Preference organization in English as a Medium of Instruction classrooms in a Turkish higher education setting

Derya Duran\textsuperscript{a,}, Olcay Sert\textsuperscript{b,}\textsuperscript{*}

\textsuperscript{a} Foreign Language Education, Hacettepe University, Ankara, Turkey
\textsuperscript{b} Mälardalen University, School of Education, Culture and Communication, English Studies, Box 883, Västerås 721 23, Sweden

**Abstract**

Previous conversation analytic research has documented various aspects of preference organization and the ways dispreference is displayed in relation to pedagogical focus in L2 and CLIL classrooms (Seedhouse, 1997; Hellermann, 2009; Kääntä, 2010). This study explores preference organization in an under-researched context, an English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) setting, and it specifically focuses on how a teacher displays dispreference for preceding learner turns. The data consist of 30h of video recordings from two EMI classes, which were recorded for an academic term at a university in Turkey. Using Conversation Analysis, we demonstrate that the teacher employs a variety of interactional resources such as changing body position, gaze movements, hedging, and delaying devices to show dispreference for preceding student answers. Based on our empirical analysis, the ways the teacher prioritizes content and task over form/language are illustrated. The analyses also reveal that negotiation of meaning at content level and production of complex L2 structures can simultaneously be enabled through teachers’ specific turn designs in EMI classroom interaction. This demonstrates that preference organization, particularly in a teacher’s responsive turns, can act as a catalyst for complex L2 production and enhance student participation. This study has implications for conversation analytic research on instructed learning settings, and in particular on teachers’ turn design in classroom interaction.

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1. Introduction

Conversation analytic research into second/foreign/additional (L2) classrooms has documented interactional organization in these contexts and revealed, for example, the reflexive relationship between pedagogy and interaction (Seedhouse, 2004, 2005, 2019), L2 learning behaviors in students’ participation practices (Hellermann, 2008), and described language teachers’ multimodal (e.g., Matsumoto & Dobs, 2017; Sert, 2015, 2017, 2019) and multilingual (e.g., Sert, 2015) resources. These studies, in addition to many others (Jacknick & Thornbury, 2013; Markee, 2000; Waring, 2016; Markee & Kunitz, 2013; Sert & Walsh, 2013, to name a few), have helped us understand the minute level details of pedagogical activities in L2 classrooms. Such research has also triggered conversation analytic investigation into Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) classrooms, resulting in micro-analytic investigations into turn taking and repair practices (Kääntä, 2010, 2012), teacher-led discussions (Escobar Urmeneta & Evnitskaya, 2014), epistemic search sequences in peer interactions (Jakonen & Morton, 2015), clarification requests (Kääntä & Kasper, 2018), definitional practices (Kääntä, Kasper, & Piirainen-Marsh, 2016), vocabulary explanations (Morton, 2015), multimodal resources in students’ explanations (Kupetz, 2011), and multimodal displays of willingness to participate (Evnitskaya & Berger, 2017).

Although the body of knowledge on classroom interaction is expanding in CLIL classroom contexts in countries like Finland, Denmark, Spain, Austria, and Germany, conversation analytic research on English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) classroom interaction, in particular in higher education settings, is scarce. Research reflecting what is actually happening in EMI classrooms in higher education is timely, as the differences between CLIL and EMI need to be documented to be able to develop research-informed pedagogical practices. It has so far been argued that while CLIL is “a dual-focused educational approach in which an additional language is used for the learning and teaching of both content and language” (Coyle, Hood, & Marsh, 2010, p. 1), EMI is regularly used as an umbrella term for academic subjects taught through English, with little or no explicit aim to develop students’ language skills. It refers to “the use of the English language to teach academic subjects...” (Coyle, 2010, p. 1).
(other than English itself) in countries or jurisdictions where the first language (L1) of the majority of the population is not English” (Dearden, 2015, p. 4; Macaro, 2018, p. 2). While CLIL has a dual focus on content and language (see Cenoz, Genesee, & Gorter, 2014; Dalton-Puffer, Linares, Lorenzo, & Nikula, 2014 for a debate on the conceptualization of CLIL), the subject-content mastery is the distinguishing attribute (Brown & Bradford, 2017) and the primary aim in EMI. Conversation analytic research is, then, needed to better understand the discursive dynamics of EMI classrooms so as to reveal the ways interactional organization “transforms intended pedagogy into actual pedagogy” (Seedhouse, 2012, p. 2).

