



Workshop: Multimodal meaning-making in English as a Lingua Franca video-mediated conversations

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Stefan Diemer, Trier University of Applied Sciences

s.diemer@umwelt-campus.de

 @DiemerStefan



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What am I talking about?

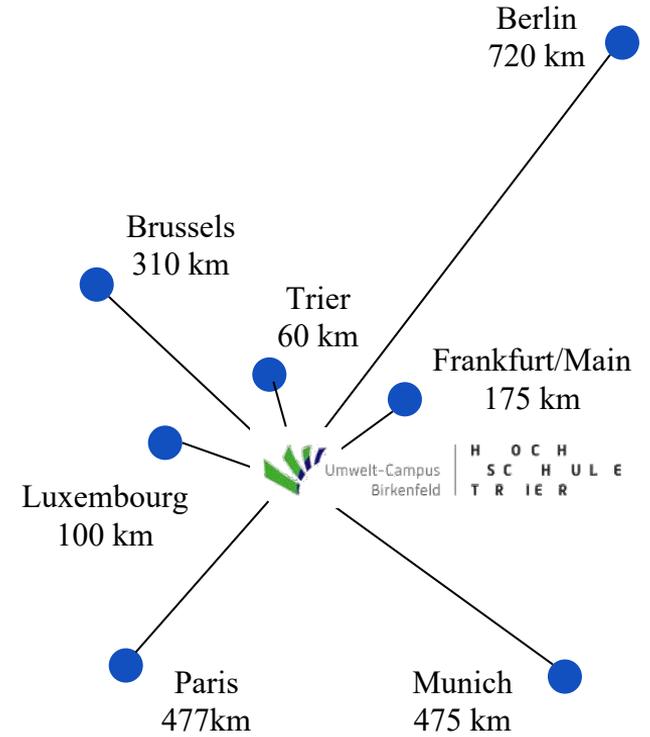


Some context...



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Institute for International and Digital Communication

Sustainable business communication, digital business & applied linguistics

- International projects on digital marketing
- Intercultural Communication
- English as a Lingua Franca via Skype
- Business English as a Lingua Franca in Social Media

umwelt-campus.de/sk

InDi 

Institut für Internationale &
Digitale Kommunikation

English as a Lingua Franca

- ELF as “preferred option for cross-cultural communication” (Seidlhofer 2003: 9) and as a set of strategies that “orients to achieving mutual comprehension” between speakers of different language and cultural backgrounds (Mauranen 2012: 7)
- “[H]igh degree of interactional robustness, cooperation, consensus-seeking behavior and affiliation” (Firth 2009: 149)
- “Spontaneous, creative and flexible” (Brunner & Diemer 2018)



The CASE project

- Compilation of a corpus of Skype conversations between speakers of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) at Trier University of Applied Sciences
- International students from various European countries (e.g. Germany, Italy, Bulgaria, Finland, Spain), native speaker component from UK, US
- 250+ hours of Skype conversations, video and audio data
- First encounters, informal, dyadic setting
- Topic prompts, naturally developing conversation of 30 – 60 minutes



ViMELF (2018)

- Corpus of Video-Mediated English as a Lingua Franca Conversations
 - 20 ELF Skype conversations (12.5 hours), ca. 150,000 tokens
 - Transcribed & annotated with basic prosody, paralanguage, non-verbal elements
 - Available data sets: annotated, lexical, part-of-speech-tagged, xml annotation
 - Also available: audios/videos and sociolinguistic background data
 - Freely available for non-commercial research

Video**ELF**
Mediated

Access via: <https://umwelt-campus.de/case>

ViMELF: Composition

- Average conversation length: 37.23 min.
- Words/Tokens: 113,670 (plain text), 154,472 (annotated version)
- Medium: Video & audio
- Participants: 40, age range: 20-35
- Native languages: German, Bulgarian, Spanish/Galician, Finnish/Swedish, Italian
- Minimum English level B2 CEFR
- 12 male, 28 female speakers

Access via: <https://umwelt-campus.de/case>

Video**ELF**
Mediated

Existing research with ViMELF data

- Corpus compilation
- Multimodality and rich data (including nonverbal & paralinguistic resources)
- Discourse organisation
- Communication strategies
- Interculturally sensitive topics
- Linguistic innovation
- Plurilingual resources
- Identity
- Food and culture
- Affordances of digital communication

Video**ELF**
Mediated

The data quandary: Cornucopia – or can of worms?



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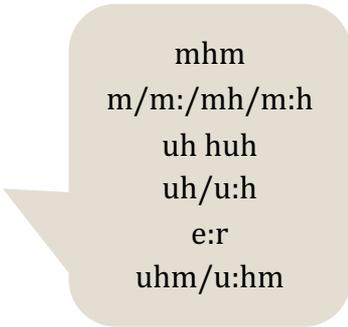
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Spoken language corpora

Spoken language corpora “notoriously difficult to work with” (Thompson 2005)

Three principles for spoken corpus compilation (Edwards 1993):

- Categories: systematically discriminable, exhaustive, systematically contrastive
- Transcripts: easily readable
- Mark-up: systematic, predictable



mhm
m/m:/mh/m:h
uh huh
uh/u:h
e:r
uhm/u:hm

Transcribing spoken data: A challenge

Spoken language

- Contractions, reduced forms
 - Intonation units
 - Repetition and repair
 - Overlap
 - Deixis
 - Hesitation phenomena (pause, filled pause, stammer, drawl)
 - Backchanneling and tag questions
 - Accent/dialect features
 - Ellipsis
 - Interjections
 - Prosodic features, characteristic pronunciation patterns
 - ...
- +** Paralanguage and non-verbal features in audio-visual data

