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Performance for Introverts? [1]

Discourse evidence for students' collaborative shaping of social space

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Abstract

A common preconception about performance in the foreign language classroom sees performance as geared towards extroverts: students who readily contribute to verbal classroom interaction in any case. If true, this claim would be particularly problematic when advocating not only for the integration of isolated instances of performance, but for a fundamentally performance-based approach to language teaching. Such an approach would then further widen the gap between those participants who are more and those who are less comfortable in underdefined social spaces. This article draws on data from a larger study on FL classroom interaction and student agency during performance activities in intermediate German classes. Conversation analytic methods are used to trace how participation for one very reticent student evolves over the course of an intensive summer class. The development happens during extended performance activities with a Teacher-in-Role (TiR) strategy, and in particular due to the initiative of his classmates to shape a welcoming social space. They offer a range of carefully crafted participation openings, and the quiet student responds and later initiates conversational moves on his own. This case study provides discourse based, micro-analytic support for previous claims about the benefits of performance for class dynamics and participation.

1 Quiet students in the foreign language classroom

In Western foreign language (FL) classrooms, verbal and social extroverts are in an advantageous position in many ways. Over the last decades, FL pedagogy has been shaped overwhelmingly by communicative language teaching; all the various implementations of this approach have in common that they build on the fundamental assumption that spoken interaction - rehearsed and, even better, spontaneous - is central to proficiency in a foreign language. Even

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though current trends in pedagogy see language learning increasingly through a lens of symbolic competence (Kramsch 2011) or multiliteracies (Paesani et al. 2016), the basic importance of spoken communication has persisted. On the research side, a general shift towards a socioculturally embedded, multimodal view of language and language learning first galvanized by Firth and Wagner's seminal article (Firth & Wagner 1997) has inspired a whole field of research on classroom interaction (e.g. Bannink & Van Dam 2006; Hall & Pekarek Doehler 2011; Waring 2011; Young 2011 and the works they reference). Grading rubrics on undergraduate foreign language syllabi typically include a large percentage for "participation", and pedagogical strategies are often aimed at creating a context where students cannot get around speaking: gap activities, for example, where information has to be verbally exchanged in the course of solving a problem.

The perhaps most commonly known drama-based activities, role plays and process drama, form another type of activities where verbal (or rather, multimodal) participation is central; moreover, the more open-ended and creative these performance activities[2] are, the more daunting they can be to students who are not verbal and social extroverts. There is some evidence from classroom interaction analyses that students show more verbal initiative in process drama (Carroll 1986; Kao and O'Neill 1998), but that evidence does not indicate what happens to quieter students, although practitioners report the benefits of performance for them also (Piazzoli 2011; Shiozawa & Donnery 2017; Weber 2017). Beyond that, a focus on spontaneous verbal interaction is a problem for equity in a wider sense: the underdefined social spaces which tend to surface in performance activities may be more difficult to negotiate for students with speaking anxiety or other mental health challenges (Price 2011), and also for students whose cultural background does not include a positive valuation of - or positive reactions to - spontaneous verbal expression and gregariousness in the classroom (Diangelo 2006).

Of course, some verbal interaction in the foreign language is inevitably part of language classes. It is also possible to design performance activities so that multiple participation options are on offer - observers, directors, and more or less scaffolded and rehearsed ways to participate can be included by design. However, for more open-ended role plays and process drama in particular, there is by definition a limit to pre-planned participation options. After all, these activities are meant to offer the students social space that they can design. Passive participation - by listening when others speak - is an option and likely provides benefits for learning as well, but as teachers, we do want to see our students use the language actively. Do we then have to limit more open-ended performance activities in the interest of equity?

It is not certain that there is a clear answer to this question. Limitation appears to be a common answer from language teachers who do not subscribe to a performance-based approach, and the following quote from a teacher

[2] I am using the term "performance activities" to refer to extended role plays and/or process drama only, since these are the formats occurring in the specific data presented here.

interview from Weber (2018: 355-356) may serve as representative of that opinion.

> some students will take to it naturally, it's there, they're born performers, and they will really go with it and do it and they have a great time, whereas others are more shy, or they're not very interested in this, [...] it works for some but, it does not work for others [...] so I try to, balance and do it, occasionally but not, all the time. [...] I think the biggest issue is probably getting over the inhibition that a lot of students have, a lot of students have the idea that, what they say has to be grammatically perfect [...] else it'll [...] make them look bad in front of the teacher or in front of students?