Our focus in this paper is on one of the “central organizational principles of social interaction” (Pekarek-Doehler and Pochon-Berger, 2015, p. 234) in classrooms, namely preference organization. Preference organization, in conversation analytic terms, refers to how actions are designed either to support or weaken social solidarity in interaction (Pillett-Shore, 2017). It informs the organization of agreements and disagreements, acceptances and declinations, and a variety of other actions. While preferred format actions are regularly affiliative, dispreferred turns of actions are disaffiliative (Heritage, 1984; Pomerantz, 1984). Such interactional constructs are consequential in institutional interaction, as has earlier been shown by Pillett-Shore (2016) in her analysis of teachers’ evaluative turns.

Using conversation analysis, we focus on a teacher’s embodied displays of dispreference in content classrooms in an EMI setting in Turkey. More specifically, the sequential context in which we focus on dispreferred actions is the teacher’s responsive and evaluative turns, which mostly appeared in IRF (Initiation-Response-Follow up) sequences (Mehan, 1979). Our empirical analysis draws on 30h of video-recorded English-medium lessons on ‘Guidance’. To our knowledge, no research on the design and sequential unfolding of dispreferred teacher turns in EMI classrooms exists. This is an important focus of inquiry, as the ways a teacher responds to structural-interactional point of view to illuminate its organizational features, dismissing the psychological meaning of the term. Similarly, Schegloff (2007) maintains that ‘it is a socio/interactional feature of sequences and of orientations to them, not a psychological one’ (p. 61) [emphasis original]. So rather than providing an explicit definition for preference and by not referring to subjective feelings or preferences of interactants, scholars tend to refer to its structural characteristics, which can be discerned by closely investigating the interactional features and work. A number of practices have been identified in the production of preferred and dispreferred second pair-parts, which are produced responsive to preceding turns with conditional relevance. Preferred turns are affiliative and face-affirming (Pillett-Shore, 2016, 2017), while dispreferred turns are considered disaffiliative, face-threatening (Heritage, 1984). As these two notions do perform differently in interaction, while one is doing face-preserving action while the other is doing a disaffiliative action, interactants employ different sets of design features in these two alternatives (Schegloff, 2007; Pillett-Shore, 2015). Preferred second pair-parts are usually produced without delay, mitigation or account while dispreferred turns are generally designed with delay, qualification or accounts (Heritage, 1984; Nishizaka & Hayano, 2015; Pillett-Shore, 2016, 2017; Schegloff, 2007). This pattern in participants’ design can be observed both as sequence-responding and sequence-initiating actions and we will focus on the responding turns within the scope of the current study.

To illustrate, Extracts 1 and 2 are cases pointing to the distinctive features of displaying preference and dispreference, respectively. Both of the extracts come from the corpus analyzed in the present paper, which is based on higher education classroom interactions in Turkey. Consider Extract 1, which illustrates how the teacher manifests her preferred turn-of-action, evidenced by the design, format, and content of her response that is delivered with no gap and includes visual and verbal resources for acceptance of the student answer. T stands for the lecturer, and Suz and Bir are the students.

**Extract 1: I know better, 08_04_15**

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Immediately following Suz’s response (lines 5–9) to her question, in line 11, T nods repeatedly and accepts Suz’s response overtly with an explicit positive assessment marker (Waring, 2008) ‘exactly’ in turn-initial position. She also rephrases the student contribution, thus providing ratification by conveying the same meaning with Suz. Although there is a delay following the student response, it is not a break since this temporal delay is accompanied by continuous nodding (Heath, 1992), which functions as an acknowledgment marker and signals positive evaluation early on. In short, the extract shows that the preferred second pair-part is produced with a positive evaluation (exactly) and an embodied action (nodding) functioning as acknowledgment. Given the fact that dispreferred utterances are generally built with hedges and delays, it is important to present how these design features are used in interaction. Extract 2 describes how the teacher employs a variety of verbal and nonverbal resources to show dispreference in an evaluative turn.
Extract 2: Fifth and sixth grade, 05_03_15

01 T: when you think about elementary school children for instance, which level or which stage that you remember
((4 lines omitted during which teacher comments on a high-stake exam in which these stages are frequently asked))
08 Bir: “fifth and sixth grade maybe”
09 (0.9) (Bir raises her eyebrows and pouts her lips)
10 (0.5)
11 T: huh?
  orients to Bir by lowering her head
12 Bir: “fifth and sixth grade”
13 (0.9)
14 T: fifth and sixth grade
  +diverts her gaze and looks at the class
15 huh? no i am asking the (0.2) er: sta- stage name of
  +suspending her hand in air
  +mutual gaze with Bir
16 the stage
17 Bir: “mhm okay”
  +moves her head up
18 T: uh-huh
  +nods