Video-mediated communication

- **Computer-mediated discourse 2.0** (Herring & Androutsopoulos 2015) of increasing interest
- Video and audio channels **imitating features of face-to-face interactions, facilitating** informal communication (Fish et al. 1993: 50f.)
- **Additional benefits** of an audio-visual video connection: visual backchannels, non-verbal elements, better pause management (cf. Isaacs and Tang 1994)
- Increasing interest in **qualitative studies** with video-mediated data, e.g.
 - Showings (Licoppe 2017)
 - Multimodality, sequential and topic organization (Harper, Watson & Licoppe 2017)
 - Code-switching (Brunner & Diemer 2018)
 - Identity (Brunner, Diemer & Schmidt 2018)
 - Non-verbal and paralinguistic elements (Brunner, Diemer & Schmidt 2017)
 - Innovation (Brunner, Diemer & Schmidt 2016)

Multimodality: Examples



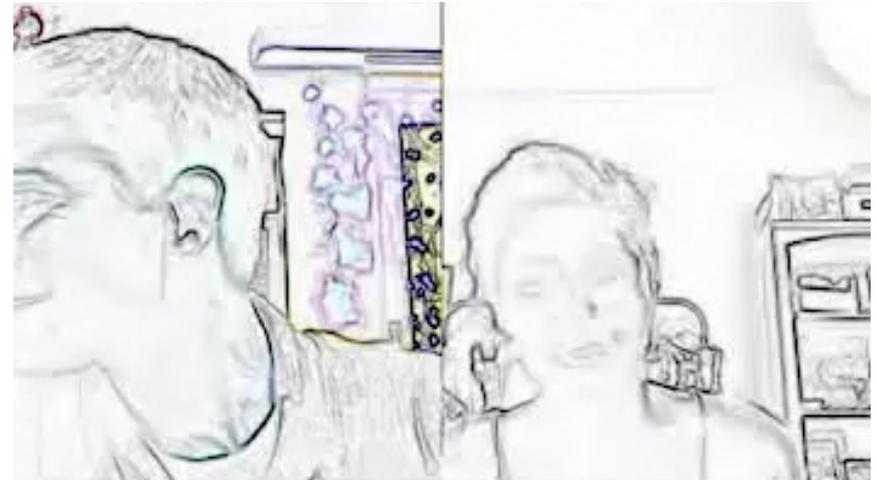
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Framing narrative



- SB80:t u:h we have a little,
.. christmas calendar here, {shifts camera to show calendar} (1.6) there.
HE06: (1.0) {leans closer to camera} O:H wow that's a yeah pretty impressive.
SB80: {shifts camera back} .. some socks u:h, {turns around}
... a:nd we actually have a christmas: u:h tree,
.. which is on the .. {leans to side} balcony outside here,
{points back to balcony with thumb}
HE06: ... is it a REAL tree?
SB80: ... it's a real tree yeah.
HE06: ... okay, because we have a fake one,
<and it's about this high>, {imitates height of tree
with hands} okay this is a <bit hard> to show you but,
{adjusts space between hands} {swaps upper and
lower hand} .. okay it's, {imitates height of tree with
hands} .. yeah. {shakes head}
SB80: yeah ((laughing)). ((laughs)) .h al[right] okay.
HE06: [° ((thh))°]
... kind of maybe, {moves hands &
adjusts space between hands repeatedly}
.. thirty centimeters something so:? {squints} {nods}



Signalling mood

FL34: I don't know, {thumping sound}
 .. and I- and I'm sure people,
 .. will go to Starbucks. because,

SB50: [because it's Starbucks.
 because, ((chuckles))]

FL34: [having .. a Starb-],
 ... yeah .. you know,
 "I- .. I went to STARbucks",
 and you're coo:l. {opens hands}

SB50: [yeah].

FL34: [I had] good coffee yeah_it's {shrugs} normal but,
 ba:h it's li- I I {leans forward & looks to side}
 cannot really see the point of it.

SB50: [yeah .. yeah].

FL34: [I mean], did- .. do you want Pizza HUT in Italy?
 where .. we have the BEST pizza in the wo:rld,

SB50: mhm.

FL34: and you cannot, ... I don't know it's like something .h,
 {leans forward & looks to side}

FL34: {thumping sound}
 ... it's ba:h,
 {thumping sound}
 >°I don't know°<.

.. it's like .. something that
 .. really pisses me o:ff.

SB50: yeah yeah I can .. I can [understand that].



Supporting meaning

- ST14: (1.1) okay?
SB73: ... an:d uhm: they have,
(1.1) {cat meows}
how do you call it uhm,
(1.3) {cat meows}
uhm, [[[hehe]]]
[{cat meows}] the- it's uhm,
... uh like a rubber band?
it goes [on your trousers?]
ST14: [two things,]
SB73: yeah,
ST14: right okay,
SB73: yeah [just I didn't,]
ST14: [>almost,<]
... I don't know what it's- what's the name for it right
{cat meows}
yeah {looks back to screen} I know what you mean,

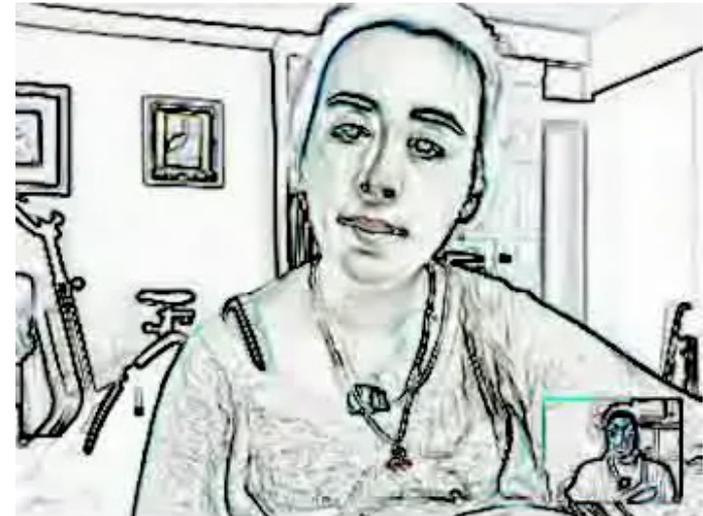
CASE 06SB73ST14

Can you make sense of the explanation?



