

# Multimodal Conflict Resolution: A conversation analytic study of a group work activity in English class

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## 1. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic precipitated many drastic changes in college education. In spring 2020, universities worldwide were suddenly forced to start teaching remotely. Campuses were closed, and courses shifted from in-person classroom teaching to an online format. As a result, both teachers and students had to adjust to a new style of education. While online education technology has made remarkable progress, online courses cannot perfectly replicate in-person courses. According to a survey conducted of undergraduate students in an Indian university in the fall of 2020, many students felt that they had developed health issues connected to online education (Chakraborty et al. 2020). College students in China were also reported to suffer from psychological issues (Cao et al. 2020). College students in Japan were no exception. Isolation and a lack of communication with others have been blamed for students' stress; however, students did participate in classes online. What, then, is lost in online courses? Online courses are certainly different from those that are taught in person, but the fundamental nature of the difference is not yet fully understood by teaching faculty who had the experience of teaching in-person classes. Using a screen sharing function, participants in a remote meeting can look at the same material. They can also show and see their faces using a web camera. Of course, they may talk at the same time. Nevertheless, these tools cannot replace the merits of being together in the same place. A shared screen does not guarantee shared attention; it is difficult to see where in the material the other people are looking. They might even be looking at something else on their computers. The

mutual gaze between the meeting participants cannot be established. Remote meetings are convenient, but they lack the rich multimodal resources that people can use in co-present interactions.

Recently, the embodied nature of interaction has attracted attention in conversation analysis and interactional linguistics. Nevile (2015) described it as follows:

The origins and establishment of the embodied turn in social interaction research reflect not only the greater availability of video data but increasing scholarly sensitivity and recognition for how we are always in our bodies, always everywhere embodied beings, acting, and doing things in a material world. In that sense, all interaction is embodied, all actions are embodied, and all turns are embodied turns. (Nevile 2015: 141)

In analyzing any kind of social interaction that occurs in a material world, including classroom interaction, bodily behaviors can never be ignored. Based on video-recorded data from a group activity in an English course, this study aims to describe some features of in-person classes. It will demonstrate how bodily behaviors such as gaze and pointing are utilized when interacting with co-present participants, especially when there are conflicting opinions and attempts at conflict resolution.

## 2. Background: embodied interaction in classroom

Prior to the conception of the “embodied turn” (Nevile 2015), the specific environment associated with certain institutional settings had been investigated. For example, Heath (1986) examined body movements and the use of tools in medical interactions. Goodwin (1995) analyzed interaction on a research ship, where different types of scientists worked together. These studies demonstrated how participants used the tools in the environment when communicating with their co-participants. They showed that interaction was inherently situated in the environment: tools such as monitors, computers, and other instruments were indispensable for constructing meaning with others.

As Streeck (1996) argued, objects can be symbolized and given

unique affordances in some situations. For example, participants may use handouts or sticky notes to facilitate group discussions (Luff et al. 2010; Mondada 2007; Mortensen 2013; Nielsen 2012). Writing in front of other participants and referring to the written product can shape the ongoing interaction (Hazel and Mortensen 2014). Such materiality in interactions is also present in the classroom. Students learning in the classroom often use worksheets, and their use of worksheets and other materials has been the target of analysis (Mathieu et al. 2021; Matsumoto 2019).

Along with objects, bodily conduct also constitutes a vital part of classroom interaction (Jacknick 2021). In teacher–student interaction, the teacher’s gaze and hand raising may solicit students’ response (Ishino 2021; Sert 2019; Waring and Carpenter 2019). While students can express their willingness to be selected as the next speaker by raising their hand, they can also display their unwillingness to speak by avoiding the teacher’s gaze (Mortensen 2008). The gaze direction is also utilized in student–student interaction to indicate the willingness to participate (Evnitskaya and Berger 2017; Ro and Burch 2020). Students’ epistemic status, especially uncertainty or lack of confidence, can be expressed by various multimodal resources, such as facial expressions, gaze direction, and body movement (Jakonen and Morton 2015; Sert and Jacknick 2015; Sert and Walsh 2013).