The quote names a number of potential problems familiar to any drama practitioner: individual student preferences, introverts' discomfort with performance, and student anxieties about potential language breakdowns or errors and loss of face. However, process drama creates its own dynamics. This article presents direct evidence from classroom interaction transcripts to show how one previously very quiet student, Cole[3], was gradually drawn into the interaction by his classmates over the course of three extended performance activities. Section 2 will discuss the larger context of the data, and section 3 will present and analyze transcribed exerpts from the performance activities that demonstrate the development of Cole's participation.

2 The context of this project: Data and methodology

All data in this article originate in a larger dissertation project (Weber 2018) which ran over the course of a year and involved three different intermediate-level, undergraduate German classes at a large public university in the United States. Classrooms were video recorded with a stationary camera (about 56 hours total), and semi-controlled interviews with teachers and some students about their perceptions of spontaneous speaking and performance activities in class were conducted and audio-recorded for two of the three classes. Data were transcribed according to conventions from conversation analysis based on initial work by Gail Jefferson (Sacks, Schlegloff & Jefferson 1974) and then further interpreted with discourse analytic methods drawing mainly on Waring's concept of initiative (Waring 2011) and Goffman's description of face and footing (Goffman 1967; Goffman 1981). While the scope of the original project was large, including a new theoretical positioning for performance-based approaches to foreign language teaching (Weber, in preparation), for the case study in this paper it is sufficient to focus on initiative, face, and footing.

Student initiative has been discussed in conjunction with performance since Carroll (1986), but it has generally remained somewhat underdefined. Waring (2011: 204) provides a more exact definition, offering three different possible types of student initiative: Learners may initiate a sequence of talk, i.e. they self-select for a turn at talk without being directly addressed by the teacher; they

[3] All student names are pseudonyms.

respond to a turn that was addressed to several people or to another student; or they may expand on a turn or even shift topics starting from a turn for which they have been selected. All three types, of course, can occur in performance activities; in that case and even in general, the first type of initiative might be expanded to "addressed by the teacher or another student" (it is perhaps symptomatic that the latter option is not included in the original definition).

According to Goffman, one important consideration for participation in verbal communication is the aspect of face. Face is "the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself [sic] by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact" (Goffman 1967: 213). While Goffman stresses here that "face" is in the eye of the beholder, the central component is the (perceived or claimed) positive value of a speaker within a particular social interaction. A speaker confronts a clear face threat when being insulted, but in a wider sense, face threat exists whenever there is any reason to be apprehensive about taking a turn in the conversation because it could negatively affect one's social standing. Face is threatened, for example, when one has to respond uncooperatively to a turn. Pragmatics research provides extensive evidence that more face-threatening speech acts - such as requests, refusals, and criticisms - usually involve a number of intricate strategies to lower face threat for participants (for an overview, see e.g. the CARLA speech act database). For example, it is rare among casual friends to merely say "Can I borrow your car for picking someone up from the airport tomorrow?" Instead, the speaker is likely to offer a reason for the request first, they may explain why there is no other option, they will likely use a hesitant tone and may modify phrasing and grammatical markers (such as modal verbs and subjunctive) to arrive at a more polite version ("So you know we had that car accident last week ... Do you think it might be possible ..."), and they may even follow up by adding that they will understand if the other person denies the request. The purpose of all these strategies is to provide a low-threat position for the listener to respond in their turn. Modification for face threat in speech acts is still quite difficult for low intermediate learners (as in the data presented here), because they are just learning the grammatical means to express these modifications, and processing load in the foreign language is so high that they rarely think to use them in the first place. In fact, they are more likely to use an imperative and say "Lend me your car tomorrow", since that is a structure they tend to be more familiar with. Performance activities, of course, have the benefit that they (ideally) create fictional social contexts that may trigger students' awareness of the necessity for face-saving moves; however, that does not change the processing load, and in fact, in a spontaneous speaking situation the processing load is arguably even higher than in more closed classroom activities. Nevertheless, as we will see below, over time, participants in a performance activity may engage in face work even without the help of intricate pragmalinguistic skills.