Multimodality: Non-verbal behaviour

- ST14: (1.1) okay? {nods}
SB73: ... an:d uhm: they have,
(1.1) {cat meows}
how do you call it uhm,
(1.3) {cat meows}
uhm, [[[hehe]]) {imitates braces with both hands}
{cat meows} the- it's uhm,
... uh like a rubber band?
it goes [on your trousers?]
ST14: [two things,] {imitates braces with both hands}
SB73: yeah,
ST14: right okay,
SB73: yeah [just I didn't,]
ST14: [>almost,<] {looks to upper corner}
... I don't know what it's- what's the name for it right
{cat meows}
yeah {looks back to screen} I know what you mean,



Back to the quandary...



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Multimodality

- “[M]ultimodality, first and foremost, **refuses** the idea of the ‘**priority**’ of the linguistic modes; it regards them as **partial means of making meaning**.” (Kress 2011: 46)
- “[L]anguage in use [...] is always and **inevitably constructed across multiple modes** of communication, including **speech and gesture** not just in spoken language but through such ‘**contextual**’ phenomena as the use of the physical spaces in which we carry out our discursive actions [...].” (Scollon and LeVine 2004: 1f.)
- **Dilemma:** “Too much attention to **many different modes may take away from understanding the meanings of a particular mode**; too much attention to one **single mode** and one runs the **risk of ‘tying things down’ to just one** of the many ways in which people make meaning.” (Bezemer and Jewitt 2010: 194)



Gesture research

Interest since antiquity, in modern linguistics renewed focus due to availability of multimodal data, advances in conversation and discourse analysis, increasingly complex view

- Kendon (2004): **gesture as utterance**, visual behaviour with communicative, not only informative or expressive function, “contribut[ing] to human understanding” (2000) (e.g. precision or completion)
- McNeill (2000): gesture as dimension of social interaction and **“window” into the mind**
> gestures shape interaction and interaction shapes gesture
- Streeck (2010): “largely improvised, heterogeneous, partly **conventional**, partly **idiosyncratic**, partly **culture-specific**, partly **universal practice** to produce situated understandings” (5)
- Goodwin (2000, 2007): all **interaction as “embodied interaction”**: movement requires talk and talk requires gestures, with “each individual set of semiotic resources partial and incomplete” (Goodwin 2007)

Gesture research

Gesture plays a **crucial role in interaction**, even on the micro-level (Kendon 2004, McNeill 2000, Goodwin & Goodwin 2000, Streeck 2010)

Problems in gesture research:

- complex and multifaceted data
- lack of generally recognized and practical transcription system
- dynamic system (interaction between gesture, context and talk)



→ **No systematic and quantitative analysis**, focus on qualitative data and conversational settings

Since the 2000s attempts to map and systematize gesture

- as part of multimodal construction grammar (Steen & Turner 2012, Hoffmann 2017)
- as part of corpus data (Adolphs & Carter 2013)
- as part of a cognitive annotation system (LASG, Bressemer, Ladewig & Müller 2013)

Gesture research

Examples for gesture transcription (I)

S: Let me just clear that up for a minute 'cos I know what you're gonna say

[1] [2] [3] [4]

She feels that this is not the case at times. Now she just

[5] [6] [7]

(Kendon 2004)

Christine: .hHHH Hätten se so:- Fetzen? Von:- von Fo:tos?

.hHHH They had like these- pieces? o:::f of photos?

[wiggles fingers of
one hand up and down]



(Streeck 2004)

(2) (G5.00 explication fermeture des portes)

1 Jan: I#+C+I/# à l'a#vant/ +la *fermeture +des# *por+tes/#
*.....approaches hand*hand on button-*touches on button-->
*looks at G----->

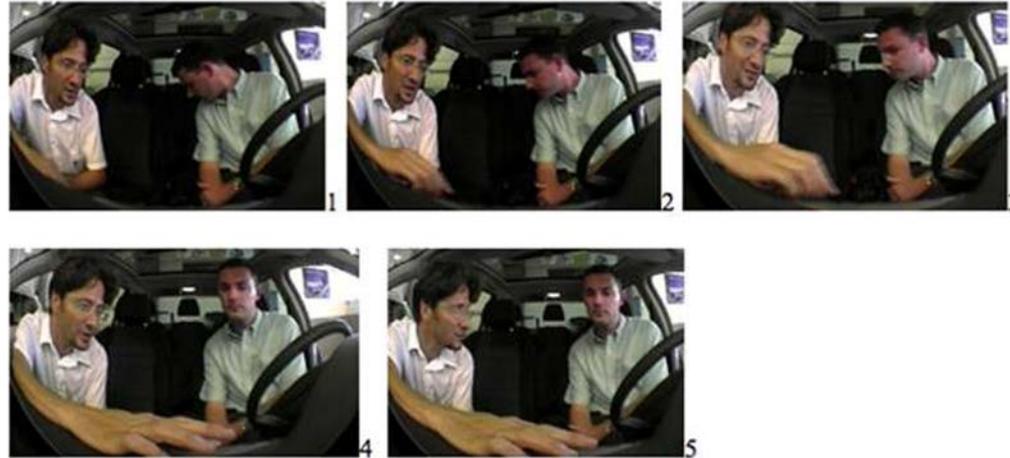
guy +moves head-----+.....+looks ---->
fig #1 #2 #3 #4 #5

2 (0.9)

3 Jan: pour rouler en sécuri+té\ ++
---->*

guy +small nod+

4 (0.*7)
guy ->*,,,



(Mondada 2014 & 2020)

Gesture research



Examples for gesture transcription

/ try[ng to swing across by a rope #]
prep hold stroke hold retract

Transcription: Iconic; 2 similar hands; A-shape; palms toward body; fingers turned down; starts at right and arcs to other side with slight wrist pivot. Hands = S's hands, character vpt = S; arc = trajectory, observer vpt. S swings on rope

Preparation

Mid-Stroke

Retraction



(McNeill 2006 & 2017)

