

## Managing the Participation of a Young Learner: A Multimodal Teacher Practice

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As it becomes increasingly apparent that nonverbal conduct plays an integral role in pedagogical interactions (McCafferty & Stam, 2008; Zwiers, 2007), researchers who study interaction *in situ* are shifting focus from solely talk toward a multimodal approach (Lazaraton, 2004; Olsher, 2004; Seo & Koshik, 2010; Taylor, 2014). From this body of research, a finding of particular interest is that teachers use nonverbal resources to manage logistics in the classroom. For example, Kääntä (2010) found that teachers allocate turns to students by obtaining mutual gaze followed by nodding. Furthermore, Cekaite (2015) found that teachers use sustained touch to get students to comply with verbal directives. This paper contributes to the growing body of research on nonverbal conduct in pedagogical interaction by examining the multimodal resources used by an English as a Second Language (ESL) tutor to manage a young student's participation in a one-on-one interaction.

The participants are a native English speaking tutor and a six-year-old tutee who is at an Intermediate level of English and whose first language is Russian. Note that the child infused play into the session by including his stuffed bear (Mr. Bear) as a participant (see Figure A). This was done by animating the bear in a ventriloquist-like manner to answer the tutor's questions. The tutor allowed this and gave the child the option of talking as himself or as the bear. The data come from an hour-long video-recorded ESL tutoring session that focused on literacy and was centered around the storybook, *Duck on a Bike*, by David Shannon (see Figure B). The lesson was designed to develop English through reading and answering questions about the storybook.

Figure A: Left to right: Tutor (T), Tutee (S), Mr. Bear

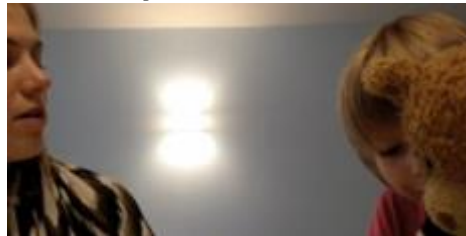


Figure B: Object of mutual attention



The video-recording was transcribed following Jeffersonian conventions, and screen shots of the interaction were included in order to illustrate the focal nonverbal actions. The data were then analyzed using conversation analysis, an analytic tool that examines the sequential turn structure of conversation (Sacks, Schegloff, Jefferson, 1974). Specifically, the teacher's use of gaze and head movement were tracked along with talk to parse *how* exactly the teacher manages the students' participation in pedagogical interactions. The sequential environments in which gaze is deployed by the teacher were also examined to identify patterns of usage.

The first extract occurs toward the beginning of the tutoring session at the start of a new sequence. The tutor and student had just finished reading and discussing the previous page and are now moving on to a new one.

(1) [ok ready?]

29 T: ((T turns page. S makes high-pitched noises)) {Ok-((T  
30 glance at S))}{ready?-((T gaze moves to page))}

31 {Who's gonna read-((T gaze at page))}{this-((T gaze at  
32 page, slight head poke))} page?  
33 S: {Me:: I y- I love reading.-((Raises Mr.  
34 Bear's hand, gazes at T and then to page))}

Figure C: "Ok"



Figure D: "This"



At the start of this sequence the student is making high-pitched noises while gazing at the storybook. The tutor immediately glances at him as she simultaneously asks if he is ready in lines 29-30. This can be considered a pre-expansion to ensure that the ensuing request in line 31 is taken up smoothly. The pre-expansion orients the student to the task at hand and serves as a directive to stop making silly noises and get ready for the request she is about to make. We see this done through verbal and nonverbal means, evident in her glance at the student while producing "ok" and then directing her own gaze to the page upon producing "ready." When the tutor produces the base first pair part (FPP) in line 31, her gaze remains on the page but when she produces "this," she creates emphasis with a deictic head poke toward the page. The student responds by fulfilling the request with a conditionally relevant second pair part (SPP) that nominates Mr. Bear to read the page. In sum, the teacher uses gaze in her verbal pre-beginning to obtain the students' attention and secure readiness. Then she verbally produces her main request while using her gaze and a head poke to emphasize the object of the request. The multimodal endeavor to control the student's participation is successful as the student complies with the directives with no resistance.