While many researchers have focused on how students manifest willingness or unwillingness through their bodily behaviors and how such manifestations affect the course of ongoing interaction, few studies have investigated how students behave when they have conflicting opinions. Although the conflict in opinion in group work may not be as serious as those in actual conflicts that foreign language speakers may face (cf. Mugford 2019), having a conflict is nevertheless an interactionally tough situation for students to deal with. This study focuses on a scenario in which students had different interpretations of a phrase and analyzes how they used multimodal resources to reach an agreement. Through detailed analysis of bodily behaviors, this study aims to demonstrate that embodied resources play a crucial role in resolving a conflict of opinion between students in co-present interaction.

### 3. Data and method

The data for this study were obtained from video-recorded conversations among students during a group activity in a seven-week English course in a university in Tokyo. The theme of the course was the psychology of language learners (Dörnyei and Ryan 2015). The class time was 105 minutes. Each class consisted of two or three parts; In the first part, the instructor always presented a lecture on the reading material assigned prior to the class. The second and third parts varied depending on the day; students might watch a short video lecture and then summarize the content, or be divided into small groups to discuss the theme of the reading. Additional reading materials were occasionally distributed. While the primary goal of the course was reading comprehension, the class was designed to develop the four skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

Video recordings were made on two days (Week 5 and Week 6) with 16 different groups of 3–4 students during the group activity sessions. Based on the dataset, this study focused on a segment of video recording of one group in Week 6, as the segment contained several different bodily behaviors illustrating the wide range of multimodal resources utilized by the students during the group work activity. The class began with reading comprehension, and then the students performed the group work. During the group work, the students used a worksheet taken from a textbook that contained some listening exercises. Thus, the class for that day included reading, listening, and discussion.

For the analysis of the extract, we adopted the methodology of conversation analysis (CA). CA was first developed in the field of sociology by Harvey Sacks, Emanuel Schegloff, and Gail Jefferson (Sacks et al. 1974; Schegloff 2007). In the CA framework, utterances in conversation were transcribed in extremely fine detail, including speech errors and silences (see Appendix B for the symbols used in the transcript). The notions deployed in CA research include turn-taking, sequence organization, the formation of social action, and stance taking. CA has been applied in various fields (Sidnell and Stivers 2012), and classroom interaction has attracted the interest of many researchers (Gardner 2012; Hellermann 2008; Jacknick 2021; Seedhouse 2005; Wong and Waring 2021). The multimodal transcript was based on the system

developed by Lorenza Mondada (Mondada 2018), with some modifications by the author.

#### 4. Analysis

In this section, the bodily behaviors of students during group work are analyzed. Special focus is placed on the direction of the face and gaze (4.1 and 4.4) and pointing to proximate and distant objects (4.2 and 4.3). These bodily behaviors, accompanied by words and materials in the environment, contributed to the interaction between participants by promoting participation, specifying referents, and managing agreement and disagreement.

In the segment analyzed in this section, the students discussed their learning styles – auditory, visual, and tactile learners (Dörnyei and Ryan 2015, Chapter 5). At the beginning of the segment, a student named Iki (pseudonym), who had been voluntarily leading the discussion, proposed to move on to Question 4, the next and final question on the worksheet: *Which activities from today's lesson match your learning style?* (see Appendix C). Before anyone could start answering the question, Iki asked what was meant by *activities* in the question. The other participants, Yoshida and Suzuki (pseudonyms), had different understandings of *activities*. The whole conversation about the meaning of *activities* constituted a side sequence (Jefferson 1972); that is, identifying the referent of the expression was not the main activity of working on the question but a prerequisite for answering the question. As such, the issue of the referent was treated by the participants as a common