Performance activities also involve layered realities and various footings. Goffman describes footing as follows: "A change in footing implies a change in the alignment we take up to ourselves and the others present as expressed in

the way we manage the production or reception of an utterance. A change in our footing is another way of talking about a change in our frame for events." (Goffman 1981: 128). Reading this at a very general level, in a FL classroom during a role play, participants are still on the classroom footing (teacher and students, with the institutional hierarchies and norms that implies); but simultaneously, on the level of the fictional reality, the footing between speakers may be quite different and may change as they develop characters and take different conversational attitudes toward each other. Participants may move in and out of a particular footing, play with it, and perhaps even use one level of reality to comment on or critique the other. Importantly, this should not be taken to mean that there is infinite room for changing reality; institutional and societal power relationships still apply. But the realities become laminated, and in between, there is liminal space, an in-between area where relationships can be re-defined locally and temporarily, and there is potential that this will have some slight effect on reality outside the particular situation as well.[4]

3 Including Cole

The particular data presented below originate from an intensive 6-week low intermediate German summer class. I was the classroom instructor in this class, and there were only four students, Dylan, Cole, Jen, and Heather.[5] Cole was by far the quietest of the students. He was attentive, a good writer, and generally responded competently when he was asked for specific information after some planning time. In pair work, he was somewhat reticent but would eventually speak, but he never volunteered a single sentence in front of the whole group in the first four weeks. I gradually introduced students to creating imaginary characters and situations (on the basis of images) and short, largely pre-planned role plays; while the three other students participated readily and appeared to enjoy themselves, Cole responded minimally when he was directly addressed but returned to taciturnity when the particular activity was over. He also did not verbally participate in minor running jokes that began to appear in the class, although he appeared to like them, judging by the smile on his face. I tried multiple times to invite Cole into a conversation, but while he responded, he never took the initiative. His low verbal participation created a somewhat lopsided atmosphere in the classroom, but Cole did not seem to mind.

3.1 Train Station: Inviting Cole in

In week five of six, the class discussed differences between town and country, and I introduced a more open-ended performance sequence. An image of a German train station waiting room on the screen served to frame the scene

[4] A discussion of this liminal space and the related notion of agency can be found in Weber (2018: 8, 18ff).

[5] An extensive discussion of the reflexivity of the teacher-researcher situation in this project can be found in Weber (2018: 103ff).

visually, and I asked students to fill in a character sheet of the train passenger they would represent in this scenario. Pictures of potential passengers were offered as optional inspiration, and all students actually based their charactes on the pictures. Next, I informed them that the train appeared to be delayed, and that I was going to be the clerk at the information booth (which ensured I could manage timing, but it also placed me at a certain level of social distance from the passengers); I suggested they would likely have some sort of conversation while waiting, and that they were to build our current topic into their conversation somehow. Then I arranged a desk as an information booth in a corner of the classroom close to the screen, and we started the scene. Passengers cued up at the information desk and were dismayed to hear from the clerk that their train to Hamburg was 90 minutes delayed. The clerk then asked passengers to sit down in the "waiting room" - more or less their usual seating positions; he would inform them of any news. Heather, Dylan, and Jen started to awkwardly introduce themselves to each other in role and exchanged basic personal information; Dylan showed Jen some imaginary pictures of his grandkids. Cole had been silent up to that point. Figure 1 shows how the other students invited him into the conversation.

76	Dylan	Yes. They are very beautiful. Maybe you(informal) should see a
77		PHOto.
78	Jen	yes! [Dylan digs in pocket, mimes getting out wallet, Jen chuckles briefly, Dylan holds up open wallet]
79		o:h, so sweet, SO sweet.
80	Heather →	what is your(formal) name?
81	Cole	ah Fritz.
82	Jen	Where do you(formal) come from Fritz.
83	Cole	ah I come from Leipzig, but I (have to) go to Hamburg,
84	Heather	What are you(formal) doing in Hamburg?
85	Cole	ah I want to- ah I'm going to the café with my family.
86	Heather	ah F- [swats hand toward Dylan, Dylan nods and grins
87	Dylan →	ah Fritz, that is a good German name.
88	Cole	thank you.
89	Heather	((chuckles))

Figure 1: Inviting Cole in

Heather takes the initiative to address Cole directly for the first time (line 81), and Jen then aligns with Heather's stance as a friendly fellow passenger in line 83. Notably, Jen and especially Heather do a lot of face work here. Both ask for the exact information students had prepared on the character sheet, so that Cole did not have to invent responses on the spot (lines 81, 83, 85).