Following T’s interrogative question on the stages elementary students go through, Bir provides a response in sotto voce. Silence along with her embodied behavior (raised eyebrows, pouted lips) seem to be designed as a hedged response to T’s request (line 8–9). Following a 0.5 s silence, T produces an open-class repair initiator ‘huh?’ (Drew, 1997), accompanied with lowering her head toward Bir, which seems to project a problem of hearing. Bir repeats her answer, using soft voice again. Following the temporal delay (line 13), T repeats Bir’s contribution by shifting her gaze from Bir to the class. The open-class repair initiator ‘huh?’ employed by T (also employed in line 11 to foreshadow trouble) indicates that a problem of understanding or hearing has occurred and it is followed by a bald ‘no’ in line 15. T, then, specifies what she has been asking for and re-establishes mutual gaze with Bir. All in all, the dispreferred answer is marked with temporal delay, divergent gaze, and an unmitigated, explicit correction for student’s current understanding. All these interactional resources do service in maintaining intersubjectivity in interaction, either in an aligned or a disaligned way. Atkinson et al. (2007) define alignment as “the means by which human actors dynamically adapt to – that is, flexibly depend on, integrate with, and construct – the ever-changing mind-body-world environments” (p. 171) [emphasis original]. In this regard, Schegloff (2007) argues that “the key issues in the organization around ‘preference’ and ‘dispreference’ concern the alignment in which a second action stands to a first, and the alignment which recipients take up forward a first pair part by the second pair part which implements their response” (p. 59). The preferred turn, then, embodies an alignment while the dispreferred response projects a disalignment. More specifically, considering the context of IRF third turns we have described in Extracts 1 and 2, T affirms in the preferred format and refuses in the dispreferred format, respectively.

Although the organization of preference in Extracts 1 and 2 is different in terms of structural and sequential features, multiple concurrent and cross-cutting preferences are at work. By assembling together linguistic, embodied (nodding, gaze shift) and sequential resources, both extracts display the preferred and dispreferred second pair-parts of the teacher in evaluative turns. While silence is observable in both of the instances, in the former case the interactional work it does is providing more space to the student which is accompanied by embodied means, i.e. nodding. In the latter example, silence along with nonverbal conduct (shifting gaze from the student and orienting to the classroom) seems to assess the adequacy of the student response.

Previous CA studies have yielded important insights into the notion of preference in a variety of contexts (Enfield & Siverson, 2007; Holtgraves, 2000; Lerner, 1996; Park, 2015). Considering the CA work on preference organization in classroom discourse, silence has been marked as an interactional resource to display dispreference (Hellermann, 2003; Macbeth, 2000, 2004; Margutti, 2004) in teachers’ third turn within IRF sequences. Hellermann (2003) demonstrates that temporal delays in a teacher’s response to a student answer may show that the preceding student answer is somehow erroneous or inappropriate. Describing repair trajectories in CLIL and ELF classrooms, Kääntä (2010) shows how teachers employ a variety of semiotic resources to project dispreferred turn-of-actions. These devices include body orientations to teaching materials, shift of gaze, motionless gaze and body movements, cut-off body conducts, and withholding the revealing of the correct answers. She also argues that repair trajectories change according to the way silence is in use. When silence is combined with a particular type of teachers’ embodied actions, repair is performed by the students, however, when silence is accompanied with the verbal turn constructional unit (TCU), the repair trajectory is accomplished either by teachers or students in the form of self- or peer-performed repair.