The next extract occurs after the tutor and student have just finished discussing the previous page in the book. The tutor turns the page and a new sequence begins.

(2) [who's gonna do this one]

39 T: ((Turns page)) {Let's take a look at the  
40 picture-((T gaze & points at page))} [{here.-((T gaze at  
41 S: [(S high-pitched  
42 T: page))}]  
43 S: noises & gaze at page)]  
44 T: {What's happening ↑here do you think.-((T gaze at  
45 page))}  
46 S: {Oo↑oo.} Fig. E: T and S mutual gaze  
47 T: {Who's gonna do {↑this-((T glance at  
48 page))} {one.-((T gaze at S while S gaze at page.))}  
49 S: {Meeee:, - ((Raises stuffed bears hand))}

Figure E: "...Who's gonna do"



Figure F: "this"



Figure G: "one"



After turning to a new page, the tutor invites the student to take a look at the illustration. Along with the verbal utterance in lines 39-40, she produces a pointing gesture to the page. At this point, both teacher and student gaze are on the storybook, however, S produces some high-pitched, nonsensical noises in line 41, potentially signaling a lack of focus or readiness. In line 44, with her gaze focused on the page, the tutor verbally requests that S interpret what is happening in the illustration. Instead of completing the request, S produces the utterance "Oooo" in a sing-song voice. This lack of compliance with T's request results in the holding of mutual gaze between T and S in line 46, almost as if a playful standoff for power is occurring between the two (play is indicated by the mutual smiles in Figure E). T then abandons pursuit of her original request and restarts the sequence by asking who is going to "do" this page, much like the request she produces in Extract 1. As T produces her verbal utterance in line 47, she is extremely explicit with her gaze direction. Particularly, she breaks the mutual gaze to glance down at the storybook

while producing the utterance “this,” placing emphasis on the page. Then she quickly gazes back up at the child while producing the last utterance in the sentence, “one.” While she produces “one” and gazes at S, the child has redirected his gaze from the tutor to the page (see Figures F & G). Following T’s request to bid for nomination, the child complies and nominates the bear to “do” the page, evident in his utterance “me” while raising the bear’s hand in line 49. To summarize, in lines 39-46, T’s gaze is fixed on the page as she gives directives, resulting in S’s noncompliance. The tutor is able to get S to comply once she obtains mutual gaze and then very explicitly directs her gaze to the page while producing a verbal request.

A clear contrast between the extracts is that Extract 1 possesses sequential smoothness in the obtaining of the student’s compliance and Extract 2 does not. In Extract 1, T produces a pre-expansion in which she secures S’s readiness by gazing at him and then to the page as she makes a verbal request. In the second extract she fails to secure S’s compliance until she integrates a similar practice to what she does in Extract 1— obtaining mutual gaze, followed by breaking the gaze to look down at the page while simultaneously producing the verbal request. It is clear from both extracts that, done in conjunction with head pokes and verbal utterances, the gaze is a powerful tool to direct the student’s attention and obtain his compliance with teacher directives.

A limitation of this work is the camera angle. Not only do the participants move around quite a bit and are partially outside the frame at times, but the actual storybook is not captured. Even though, in the extracts shown, it is apparent when T and S gaze at each other as well as the storybook, the data would be enhanced by a higher camera angle that could capture the triadic framework of the participants and the storybook. Perhaps this would aid in uncovering even more multimodal features of the interaction that drive how the teacher directs the student’s participation.

To conclude, uncovering how gaze and other multimodal resources are used in conjunction with talk to direct attention and participation in pedagogical interaction can have implications for teacher-training programs. Teacher trainers can use findings to cultivate awareness of nonverbal conduct in the classroom. Novice teachers who have trouble with classroom management might also consider video recording themselves to become aware of how they are utilizing such nonverbal resources, and might then make conscious adjustments in their teaching.

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