In previous exchanges not involving Cole, address pronouns alternated

between informal "du" and formal "Sie". The formal pronoun would have been culturally appropriate here, since students chose characters above 30 years of age who did not know each other previously. Students in class generally interact informally, and intermediate German learners are still discovering when formal address pronouns are needed, so variation is to be expected in this situation. In contrast to the previous pronoun variation, however, in the excerpt above, both Heather and Jen use the formal address pronoun for Cole, a show of respect which supports positive face for him.

Moreover, when Dylan tries to intervene in Heather and Jen's collaboration (line 87), Heather stops him, and Dylan appears to align with Heather's face work, since we see him providing positive feedback to Cole's fictive, very traditional German name in line 88. The praise is also consistent with the character Dylan is creating for himself in the scene, an older man who is nostalgic about the past and somewhat patriotic. Cole responds quite appropriately when he is selected by Heather and Jen, and he provides the expected response to Dylan's praise as well.

It is clear that students are simultaneously operating on two distinct footings in the excerpt: All contributions are consistent with students' fictional characters as passengers who are killing time by exchanging personalized small talk. Even though the small talk would probably not happen in quite this way in a real German waiting room, particularly not via first names, in this fictional setting embedded in US culture, it is something all participants can align with. However, in a real train station, even in the US, a non-participant in small talk would perhaps not be addressed. Beyond the fictional footing, then, Jen and Heather, and eventually also Dylan, are aligning with the specific collaborative norms of the FL classroom that highly value universal, balanced participation. Due to the fictional setting and the fact that my TiR character (as a clerk conveying annoying information) slightly distances me from the passengers' conversation, students themselves take up the interactional function which generally falls to the teacher: making sure that everyone is given a chance to contribute. While Cole is not yet taking the initiative, he responds to his classmates' friendly face-work readily and appropriately.

As the role play proceeded, Cole showed facial reactions which indicated that he was following the action. At one point, he initiated a simple question to Dylan's character. Beyond that, he remained a silent observer until very late in the role play, when there was another exchange with Heather (Figure 2).

Heather is again consistent in her use of formal address pronouns. By now (after a brief reflection phase where I reminded students of formal phrasing) she is also using his last name. This time the question does not have a pre-planned answer, but Cole responds appropriately all the same. His answer explicitly references his fictional character as a retired judge and uses common perceptions about the predilections of older men: reading the paper and tinkering with cars (lines 163-164). Heather then makes an interesting move. She aligns with his character description and develops it by her next suggestion: that he might be able to repair the train (line 165). The first effect is clearly to

160	Heather	Mr. Hans, do you(formal) live in the country? or?
161	Cole	yes, I prefer to live in the country.
162	Heather	What do you(formal) like about the country.
163	Cole	ah, I am very- I am old, so, I love to
164		read the newspaper? And repair my old car?
165	Heather	maybe you(formal) [can repair the train?
	→	[shrugs, spreads ↑L hand toward Silja
166	Cole	[no,
		[moves shoulders and shrugs, chuckles a bit, others grin

Figure 2: Offering power to a shy old man

positively value Cole's answer, i.e. she provides positive face for him. However, she also offers him a great deal of power: He might choose to assent, in which case he would be able to stop the whole role play, since the scene is based on the premise that the train is broken. Beyond the face work for Cole, this may be an indirect notice to me as a teacher that the role play has gone on long enough, and the chuckles of other students (line 166) may be a comment on her move, although it is not clear whether they are just amused or whether they want to stop and are chuckling at this creative way to indicate as much. In any case, through his refusal, Cole aligns more with his student role (continuing the task) than with Heather's suggestion (to stop or at least significantly change the task) here, but he responds with a grin (line 166). Whether the grin acknowledges Heather's face work for him or her clever manipulation of the fictional and classroom footings, or indeed both, cannot be determined.

In fact, I as the teacher responded to Heather's cue and stopped the role play for another reflection phase. It included the presentation of a short news item (which was ostensibly playing in the waiting room) about farm subsidies the EU was planning to cut. I asked students to integrate this topic somehow into the third (and last) section of the role play. This was a difficult task, since both their background experience and their linguistic resources were of limited help for this topic. To jumpstart the languishing conversation, I intervened (in my TiR identity as the clerk) with a polemic statement about my father who owned a farm and would not be able to carry on if the subsidies were cut. Heather and Dylan responded, and I then chose to challenge Cole by asking him whether it was all the same to him (Figure 3).

