data session, we will explore how L2 interactional competence is manifested in participants' talk and gestures in workplace meetings where employees with diverse linguistic backgrounds collaborate. The data come from a small-sized company that produces steel constructions. Together, we will explore a segment of a meeting where an engineer and a welder plan how to assemble a staircase in a shopping mall. The focus will be on depictive hand gestures that the participants coordinate with their talk to express the underlying actions and states. The participants use English as an L2.