1 Dad: **Sorry** guys. (1.6) **Time** to turn it off.



2 Jason: **N O:::** I'M **NOT-**

3 Dad: We gotta **go**. I **told** you Jason.
4 A few **minutes**.

5 Dad: Hailey g- go get the pair of shoes
6 you wanna wear. Also.

7 Dad: Let's **go**. We've gotta **go**.

8 Jason, do you want a piece of gum?



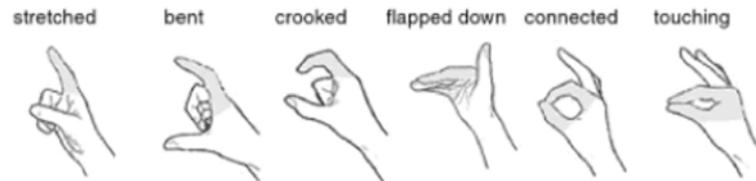
(Goodwin 2007)

Gesture research

Examples for gesture transcription: LASG



(Bressem et al. 2013)



Multimodal Discourse Analysis

“Multimodal discourse analysis [...] is an emerging paradigm in discourse studies which extends the study of language per se to the **study of language in combination with other resources**, such as images, [...] gesture, [...] music and sound.” (O’Halloran 2011: 120)

Multimodal analysis based **on language, kinesics, and paralanguage**
(e.g. Querol-Julián & Fortanet-Gómez 2012)



ViMELF: A system for gesture in interaction

Existing transcriptions of non-verbal elements

- Purely descriptive approaches make understanding in interaction difficult
 - As descriptions become too complex, extension from descriptive to interpretative in transcription > often multi-layered
 - Inclusion of images, division into stages
- not ideal for corpus contexts

Our approach

- As systematic as possible (regular & predictable syntax for corpus research)
- As descriptive as possible while easily understandable, short, (relatively) simple
- Some interpretation through conventionalized naming process
- Taking into account function in interaction



Methodology

- **Data-driven**, mostly bottom-up, with extrapolations
 - **Many transcribers: SALIENCE as guideline** for non-verbal features, i.e. gestures *contributing to supporting meaning-making* & gestures that are *referred to on a verbal level/refer to sth. that is discussed*
 - **Proofreader & researchers** analyze **recurring non-verbal features** by searching for slight variation with regard to common features, additional manual search for options, extrapolation based on results
- **Development of taxonomy** based on actually occurring features & conversational needs

<https://umwelt-campus.de/case-conventions>



Quantitative analysis

7,450 non-verbal elements in ViMELF (2018) in
6,464 instances of transcribed non-verbal behavior

What can non-verbal behavior tell us?

- Insights into the **interplay** between gestures and spoken discourse
- Quantitative results pointing to tendencies regarding **co-occurring words** and possible **functions** in conversation

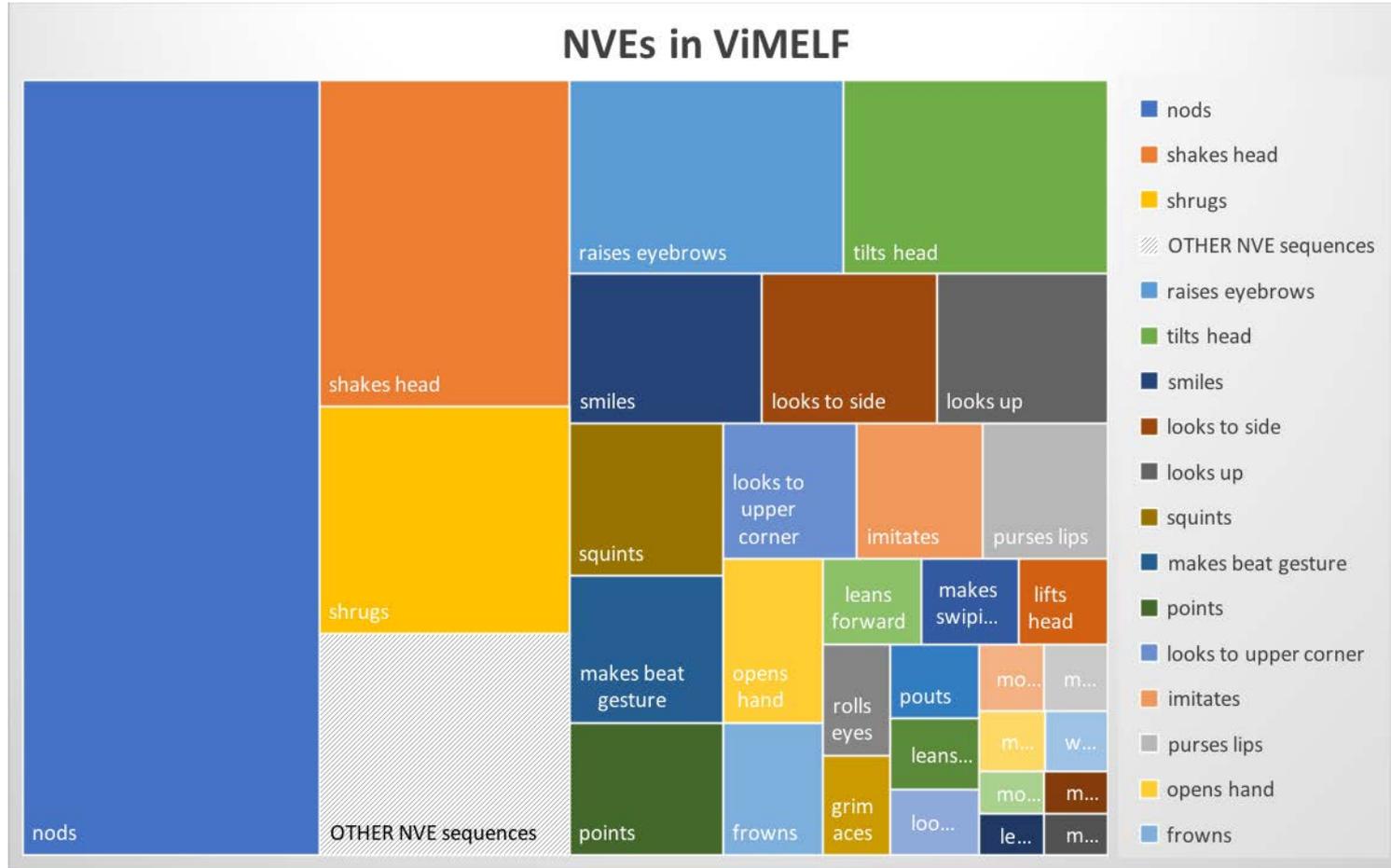


Quantitative analysis

44 NVEs
account for
93.5% of total
instances

Most frequent
(6 NVEs, 58,67%)