The other students clearly see this as face-threatening for Cole. Before Cole has time to respond, Dylan quickly intervenes to comment that Cole's character is a judge, implying that this fact makes the topic rather irrelevant (line 255). It is a pre-emptive face-saving move for Cole, since it offers him the possibility of not responding or not offering an opinion. When I counter that it is still possible to have an opinion, Dylan partially aligns with my question but reframes the question to Cole in a more respectful way ("can you make that?" - referring to

253	Silja	[and you(formal) don't say anything on the topic at all, do you? [to Cole
254		Is it all [the same to you(formal)? [throws R hand upward
255	Dylan →	He is a, ah you(formal) is a judge.
256		so,
257	Silja	WELL, you can still have an oPINion.
258	Dylan	[can you, [make that? [to Cole [waves toward screen
259	Heather →	=those [people are so DUMB. yes?= [looks toward Cole, waves hand toward Silja and Jen, chuckles
260	Cole	=yes in my opinion that is not so good, ah. I
261		don't think about the, European Union. [Do you like- do you like [gesturing toward Dylan
262		the European Union?
263	Dylan	no. (...)

Figure 3: Pre-emptive face-saving

the laws being changed, line 258). Heather also responds to my challenge, but she uses a generic insult addressed to Jen and me, who have stated opinions on the issue. Heather's own character previously stated that he didn't care. By her move, Heather is threatening my face, siding with Cole, and raising his face in the process (line 259). At this point, even though he could opt out based on his classmates' face work for him, Cole rises to the challenge. He self-selects, produces a cogent answer to my original question (line 260), and addresses Dylan with a follow-up question eliciting his own opinion (line 261-262), which Dylan duly provides (line 263).

Over the course of this 20-minute role play, then, we have seen Cole move from his habitual silence to being a responsive partner in a conversation; he has initiated his first - if minimal - exchange and self-selected to move the conversation on during a role play section that was rather hard to negotiate in terms of content. This is a significant development. In another role play a few days later, he expands his participation further, and without need of a challenge by a confrontational clerk.

3.2 Café Awkward: Verbal initiatives and nonverbal contributions

The role play quoted in the excerpts in this subsection was based on a short German novel for teenaged readers that the class was reading at the time.[6] The novel portrays a thirteen-year-old girl, Fränze, whose family is in crisis due to her father's lost job and slide into alcoholism. Fränze processes the new pressures in her life partly by practicing the violin, which she plays very well,

[6] "Fränze" by Peter Härtling

and partly by finding out what is actually going on with the help of her best friend, Holger. At some point during the novel, the readers learn that Fränze's father, Johannes, is also seeing a girlfriend who he initially met in his college years. At the close of the novel, Fränze has reached a tenuous balance, and Fränze's father takes a train out of town, but most questions about the future of the family remain open.

The class read the novel chapter by chapter throughout the course. We had fleshed out the girlfriend character via hotseating (with Heather in the hotseat) and played a few more brief scenes to anticipate developments in the text. When we finished the book, students were fairly frustrated with the open ending, which they encountered a few days after the Train Station role play. To explore hypothetical future developments beyond the scope of the book, we played two versions of the same scenario: A year after the ending, Fränze has become a violin prodigy and she plays at a major concert. Family and friends attend the concert and some of them meet for coffee afterwards.

Since we were familiar with the characters, the first task was for students to decide which characters (including potential new ones that they might create to fill in blanks in the story) would be meeting at the café. Since we had five participants (four students and me), they were limited to five roles. In the first version, they invented a new boyfriend for Fränze's mother, and the attending characters were Fränze and her mother, Mams, accompanied by her boyfriend Fritz, as well as two of Fränze's friends, Holger and Anke. After creating a post-concert atmosphere by watching to a short video clip showing a performance by a real German violin prodigy, we set up a table with five chairs and began the scene. Early in the role play Cole (in role as trusty friend Holger) responded to small talk, but slightly further on, he took the iniative in the conversation (Figure 4).

Both Dylan and Jen have already signalled their negative stance toward Fränze's father, Johannes (lines 75-76, 78). In line 79, Cole takes the initiative to self-select and, as it turns out, for the first time he contradicts the drift of a scene (line 81), conveying sympathy for Johannes. At this point, apparently, the other students do not feel they have to do much face-work for Cole any more, since their nonverbal reactions in the next line are incredulous chuckles (their body language, leaning forward and staring at Cole with raised eyebrows, supports this interpretation rather than mere surprise.) While the conversation turns away from Cole and toward bickering between Heather's and Jen's characters, there is no apparent awkwardness about it.