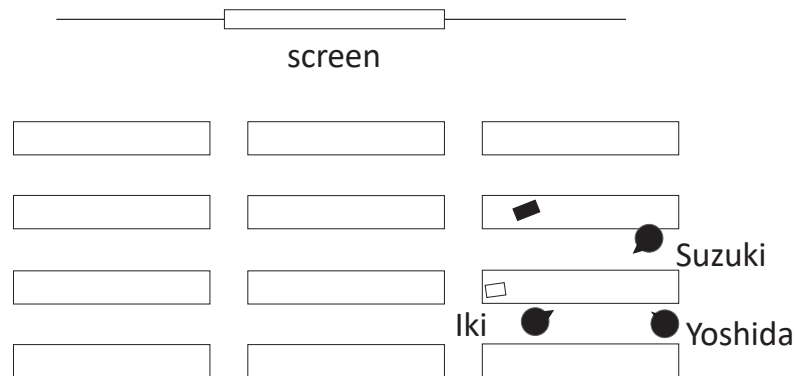


Fig. 1: Seating position of the participants

problem that needed to be immediately resolved. The seating positions of the participants are shown in Figure 1. The long white boxes indicate the tables. The back half of the classroom and other groups of students are omitted from the figure. The black box indicates the position of the camera. The small white box is the IC recorder.

#### 4.1 Face and gaze direction: activity type and seeking a response

The direction of the body, especially the face, plays an essential role in various aspects of interaction. Gaze is generally a powerful means of soliciting participation; The person the current speaker is looking at is often selected as the next speaker (Kendon 1967; Rossano et al. 2009; Rossano 2012). In the group activity included in this study's dataset, however, gaze was used differently. When the students had worksheets, they often looked at their own worksheets during the group activity and rarely had mutual gaze. Looking down at their worksheets indicate the participants' engagement in the activity. When they looked up and gazed at another participant, on the other hand, their face direction and gaze seemed to be associated with their particular needs.

Prior to the excerpt, the participants finished working on Question 3 in Exercise 12 (See Appendix C). Before moving on to Question 4, Iki looked at the screen for a moment, and brought his gaze back to the worksheet. Yoshida looked at Suzuki, but when Iki started talking in lines 1, Yoshida brought his gaze back to his worksheet. Suzuki was looking at his worksheet. While Iki asked two questions in lines 1 and 3, he did not look at the group members, Suzuki and Yoshida, nor did Suzuki and Yoshida look at Iki.

#### Excerpt 1

- 01 IKI: Shall we move to question (.) four? (Fig. 2)  
 02 (0.4)  
 03 IKI: Which ac- tivitie:s fro:m today's lesson match  
 your: learning style?  
 04 (0.8)



Suzuki Yoshida Iki

Fig. 2: Everyone looking down



Iki's question in line 1 was a suggestion to move on to the next question, and in line 3, Iki was reading the question printed on the worksheet aloud. With these questions, Iki was not requesting information from the other participants. Rather, he was leading the discussion, and the other two accepted Iki's taking the role. Saying nothing and looking down at the worksheet were their bodily displays of engaging in the group activity. The purpose of the activity for all the students in the classroom was to work on the questions, and refusing to do so was not an option. The absence of a mutual gaze here indicates that the participants knew what they were supposed to be doing.

In contrast, when Iki asked an information-requesting question, he looked at his co-participants. After line 3, no one answered the question for a while. The sounds Suzuki and Iki made in lines 5 and 6, *u::n* and *un*, indicate that they were working on the question. In line 8, Iki said *akutibitiizu ka*, picking up the word *activities* from the question and adding the Japanese final particle *ka*. Then, no one said anything for 4.6 seconds.