- nods
- shakes head
- shrugs
- raises eyebrows
- tilts head
- smiles



Quantitative analysis

Co-occurrences for the most frequent NVEs in ViMELF

NVE	n	Collocates (p<0.05)
{nods}	1741	<i>yeah, mhm, right, okay</i>
{shakes head}	615	<i>no, not</i>
{shrugs}	430	<i>why</i> , other non-verbal elements (pouts, shakes head, purses lips, raises eyebrows, nods, etc.), paralinguistic elements (laughs, chuckles, hehe)
{raises eyebrows}	403	<i>ah</i> , other non-verbal elements (purses lips, tilts head, frowns, nods, shakes head), paralinguistic elements (hehe)
{tilts head}	386	<i>well, then</i> , other non-verbal elements (frowns, squints, smiles, looks to side), paralinguistic elements (laughs, chuckles)
{smiles}	218	<i>yeah, oh, okay</i> , other non-verbal elements (nods, tilts head, raises eyebrows), paralinguistic elements (ehh, heh, laughs)
{looks to side}	198	-
{looks up}	192	-

Methodology issue: multiple functions



{shrugs} (24)

- **uncertainty** (“I don’t know why”);
- **to indicate normalcy** (“I think it’s pretty much, like any other country in the world nowadays?”);
- **to mark a lack of knowledge** (“I’m missing the word?”);
- **lack of alternatives/resignation** (“that’s what it is”);
- **acceptance** (“{shrugs} right” as a response to the description of an unusual combination of subjects at university);
- **to indicate a lack of preferences** (“you want to go first or should I? [...] Go ahead {shrugs}”);
- **exasperation/frustration** (“it doesn’t make sense, why is the table female?”);
- **disapproval** (“the topic is not, ((hehe)) {shrugs}”)

Taxonomy – General principles

- Focus on salient multimodal elements
- Not aligned, marked for duration, for intensity, or speed
- Descriptive
- Clearly marked in transcript, transcribed after the intonation unit containing the most salient use, or, if limited to smaller units (e.g. words), follow those units
- Verb-based, names of conventionalized Western European gestures as descriptions to reduce complexity
- Actual interpretation of individual function(s) of a gesture left to researcher



Complete taxonomy at: <https://umwelt-campus.de/case-conventions> {air quotes}

ViMELF transcription: Overview

. ? ,	Falling, rising , continuing intonation
CAPS " " ° °	Voice quality (stress, shift, reduced volume)
.. ... (x.x)	Pauses (untimed or timed)
: < > > <	Speed (lengthened, slower, faster)
[] = _	Overlap, latching, liaison
(())	Paralanguage, e.g. whispers, coughing, laughter
((/ /))	Phonemic transcription
((German (x.x)))	Code-switching (with language and duration)
{ }	Nonverbal behaviour, e.g. gestures, movements and looks

Detailed conventions: <https://umwelt-campus.de/case-conventions>

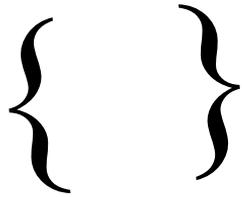
Taxonomy – Syntax

- Consecutive gestures: transcribed consecutively
{smiles} {nods} {makes thumbs-up gesture}
- Co-occurring gestures: transcribed in one bracket, connected with &
{smiles & nods}
- Separate stages of the same gesture: transcribed concisely
{imitates breathalyzer by blowing into top end of pen}

{ S₁ M₃ I₁ L₁ E₁ S₁ }

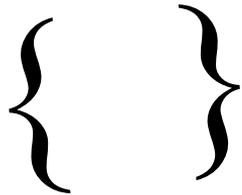
Taxonomy – Head gestures & gaze

- Looks (up, down, to side, to upper corner ...)
- Nods (i.e. head moves up and down)
- Shakes head (i.e. head turns left and right)
- Tilts head (repeatedly)
- ...



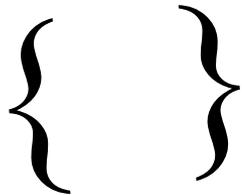
Taxonomy – Facial expressions

- Frowns
- Raises eyebrow(s)
- Smiles
- Winks



Taxonomy – Hands/body

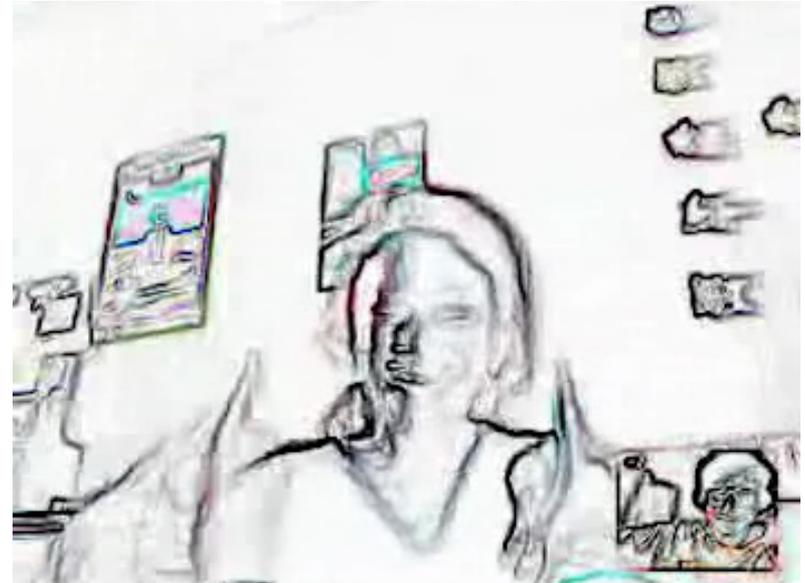
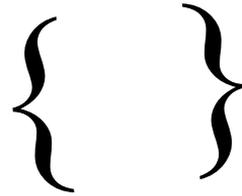
- Imitates ... (e.g. drinking, breathalyzer, braces, ...)
- Lifts hand to... / lifts hand; palm up
- Shows (i.e. moves sth. in front of the camera to bring it into view, e.g. object, pet, child)
- Shifts camera to show ...
(bookshelf, room, weather outside)
- Drinks (from mug, bottle, ...)