After the first version of the café scene, there was a reflection period with some laughter about the characters and their idiosyncrasies, and then students were asked to choose a new group of participants for a replay of the scene. In the second version, Fränze, her mother, and the mother's new boyfriend Fritz were again present, but Fritz was now played by Cole, and there were two different characters involved: Fränze's father Johannes and his new girlfriend, Annika. Once the scene was set, students launched immediately into action, and this included Cole (Figure 5).

73	Dylan (Fränze)	I don't know. We haven't () because he
74		hit Mams.
75	Heather (Fritz)	[{I'm sorry} [rubs her neck
76	Jen (Mams)	yes,=
77	Cole (Holger) →	=it is sad. (.)
78	Dylan (Fränze)	what.
79	Cole (Holger) →	[{I feel sorry for him}. [shrugs
80	others	((chuckle, Dylan leans forward and stares at Cole, Heathers eyebrows rise, eyes and mouth open; Silja smiles sideways at Cole))
81	Dylan (Fränze)	ah,
82	Heather (Fritz)	[he is dead. to us. [to Cole

Figure 4: Cole initiating disagreement

4	Heather (Joh.)	[I- ah, need no coffee, thanks. [waves and looks to space behind her, shakes head and smiles
5		[I have beer. [nods and looks down
6	Cole (Fritz) →	Where do you come from, Annika.
7	Silja (Annika)	ah, I am from Munich? [[>so I am in [Jen nods]
8		Munich< BORN, and my family is also from Bavaria, so.
9		and you?
10	Cole (Fritz)	ah, [I come from, (.) Leipzig? [Jen smiles and nods
11	Silja (Annika)	aha,
12	Heather (Joh.)	and what is your profession?
13	Cole (Fritz)	ah ju[dge,
14	Dylan (Fränze)	[he [HAS a profession, [moves ↑hand up briefly
15	others	((chuckle briefly))

Figure 5: Cole initiating non-confrontational small talk

Heather is playing a rather obnoxious Johannes who immediately begins to talk about alcohol, which was the major cause of family disruption in the book. Cole, in his role as the relative outsider, takes the initiative to invite the other relative outsider, my character, into the conversation and successfully diverts the focus (line 6). When Heather and I align with his move toward collaborative small talk and ask him about his character's background, Cole draws on the answers he prepared previously for the Train Station role play, casting himself again as a judge from Leipzig (lines 10, 13). He is operating with a high level of scaffolding here, but the fact remains that he joined the conversation immediately and with an appropriate strategy for maintaining balanced, peaceful collaboration (in a FL classroom, usually the teacher's purview).

A little later, he expanded his initiatives by commenting on the other characters, and sometimes in pointed ways. One example is shown in Figure 6.

27	Jen (Mams)	ah. [I would KNOW. I didn't hear any mistakes. It [sets down cup audibly
28		[was SO beautiful. [briefly raises and lowers ↓hand, accentuating stress, tilts head
29	Jen, Heather, Cole	((briefly share grins))
30	Cole (Fritz) →	Johannes, (will) find a mistake.

Figure 6: Cole offering pointed commentary

Jen in her role as the proud mother has just praised Fränze's performance in the concert somewhat excessively (line 27-28), and Cole and Heather have responded to this exaggeration by sharing grins (line 29), briefly stepping out of the footing of the fictional scene to make fun of Jen's acting. Cole shifts the footing back to the level of the scene in line 30, where he disparagingly comments that Fränze's father (the persona non grata) will always find something to criticize. This is entirely consistent with his role as Mams's new boyfriend, who might want to ally himself with Fränze and Mams against his predecessor.

Cole also began to participate in other modes of interaction. While his facial expressions consistently showed evidence that he followed the action, he did not engage in much kinaesthetic activity - unlike Heather, for example, who spontaneously hailed an imaginary waiter, or like Jen and Dylan, who would lean noticeably forward while questioning something I said in role or add hand gestures to support their verbal contributions. But in this role play, Cole began to explore multimodal expression. At one point, the interaction was so contrary that I (in role as Johannes' girlfriend, new to the contentious family dynamics)

suggested that we be more peaceful. This move could also be read on the level of classroom interaction, where the norm is peaceful collaboration without personal attacks. Dylan, Heather, and Jen, in role, argued that they liked to fight - gleefully resisting classroom norms. I then asked why, in that case, Fränze's parents had separated. This was followed by a longish pause, which I covered by asking for milk, and both Jen and Cole aligned with this move by pretending to take up a milk jug and pass it to me (Figure 7), so that we moved back entirely into fictional footing.