### Excerpt 2

- 03 IKI: Which ac- tivitie:s fro:m today's lesson match  
your: learning style?
- 04 (0.8)
- 05 SUZ: u::n=  
"uhm"
- 06 IKI: =un  
"yeah"
- 07 (0.5)
- 08 IKI: akutibitiizu ka.  
activities FP  
"Activities..."
- 09 (4.6)
- 10 IKI: °aa::°  
"uhm"
- 11 (2.0)

12 IKI: \*tte kore @akuṭibitiizu %tte naṯni? (Fig. 3)  
 QT this activities QT what  
 “Hey, what is this ‘activities’?”  
 iki \*looks at Yoshida/Suzuki -----> 1.14  
 yos @looks at Iki  
 suz %looks at Iki  
 13 (0.8)



Fig. 3: Participants in a mutual gaze

Iki's utterance in line 8, *akutibitiizu ka* seemed to be problematizing the word *activities*, but the utterance was not explicitly addressed to either of his co-participants. Iki's gaze was focused on the worksheet, and the final particle *ka* in this utterance made it seem like he was talking to himself. By contrast, Iki's utterance in line 12 was formulated as a question that should be answered, and the attitude of seeking a response was also expressed by the change in his gaze direction; Iki shifted his gaze from his worksheet and looked in the direction of Yoshida and Suzuki. In addition, Iki made a slight smile, which could be associated with his epistemic stance of insufficient understanding (Sert and Jacknick 2015). The recipients of the question, Yoshida and Suzuki, then looked at Iki.

The shift in the participants' gaze in line 12 indicates a shift in the activity in which they were engaged and in the participation framework. Until line 11, they had been working on the question in a largely individual manner; although in the same group, they were thinking individually about the answer to *Which activities from today's lesson match your learning style?* (Question 4). Iki's question in line 12 suspended the activity of working on Question 4 and shifted the activity to dealing with Iki's problem of understanding what was meant by “activities.” The bodily behaviors of raising the head and looking at one



another embodied the shift. From then on, the participants started working on the problem of the *activities'* referent.

#### 4.2. Pointing at worksheet: specifying the referent and negotiation

When a group of people work on a task using the materials at hand, the material often plays a critical role in communication. As Hutchby (2001) argued, materials have their own affordance in ongoing activities. Materials distributed to each student, such as worksheets or textbooks, can be resources for managing attention on a narrowly focused target. In the segment examined in this study, each student had his worksheet on the table, and they referred to the questions and list of activities using linguistic expressions and bodily behaviors.

After Iki asked a question in line 12, neither Yoshida nor Suzuki answered immediately. Then, Iki said *kono* "this," pointing to the bottom part of his worksheet, where the question was written (Figure 4). This utterance of Iki did not form a complete sentence. However, because it was produced after there was no response to his question, it is reasonable to assume that Iki was pursuing a response from his co-participants by elaborating on what he was talking about. Yoshida answered Iki's question in line 15 by saying *koko kara* "from here" and pointing at his worksheet (Figure 5). Yoshida pointed to the list of activities on the worksheet.

#### Excerpt 3

- 12 IKI:     \*tte kore @aku↑tibitiizu %tte na↑ni?  
               QT   this   activities               QT   what  
               "Hey, what is this 'activities'?"  
       iki     \*looks at Yoshida/Suzuki -----> 1.14  
       yos                       @looks at Iki  
       suz                                       %looks at Iki
- 13               (0.8)
- 14 IKI:     \*kono::  
               this  
               "This..."  
       iki     \*points at Iki's worksheet (Fig. 4)

15 YOS: @koko kara.

here from

"From here."

yos @points at Yoshida's worksheet (Fig. 5)



Fig. 4: Iki pointing at his worksheet Fig. 5: Yoshida pointing at his worksheet

Both Iki's and Yoshida's utterances were accompanied by pointing gestures directed at their worksheets. For the formulation of their turns, the pointing gestures were a necessary element, as without them, the deictic terms *kono* "this" (line 14) or *koko* "here" (line 15) would not convey any meaning. These terms were specified by the actual part of the worksheet, as indicated by the participants' pointing. The understanding of what the participants were trying to express crucially relied on the condition of the participants' shared vision and their ability to see the worksheets and follow the pointing of the speaking participants (cf. Goodwin 2003).