Taxonomy – Hands/body II

Makes ...

- air quotes
- beat gesture
- box gesture
- okay sign
- peace sign
- throwing-away gesture
- thumbs-up / thumbs-down gesture



FL89: I'm a- I'm a yoga master,
.. when I bend I can .. almost touch my knees.

LY06: (1.0) "WO:AH ALMOST"? .. (((chuckles)))

FL89: [yeah_((laughs))],

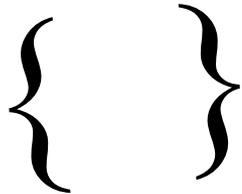
LY06: [()], {makes thumbs-up gesture with both hands}
do it everyday,

.. and you know (after a few) months you'll be
able >maybe< to touch your knees?

(((chuckles)))

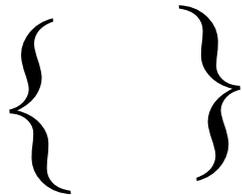
Taxonomy – Physical stance

- Leans ... (forward, backward, towards ...)
- Sits up (i.e. straighter than before)
- Shifts position
- Stands up / sits down



Taxonomy – Background

- **Movement:**
Noun + verb 3rd pers. through screen/
towards/in front of screen ...
- **Noises:**
Noun + verb 3rd pers. if origin
is clear
Description as present participle or
noun + sound



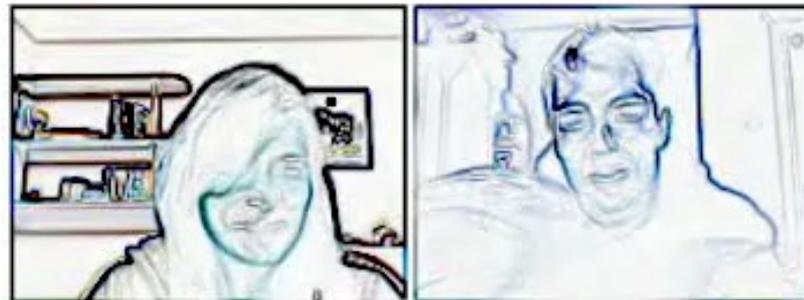
{cat meows}

Advantages for a corpus context

- **Preserves complexity** in large datasets by simplifying and systematizing complex interactional processes
 - Focus on **conversational function** (conventionalized names) rather than complex physical description (“points”, “makes air quotes”, “waves” instead of “lifts right hand and moves hand from left to right repeatedly”) → easier retrieval
 - Unique gestures (e.g. “imitates”, of particular importance in an ELF context) → otherwise impossible to retrieve by existing approaches
 - **Disadvantages:** not purely descriptive, not aligned, does not focus on various stages and compositional elements
- **Ideal for corpus-assisted/-based discourse analysis**

Back to the pretzel...

SB57: I know that,
uhm: pretzels are made by,
.. being dipped into .. kind of an acid?
{imitates dipping}



ST07: ... mhm=

SB57: =that's why they have these,
.. brown .. crust things, {imitates shape of pretzel crust}

ST07: ... yes,

SB57: .. and there is salt on them, {imitates sprinkling salt}

ST07: ... mhm, {nods}

SB57: .. and they are usually .. like (2.0), {imitates shape of pretzel with index fingers}
{imitates tying knot repeatedly}
.. they have a knot in them,



Functional typology of non-verbal behavior

- Our aim: Developing a **functional typology of non-verbal elements** to gain a more comprehensive view of dynamic meaning-making processes involved
 - **Extrapolation of possible functions** of salient gestures based on all transcribed occurrences
 - **Application of typology** with the help of context analysis
 - Refining of typology
- **7 basic functions** (context-dependent and not mutually exclusive)

Functional typology of non-verbal behavior

7 basic functions

1 Back-channeling

2 Complementary

3 Replacing

4 Nuancing

5 Supporting

6 Incidental

7 Background

Functions of non-verbal elements

1. Back-channeling , i.e. listener practices indicating engagement

SB73: uhm you [learn] how to to uhm,
procedure this Christmas uh time,

ST14: [((clears throat))]
{nods}

SB73: and yeah,
(1.3) [I really like] it,

ST14: [that's cool.]

SB73: °yeah.° {nods}

ST14: {nods}

SB73: (1.0) so you have every day something you ca:n,
>yeah<,
just be happy about,



Functions of non-verbal elements

2. Complementary, i.e. verbal and non-verbal elements complement each other, providing a more complete/detailed or clearer meaning

a) Focusing, i.e. visually drawing attention to something referred to verbally

SB27: I have so much books here?

.. that I .. bought,

but .. I can't read them. ((hehe))

FL25: look, {shifts camera to show bookshelf} {points to bookshelf}

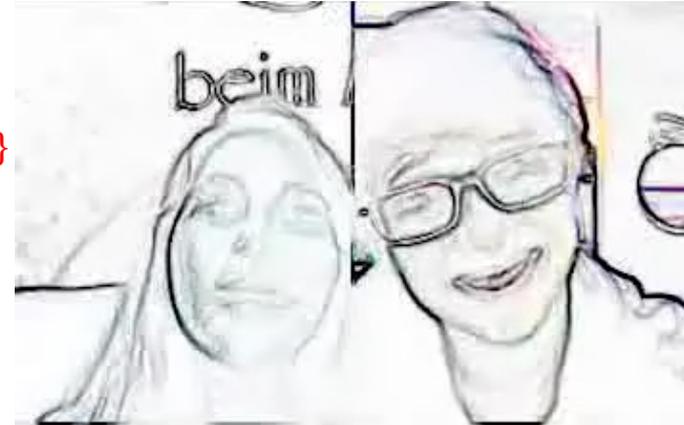
I mean .. we have dictionaries,

yes .. dictionaries,

but ther- but there are also books there somewhere,

{makes brushing-away gesture; arm still extended to back}

CASE 03SB27FL25



Functions of non-verbal elements

- 2. Complementary**, i.e. verbal and non-verbal elements complement each other, providing a more complete/detailed or clearer meaning
- a) **Focusing**, i.e. visually drawing attention to something referred to verbally
 - b) **Imitating**, i.e. imitating an action, activity, object, shape, size while explaining/referring to it verbally

SB48: the little green round ones.