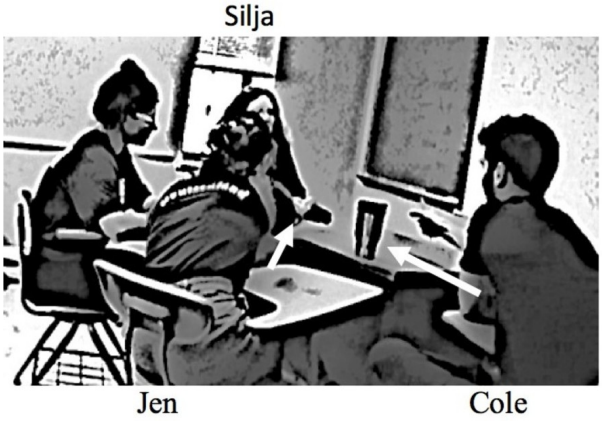


Figure 7: Multimodal participation to cover a pause

Soon after, I suggested Johannes and I leave the café, since the atmosphere was so awkward, and Johannes agreed, expressing hope that Fränze would come see him, which (I as) Annika was quick to qualify a little (Figure 8).

140	Silja (Annika)	We'll see. Maybe Fränze also has her
141		own opinion so. We'll- [others look at Dylan]
142		We'll call sometime.
143	Heather (Joh.)	okay.
144	Silja (Annika)	okay many THANKS![[bye! [waves a bit and gets up] [
145	Jen (Mams)	bye.
146	Heather (Joh.)	bye.
147	Cole (Fritz) →	Are you(formal) going (to) a bar now?
148	others	((chuckle, Silja walks away from desk and leans against wall, Heather takes a step to wall))

Figure 8: A final joke

As everyone says goodbye, Cole draws on the well-established history of Johannes as a drinker (classroom level) and his recent insistence on drinking

beer (role-play level) in order to land a joke by asking whether Johannes and Annika will now go to a bar (147). The others immediately align with him and chuckle (line 148). This well-placed joke shows that Cole is now confident enough of his linguistic abilities, the content of the scene, and the support of the other participants to not just respond to or initiate small talk, but to engage in humor.

In a brief, unrelated role play in one of the last sessions of the summer class, Cole ended up in the role of a bank clerk having to deal with a bank robber. While the general framework of bank interaction was predetermined (two brief scenes between clerk and customer had already been played), roles were distributed via minimal role cards just before each performance. While Cole did know his own role as a clerk from his card, he did not know ahead of time that the other student would be playing a bank robber. He was flustered at first, but rallied quickly and used both verbal and nonverbal resources to good effect - putting up his hands at the bank robber's request, inventing an appropriately hidden space where the safe was located (behind the computer console), leading the bank robber there, and surrepetitiously pushing an imaginary emergency button to call the police.

For a student who had been virtually silent for the first four weeks of class, this development toward spontaneous, multimodal, complex conversational language use was a significant achievement, and moreover, it was accomplished largely without teacher support via student interaction and on Cole's own initiative.

4 Conclusions and outlook

Over the successive excerpts from role plays in this intermediate classroom, I hope to have shown that the collaborative conversational dynamics during sequences of open role plays and process drama effected a substantial change in the participation of one previously very quiet student. Of course, that the course was so small and intensive helped to make this development possible; in a class of 20 students, it is debatable whether Cole could have developed a similar level of confidence in this short time. However, given how short the time really was - no more than ten days, and role plays constituted no more than an hour out of the 7-8 hours of class time during that period - it could be argued that with sufficient familiarization and with enough scaffolding for sequences of performance activities, the kind of spontaneity that developed in this class is not impossible even with 20 students in a more traditionally scheduled class. There is in fact evidence from practitioner reports that class dynamics change when performance is a major component of FL interaction (cf. Kao and O'Neill 1998, Even 2003).

Beyond mere multimodal participation, another important pattern in the interactions analyzed above is the richness of speech acts and conversational stances involved. Even on the part of Cole, who still participated less than the other students, initiatives included content questions, evaluations, and

ironic and humorous comments and socioculturally appropriate strategies to encourage conflict-free, balanced talk. He self-selected and addressed specific others. While most of these functions are basic L1 competences which might transfer well to an L2 (Kecskes, Sanders and Pomerantz 2018), some of them, especially the self-selected comments, are not particularly common features of student speech in non-performance classroom interaction at this level, where students are more likely to convey specifically elicited information to the teacher or other students, ask questions, or occasionally proffer personal opinions.