Although the exact pointing position was not visible due to the videotaping setting, it is highly likely that Yoshida was pointing at the list of activities on the worksheet. In contrast to Iki's turn *kono*:: "This..." in line 14, which was elongated at the end and did not sound as clearly finished, Yoshida's turn in line 15, *koko kara* "From here" ended with a falling intonation, which clearly marked the end of the turn. By saying this, Yoshida answered Iki's question about *activities* in Question 4, *Which activities from today's lesson match your learning style?*

To Yoshida's *koko kara* "from here" in line 15, Suzuki immediately looks at Yoshida's worksheet and says *e?*, an open class repair initiator that does not specify the nature of the trouble the speaker has (Drew 1997). After a very short pause, Suzuki continued to deliver his view. Suzuki proposed an understanding that is different from Yoshida's, i.e., activities mean something

they did in the day's class, but was overlapped by Iki, who acknowledged Yoshida's answer (line 18).

#### Excerpt 4

- 16 SUZ: %e? (.)  
 INJ  
 "Huh?"  
 suz %looks at Yoshida's worksheet
- 17 SUZ: [kyoo no jugyoo de nanka (yatta) tteiu koto janai no  
 today GEN class DAT something did QT thing TAG FP  
 "Isn't it something we did in today's class?"
- 18 IKI: [koko- a, \*koko kara koko kara da yone.  
 here INJ here from here from COP FP  
 "Here, oh, from here, from here, isn't it?"  
 iki \*making a circle on a part of the  
 worksheet (Fig. 6)
- 19a IKI: \*koko kara: (.) de ii yone  
 here from DAT good FP  
 iki \*points at Iki's worksheet
- 19b IKI: akutibitii \*ko- koko kara de.  
 activity here from DAT  
 iki \*points at Suzuki's worksheet  
 (Fig. 7)  
 "It's fine to (understand) activity as from here, right?  
 From here."



Fig.6: Iki making a circle on his worksheet Fig.7: Iki pointing at Suzuki's worksheet

Iki first made a circle on his worksheet with his pen (line 18), then pointed at this part (line 19a) and then pointed at the corresponding part in Suzuki's worksheet (line 19b), requesting confirmation.

As shown in Fig. 7, Iki extended his right arm to point to Suzuki's worksheet as he expanded his turn with *koko kara de* "from here". This pointing makes a clear contrast with Yoshida and Iki's pointing gestures in Excerpt 3, in which the participants pointed at their own worksheets. Pointing at a worksheet that is not his own might be treated as an impolite, intrusive behavior. Here, Iki not only attracted Suzuki's attention to the list of activities but also invited him to agree. Iki took the risk of soliciting agreement from Suzuki, as Suzuki's agreement with the interpretation would have ended the side sequence. In this way, Iki, who had been leading the discussion, appealed to Suzuki both verbally and non-verbally.

#### 4.3 Pointing at a far-away target: referring to authority for support

The target of pointing is not limited to proximal objects. Pointing toward a distant object is known to be a way of attracting joint attention from participants (Franco and Butterworth 1996). In group work activities in the classroom, students sometimes point at a screen to direct their co-participants' attention to instructions given by the instructor.

In this example, Suzuki, who had displayed doubts about Yoshida's understanding of the *activities'* referent in line 17, further presented his view that *activities* should be understood to be what they had done in the day's class. As he stated his opinion, Suzuki pointed to the screen in the front of the classroom, where instructions about the activity were projected.