{imitates shape of pea}

you know what I mean?

FL32: peas?

SB48: peas.

FL32: [peas.]

SB48: yeah [ex]actly those. {points at screen}
the peas,



CASE 07SB48FL32

Functions of non-verbal elements

3. Replacing, i.e. replacing a verbal element with a non-verbal one

ST14: (1.1) okay? {nods}

SB73: ... an:d uhm: they have,

(1.1) {cat meows}

how do you call it uhm,

(1.3) {cat meows}

uhm, [[[hehe)]]] {imitates braces with both hands}

{cat meows} the- it's uhm,

... uh like a rubber band?

it goes [on your trousers?]



ST14: [two things,] {imitates braces with both hands}

SB73: yeah,

ST14: right okay,

SB73: yeah [just I didn't,]

ST14: [>almost,<] {looks to upper corner}

... I don't know what it's- what's the name for it right {cat meows}



BabyCASE 06SB73ST14

Functions of non-verbal elements

4. Nuancing, i.e. non-verbal elements providing a more nuanced basis for interpretation, e.g. expressing stance, irony, ...

ST14: (1.7) well as a catholic {makes air quotes} ... country-

>I'm not catholic. < {points to herself}

(1.0) but- (1.9) Spain is .. VErY into;

(1.1) uhm religious parades,

SB73: ((heh)) I know. [[[hehe]]]

BabyCASE 06SB73ST14

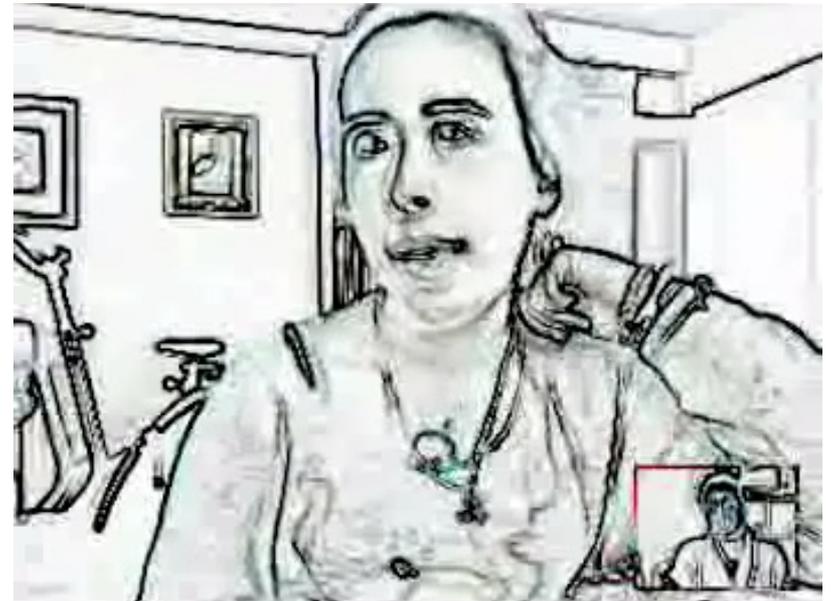


Functions of non-verbal elements

5. Supporting, could be interpreted as part of verbal level, often seem subconscious, similar to what McNeill calls for example “metaphoric gestures” and “beat gestures” (McNeill 2005: 38ff.)

ST14: (1.2) is it-?
well I have this image,
{lifts hand & opens hand}
.. in my mind,

CASE 06SB73ST14



Functions of non-verbal elements

6. **Incidental**, i.e. not immediately contributing to meaning per se but (potentially) influencing conversational development

ST14: (1.2) see we're not that different after all.
{shakes head}

SB73: yeah?

ST14: ((hehe)) that's [(cool).]

SB73: do you have any Easter traditions?

ST14: {drinks out of glass} ... M {nods}
{lifts hand to mouth}

CASE 06SB73ST14



Functions of non-verbal elements

7. Background, i.e. something happening in the background that may have an influence on the conversation

SB47: so I could always-, ((ehh))

{looks to side} chee:rs? {roommate gives her
glass of wine} {holds up glass of wine}
{drinks out of glass}

FL21: (((laughs)))

SB47: {roommates laugh} (((chuckles)))
{holds hand to mouth} {waves sideways}
they always .. want to drink,

CASE 03SB47FL21



And then there is paralanguage...



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T R I E R

Paralanguage – The case of laughter

Functions of laughter (Stewart 1997):

- **Metalinguistic** (e.g. emphasizing (Thonus 2008), backchanneling (Yngve 1970), topic-ending (Holt 2010))
- **Evaluative** (e.g. agreement and alignment, cf. Glenn 1995, Partington 2006, Baynham 2011, Warner-Garcia 2014)
- **Joking** (cf. Partington 2006)



- **Social, interactional effect** (cf. Gervais & Wilson 2005, Warner-Garcia 2014)
- **Rapport management** (Cassell et al. 2007, Spencer-Oatey & Franklin 2009), speakers “**position themselves as amiable and agreeable**” (Warner-Garcia 2014: 177)

Transcribing laughter

Various approaches

HA HA HA
heh heh heh
ahh ha::ha::ha::
ehh ye(h)hhmh'hmh'hmh
(Jefferson 1979)

^ ^ ^ ^ v
^ m ^ m ^ m
(Chafe 2007)

@@@@@
@e@e@e@a@a@a
speech in boldface and
underlined
(Santa Barbara Corpus)

((laughs))
((chuckles))
paralinguistic behaviour
(Dressler and Kreuz 2000,
Norrick 2013)