Finally, Cole, like the others, was able to make use of the simultaneous "classroom" and "role play" levels of footing. He drew on previous classroom discussions and role plays for background information and scaffolding, responded to my modelled strategies for filling conversational pauses (drinking coffee, asking for and passing the milk). He also joined Jen and me in moving the action back to entirely fictional footing after an exchange that could be read on both levels of footing, and on the classroom level would have meant that I was trying to shift students' behavior toward classroom norms of respectful collaboration. In a subtle way, momentarily, Cole perhaps joined the resistance against teacher authority.

In short, performance activities demonstrably allowed a student whose verbal and nonverbal participation was initially very limited in scope to expand his participation options dramatically, in both senses of the word, and largely on his own terms. It would not have been possible without the effective and consistent supportive face work his fellow students offered during role plays, when through the Teacher-in-Role strategy, my various functions of directing and balancing interaction in the classroom were temporarily masked.

Notably, in the data from the larger study, it could also be seen that the playfulness generated within performance activities appeared to help increased student initiative spill over into other conversational interactions in the classroom that did not involve performance. While generalization from one study is not possible, these results point to the usefulness of performance beyond the limited time frame of individual activities. Another observation from the larger study was that students do indeed make use of the layered footing during performances to increasingly play with and critique social and classroom norms. This is – holistically speaking – not a new observation, since Augusto Boal based his entire literacy work on the perception that liberation can take place via the heteroglossia of musical, visual, and dramatic performance (Boal 1979/1995), but its implications are just beginning to make their way into the FL pedagogical discourse, and the praxis of FL performative teaching, learning, and research has not yet been fully integrated with the rich existing literature on decolonialization and critical pedagogy, although Katja Frimberger (Frimberger 2017), Gustave Weltsek (Weltsek 2017) and my own research provide some connections (Weber 2017, 2018). To date, as far as I am aware, there has been no discourse analytic research on performance activities in FL learning from a decolonialist perspective.

Interestingly, the interview data from the larger study also showed that the

somewhat apprehensive preconceptions about performance in the classroom cited in the introduction to this article clash directly with the same interviewees' own observations of the complex interaction that performance engenders. It is therefore all the more important to document closely what actually happens in the classroom during performance activities. Research based on conversation and discourse analysis is a good methodological vehicle for conveying to skeptical students, teachers, and administrators alike what performance actually does, whether that may be to draw shy students in, to expand speech act options, or to create liminal spaces for students to shape their own social worlds and comment on the power structures of the world they live in every day. Such research can also support self-reflective and self-critical work by teachers who are interested in analyzing how their own choices shape classroom interaction and power dynamics.

This study can therefore act as a small model for documenting granular evidence for the way effects of performance activities take shape in interaction. Beyond existing practitioner reports and studies using self-report data, it constitutes another level of support for integrating performance thoughtfully and consistently into the teaching and learning of foreign languages.

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A Appendix

A.1 Transcription conventions

(based on Sacks, Schlegloff & Jefferson 1974; variations largely following Waring, 2011)

To avoid transcript overload, nonverbal cues are only transcribed when they are taken up by discourse participants or otherwise directly affect the participation framework.

underline	English in the original
CAPS	stress (in the case of acronyms or single letters, they are bolded, such as "**I**")
word!	emphatic end of prosodic phrase (falling)
→	location of interest for the analysis
↓	quickly falling pitch
↑	quickly rising pitch
↗	pitch rising over the course of the word it precedes
↘	pitch falling over the course of the word it precedes
<word>	spoken more slowly than surrounding talk
>word<	spoken more quickly than surrounding talk
a ^{word}	spoken on consistently raised pitch
a $_{word}$	spoken on consistently lowered pitch
°word°	whispered or spoken very softly
[	simultaneity, including overlaps; in interviews: used to bracket English glosses
=	latch (very tight connection between consecutive turns)
((nods))	nonverbal information in lines where there is no verbal material
,	non-final end of prosodic phrase (intonation falls then rises)
.	end of prosodic phrase/sentence (falling)
?	end of prosodic phrase (rising)
:	lengthened vowel sound
wo-	false or fragmented start, abrupt break-off
()	transcription impossible
(word)	transcription uncertain
T	Teacher
S	Student
Ss	several students