#### Excerpt 5

20                   @ (0.8)  
           yos       @flips the worksheet

21 IKI:       (soo sutto)=  
                   so   do.COND  
                   "Then"

# MULTIMODAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION

- 22 SUZ: =°chigakunai?°  
wrong.NEG  
“That isn’t right, is it?”
- 23 IKI: @aisoona yatsu mitaina.  
fit.seem thing like  
“Like, the one that seems to fit.”  
yos @flips the worksheet
- 24 (.)
- 25 SUZ: e, chigau njanai no. %kyoo[:  
INJ wrong TAG FP today  
“Oh, that’s not right, is it? Today...”  
suz %gaze at Iki
- 27 IKI: [kyoo no akutibiti.  
today GEN activity  
“Today’s activity.”
- 28 (3.0)
- 29 SUZ: kyookasho yomu toka. (.) h h %nan[ka hh  
textbook read like something  
“Like reading the textbook, something”  
suz %points towards  
the screen (Fig. 8)
- 30 IKI: [iya, moo. e?  
INJ already INJ  
“No, already, what”
- 31 \*(0.4)  
iki \*starts flipping the worksheet and stops
- 32 IKI: aa hanasu. miru. %kyookasho yomu.  
INJ speak look textbook read  
“Oh, speaking, looking, reading the textbook.”  
suz %pointing with palm toward the  
screen (Fig. 9)
- 33 (0.6)

- 34 SUZ: toka: \*kyoo %yat(.)ta koto (h) janai=  
 like today do.PST thing NEG  
 “Things like that. (“Activity” means) what we did today, doesn’t it?”  
 suz %pointing towards the screen  
 (Fig.10)  
 iki \*gaze at Suzuki
- 35 IKI: =a:::::  
 INJ  
 “Oh.”
- 36 SUZ: >chigau kana.<  
 wrong FP  
 “(I’m) wrong, I wonder.”



Fig. 8:

Pointing at screen (1<sup>st</sup>)



Fig. 9:

Pointing at screen (2<sup>nd</sup>)



Fig. 10:

Pointing at screen (3<sup>rd</sup>)

Suzuki’s engagement increased gradually. Suzuki disagreed by saying *chigaku nai?* “That isn’t right, is it?” in line 22, but it was in a soft voice, and the other participants did not seem to hear what he said. After receiving no response, Suzuki produced a slightly modified version of his own utterance, *e, chigau njanai no* “Oh, that’s not right, is it?” and continued to provide his understanding. Saying *kyoo* “today,” which is the first part of explaining what he thought to be the correct interpretation of “activities,” Suzuki directed his gaze toward Iki. Finishing the explanation with *kyookasho yomu toka* “like reading the textbook,” he pointed at the screen and then again made the pointing gesture twice.

Suzuki made the pointing gesture three times in lines 29, 32, and 34, making a considerably larger gesture the third time. With these gestures, Suzuki tried to divert Iki’s attention from the worksheet and make him look at the screen. Though Suzuki did not tell Iki to look at the screen, Suzuki’s gestures invited Iki to do so. Suzuki’s repeated pointing gestures suggest his firm



orientation to the outside source and his effort to change Iki's mind. Disagreeing with what the other participant has said and maintaining one's own opinion may not be an easy thing to do but utilizing one's body can be a powerful support for such face-threatening, delicate action.

#### 4.4 Face direction and facial expression: agreement and end of side sequence

Finally, in terms of face direction and facial expressions, especially when talking about a delicate matter, participants sometimes communicate more efficiently through their facial expressions than through words. Such a communication strategy can also be found in classroom interactions.

As seen above, Suzuki insisted that *today's lesson* in Question 4 meant what they had done in the class that day and thus conflicted with Iki and Yoshida, who believed that *today's lesson* meant the activities listed on the worksheet. Iki and Yoshida did not quickly change their minds, as shown by the excerpt below (lines 37 to 41). While maintaining their claims, Suzuki and Yoshida showed an understanding of each other's positions; Suzuki produced the interjection *a:::* (line 42), read the question aloud, and then said *a::* (line 45). On the other hand, Yoshida said *maa demo* "well but" in line 43 in a fast tempo, which could indicate the start of a compromise.