Transcribing laughter in ViMELF



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S C H U L E
T R I E R

((LAUGHS))	separate, loud laughter
((laughs))	separate laughter
((laughing))	laughing while speaking
((chuckles))	chuckle
((chuckling))	chuckling while speaking
((thh))	aspirated minimum laughter starting with alveolar plosive sound
((ehh))	monosyllabic laugh pulse
((hehe))	short chuckling
((heh))	initially aspirated monosyllabic laugh pulse

cf. Brunner, Diemer & Schmidt 2017
helsinki.fi/varieng/series/volumes/19/brunner_diemer_schmidt



Paralinguistic meaning-making: Laughter

- **Creating rapport** between interlocutors (Spencer-Oatey 2002) by creating **common ground** and **reducing situational awkwardness** (cf. Chafe 2007)
- **Mitigating a delicate situation**, e.g. embarrassment, by indicating **non-seriousness** (Chafe 2007), or **defusing** (Jefferson et al. 1987: 172)
- Laughter generally seems to have a **positive effect on the communicative setting**, putting partners at ease with each other
- Code-switching also often used in a **humorous manner** (cf. also Siegel 1995), **resulting in co-occurring laughter**



08SB106HE03: Laughter and CS

HE03: yeah.

yeah ... it's really doesn't cost anything.

SB106: an apple and an **Ei** ((German(0.4))). ((laughs))

HE03: ((laughs)) yeah.

yeah.

that's fun.

Putting it all together: Multimodality in intercultural communication



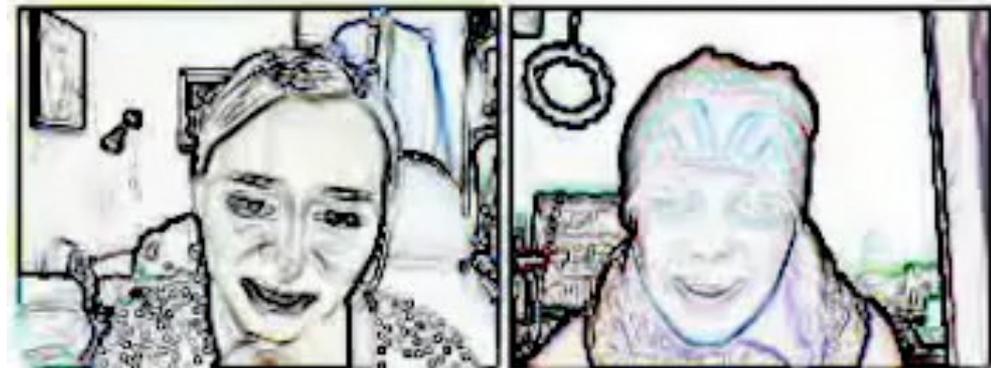
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T R I E R

Negotiating misunderstandings

SB93: i- is it true that alcohol's ((/'ælkəls/))
 so expensive there?
 or is it,
 is was that just Norway,
 HE19: oh which one? {leans forward}
 SB93: alcohol ((/'alkə:l)).
 [was that just in Norway],
 HE19: [{shakes head once, leans forward}] what is it,
 aikai ((/aikai/))? {leans forward}
 SB93: so,
 alcohol ((/'alkə:l/)),
 <alcohol> ((/'alkohəʊl/)). {imitates
 breathalizer by blowing into end of pen}
 [what you drink]. {holds pen to mouth}
 HE19: [oh: the], {scratches head with left hand}
 the brand?
 SB93: nO, what you drink, {imitates drinking}
 in, what's in beer,
 SB93: [and wine].
 HE19: [oh: sorry], ((laughing)), {closes eyes, leans
 back, raises both hands in a throwaway gesture}

SB93: [alco], ((laughing)), {leans forward}
 HE19: sorry °sorry°, ((laughing))
 alcohol, {nods}
 sorry, {nods}
 now I understand, {nods}
 yeah yeah yeah, {nods} oh it's very expensive in Finland,
 I think we have a very high tax on alcohol, {raises right hand,
 pressing fingers together}
 SB93: yeah.
 HE19: [yeah].
 SB93: [so that] wasn't just in Norway,
 HE19: no:, {shakes head}



Negotiating interculturally sensitive topics

SB73: (1.4) is uhm do you still celebrate this uhm <bull racing>?

... uhm,

ST14: ... OH the bull fighting,

SB73: yeah,

ST14: yeah,

(1.0) ((clears throat))

[well,-]

SB73: I think it's a celebration for you or?

isn't it?

ST14: (1.0) well. {rolls eyes}

(1.5) okay.

... uhm ... <Spain is a ((/ei/)) very: diverse country.

... and it might not look like so. ((clears throat))

{left hand to mouth}

... because it's not very big, {stretches arms, palms facing inwards}

... but it has a lot of cultures.

{raises hands, waving back and forth}

... very different cultures.

{moves hands to front, fingers pointing downwards}

... and where I am from? {both hands on chest}

we don't bull fight. {shakes head}



Applications

- ELF and intercultural communication: Rich resource for analyzing informal interactions in an international context from various perspectives (Brunner 2021)
- Multimodality: Handling rich data, Skype as a medium, gesture research in ELF (Diemer et al. 2017)
- Second language acquisition: Providing authentic examples of communication strategies for the classroom (Brunner & Diemer 2018)
- International business contexts: Working in intercultural teams (Komori-Glatz 2017), optimizing service encounters and customer interaction (Brunner & Diemer 2019 & 2021), small talk and rapport building in business negotiations (Ehrenreich 2010, Kankaanranta & Planken 2010)



Conclusion: Multimodal meaning-making

- Meaning in interaction is always negotiated on several levels
- Non-verbal elements and paralinguistic features contribute to creating meaning in interaction
- Transcribing such features is essential when analyzing spoken data
- A systematic categorization of possible functions provides a better insight into how such features are used in context and to what end
- Quantitative analysis of collocates of multimodal element yields limited results → combination with detailed qualitative analysis (functions in interaction)
- Multimodal aspects are of key importance in the analysis of spoken ELF



Thank you!

s.diemer@umwelt-campus.de

<https://umwelt-campus.de/case>



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