##### Excerpt 6

- 37 (1.6)
- 38 YOS: °n::::°=  
INJ  
"Uhm"
- 39 IKI: =maa demo \*kore de mo ii:: (.) ki ga=  
INJ but this COP too good feeling NOM  
"Well, I feel that this also works..."  
iki \*points at Suzuki's worksheet
- 40 YOS: =ore wa \*kocchi da to omou n [su yone  
1sg TOP here COP QT think SE POL FP  
"I think (the activity means) this one."  
yos \*points at Yoshida's worksheet

- 41 IKI: [aa  
"Oh"
- 42 SUZ: a:::  
"Oh"
- 43 YOS: >maa demo-<  
"well but"
- 44 (1.5)
- 45 SUZ: Which activities from today's lesson match your  
(0.4) learning style? a::=
- 46 IKI: =a::=  
"Oh"
- 47a YOS: =tashikani ano:  
surely that
- 47b @today's lesson tte iwareru to @ (.) sono  
today's lesson QT say.PASS if INJ  
"Surely, if someone says *today's lesson*, well"  
yos @looks at Suzuki, smiling (Fig. 11)@
- 48 (1.5)
- 49 IKI: [tashikani tashikani  
surely surely  
"Surely."
- 50 SUZ: [kyoo yatta koto wo, ma- (0.4)  
today did thing ACC INJ  
"What we did today, well,"
- 51 SUZ: %jaa kyoo yatta koto toshite kangae↑ru to.  
then today did thing as think QT  
"Then we are going to take it to mean what we did today."  
suz %smiles -----> 1.52

52            @\* (.) (Fig.12)  
               yos       @nods/smiles  
               iki       \*smiles



Fig.11:  
Yoshida looking at Suzuki



Fig.12:  
Participants in a mutual gaze, smiling

In line 51, Suzuki said *jaa kyoo yatta koto toshite kangaeru* to “Then we are going to take it to mean what we did today.” With this utterance, Suzuki confirmed with Iki and Yoshida that they would treat *activities* in Question 4 not as the activities listed on the worksheet but as what they had done in the day’s class, as Suzuki had insisted earlier.

Note that the participants’ utterances alone do not provide enough clues as to when the conflict of opinions between the participants is resolved. In line 43, Yoshida said *maa demo* “well but” and in line 47 *tashikani ano today’s lesson tte iwarereba sono* “Surely, if someone says *today’s lesson*, well.” Although some parts of his utterances, such as the contrastive conjunction *demo* “but” and adverb *tashikani* “surely” strongly imply a change in the direction of his claim, Yoshida’s revised understanding of the phrase *today’s lesson* was still not clearly stated.

However, if bodily behavior is considered, the agreement achieved among the participants becomes visible. In line 48, Yoshida looked at Suzuki and smiled (Figure 11). Yoshida did not explicitly say that he agreed with Suzuki, but his looking and smiling at Suzuki seems to indicate Yoshida’s stance that he is ready to accept Suzuki’s opinion. Suzuki’s turn starting from line 50, produced after Yoshida’s bodily demonstration of his stance, reflected Suzuki’s interpretation of Yoshida’s smile as an expression of agreement with Suzuki. After Suzuki finished his utterance, all three participants raised their faces and smiled. (Figure 12) In agreement on the *activities’* referent, the students were ready to answer Question 4. Thus, the side sequence is closed.

## 5. Discussion and Conclusion

Focusing on a short segment from a group work activity, this study analyzed the bodily behaviors of a group of students trying to solve the problem of identifying the referent of a question on a worksheet. It was observed that face direction and gaze marked the beginning and end of the side sequence. Pointing at the worksheet was a powerful means to specify the referent of deictic terms, and pointing at the screen was used to refer to the instruction provided by the instructor. Although this study presented data from one group only, these behaviors were also observed in other groups. There were other kinds of behaviors depending on the situation; when group members shared a worksheet, the use of the worksheet was naturally different from what we observed in this study. When the task included writing an answer on the worksheet, the students had to come up with the answer, and writing it down was also an action for the students to perform. The interaction among students was facilitated by the task in which they were engaged (cf. Hellermann and Pekarek Doehler 2010), and the material condition deeply influenced the interaction.

Most conversations have several different phases, such as a beginning and closing and the initiation of an action and its implementation. This study focused on identifying the referent of a word, which was a prerequisite for the main activity of answering a question. As this problem endangered the progress of the activity, all the participants collaborated to solve the problem. At the same time, because the participants had different understandings, they encountered another type of problem, that of disagreeing and needing to defend their opinions. In such a situation, simply stating one's opinion with words may not be the best way, as some messages are better delivered non-verbally.

This study examined a segment from group work in classroom and demonstrated how multimodal resources such as gaze/face direction and pointing gestures are utilized in a co-present interaction. As in other kinds of face-to-face interaction, participants in classroom group work utilize their body in doing the tasks with their group members. Being in a same place provides participants with various invaluable means of communication. It

does not mean, however, that co-present interaction is always superior to remote interaction. There are many advantages in remote interaction which can enrich the quality of education. Online classes give more access; students can take classes from anywhere, together with people living in distant places. Especially, in a country like Japan, where the number of English speakers is low and the dominant language is Japanese, the opportunity of using English to communicate with people is difficult to get. Online classes with participants from diverse backgrounds will provide students with the need to use English as a lingua franca. Furthermore, from the perspective of language teaching, it would be preferable if students can verbally express their thoughts and negotiate with people explicitly using language. Relying too much on nonlinguistic behaviors might inhibit the growth of students' linguistic proficiency. Courses should be designed carefully considering the pros and cons of both in-person and online classes, so that the students can maximally utilize the features of each type of education.

## Appendices

### Appendix A: Glossing symbols

ACC	Accusative	PASS	Passive
COP	Copula	PST	Past tense
COND	Conditional	POL	Polite form
DAT	Dative	PRT	Particle
FP	Final particle	QT	Quotation marker
GEN	Genitive	SE	Sentence Extender
INJ	Interjection	TAG	Tag question
NEG	Negation	TOP	Topic marker
NOM	Nominative		

### Appendix B: Transcription symbols

,	continuing intonation	=	latching (no gap between two lines).
.	terminal intonation (falling)	huh	laughter or laughing quality
?	rising intonation	h	hearable exhalation
[   ]	overlapping speech	°	soft voice

x	uncertain hearing	—	loud voice
:	lengthening	↑	sudden rise in pitch
(. )	micro pause	< >	slowed down speech
(2 . 1)	long pause and its length in seconds	> <	accelerated speech
-	truncated speech		

## Appendix C: Worksheet

(Taken from *Headway Academic Skills Level 1, Listening, Speaking and Study Skills*, Oxford University Press p.29)

**Exercise 6.** Listen to the sentences and decide if you agree or disagree with each one. Write your answers in the table. Agree = A disagree = D not sure = ?

(The sound file contains 12 statements that are the characteristics of three learning styles. The answers to statements 1 to 4 are to be written on column a, 5 to 8 on column b, 9 to 12 on column c.)

**Exercise 7.** Listen and find your three scores. Write them in the table.

**Exercise 8.** Listen and write the names of the learning styles a—c in the table.

**Exercise 9.** Work with a partner. Compare and discuss your scores. Do you agree? Think of three ways you can use this information.

**Exercise 10.** Work with a partner. Look at the list of learning activities. Which do you think are best for each learning style? Write A (Auditory), V (Visual), or T (Tactile).

**Items on the list:** listening to documentaries, using diagrams and pictures, doing practical classes, taking notes, going on trips, using different colour pens, doing role plays in class, making models, recording lectures and notes, talking in groups.

**Exercise 11.** Listen and check your answers.

**Exercise 12.** Work with a partner. Answer the questions.

1. Which activities in exercise 10 do you enjoy doing?
2. Do your choices match your learning style?
3. What other activities would be good for your learning style?
4. Which activities from today's lesson match your learning style?

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