In his longitudinal study, Hellermann (2009) examines the interactions of an adult learner of English in a language classroom. He investigates negative responses in dispreferred turn designs, and in particular focuses on the use of ‘no’. He reveals that the use of ‘no’ for the purposes of other-correction, third-position repair, and multiple sayings is attended to by peers as appropriate within the classroom community of practice. He tracks learning in students’ orientations to preference for affiliation in producing negative responses. Seedhouse’s (1997) study, on the other hand, investigates missing ‘no’ in L2 classrooms. He focuses on the structural features of repair in form and accuracy contexts (e.g. moments in L2 classroom interaction in which linguistic form is prioritized over meaning) and finds that by avoiding bald negative evaluation of learners’ errors, teachers are interactionally showing that it is embarrassing and face-threatening to make mistakes. In other words, in an implicit way, errors are treated as problematic, thereby making pedagogy and interaction working in direct opposition to each other. In content classrooms, investigating the interactional structure of repair in mathematics classes, Ingram, Baldry, and Pitt’s (2013) findings are in line with Seedhouse’s findings. They reveal that by avoiding direct and overt negative evaluations of students’
mistakes, teachers bring up a conflict between their pedagogical beliefs and their interactional work, which is supportive of a no- or indirect evaluation of mistakes.

In short, research on preference organization has shown that pedagogic work gets done by teachers (e.g. evaluation of student performance) through particular verbal and embodied interactional devices within preferred and dispreferred turn designs. Structural features in conversation associated with preferred and dispreferred turn designs are, thus, worthy of investigation if one wants to describe the interactional architecture of EMI classrooms. Based on our review of literature, to our knowledge, there are no studies that particularly focus on teachers' dispreferred turn designs in EMI contexts, and this is an important research gap. Seedhouse (2004) argues that preference organization is one of the building blocks of the interactional architecture of L2 classrooms. Focusing on this phenomenon may also reveal unique interactional properties of EMI interaction, and can feed into research on L2 use both in EMI as well as in EFL settings. Identifying unique features of preference organization in EMI may reveal how student engagement is facilitated in meaning-focused, rather than linguistic form-focused encounters in classrooms. In the next section, we will provide a review of English as a medium of instruction in the world and in Turkey.

3. English as a medium of instruction in the world

English, which has a global lingua franca status today, is a widely adopted medium of instruction in many educational settings in the world. It has helped to promote mobility within and beyond Europe and has contributed to the improvement and sustainability of high-quality education (Hahl, Järvinen, & Juuti, 2014). EMI courses focus on content learning (Smit & Dafouz, 2012), making “no direct reference to the aim of improving students’ English” (Dearden & Macaro, 2016, p. 456). The exclusive focus on content has also been confirmed by research which showed how EMI teachers prioritize subject content, evidenced by for instance very limited teacher-initiated focus on vocabulary and grammar (Jiang, Zhang, & May, 2016), a point which we will revisit in the discussion section. EMI is a term used “ubiquitously geographically and, usually but not exclusively, applied to higher education” (Macaro, Curle, Pun, An, & Dearden, 2018, p. 37). It has earlier been suggested that in contexts where English is used as a medium of instruction, (1) English acts as a vehicle for learning content; (2) content learning outcomes are central; (3) language-related outcomes are peripheral, and (4) subject content specialists teach EMI courses (Brown & Bradford, 2017). However, it is important to note here that implementation of EMI courses is context-driven, generally depending on the individual instructors, language proficiency of the classes or the discipline under focus. Therefore, we cannot provide a ‘one-size-fits-all’ definition for EMI programs.

The diversity in the implementation of EMI programs in the world has resulted in different models. In a recent paper that conceptualizes EMI, Schmidt-Unterberger (2018) argues that a combination of EMI courses and explicit English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and English for Academic Purposes (EAP) instruction is a more realistic model. What is more realistic or beneficial for learning content and language, however, requires closer investigation of instructional practices and learning outcomes. In a recent systematic review of EMI research, Macaro et al. (2018) show that EMI research has dominantly looked into teacher and student beliefs about EMI (e.g. Chapple, 2015; Earls, 2016) and professional development of EMI teachers (e.g. Guarda & Helm, 2016). Studies that investigate the impact of EMI on language learning are limited to the use of language tests, and research into interaction in EMI in higher education is rare (Macaro et al., 2018). The situation is no different in Turkey, where there is a lack of empirical micro-analytic research on what is actually happening in classrooms.

3.1. English as a medium of instruction in Turkish higher education

English as a medium of instruction has been a disputable topic in Turkish education (Macaro, Akınçoğlu, & Dearden, 2016; Selvi, 2014). While supporters of EMI argue for the benefits of it such as (1) the contribution of learning a second language to competencies in the first language (Alptekin, 1998) and (2) the facilitating trait of bilingualism to cognitive and linguistic development (Kirkci, 2004), opponents consider its presence in education as a violation of human rights (Demircan, 2006) and a threat to Turkish culture (Sinanoğlu, 2000). There is a substantial body of literature investigating EMI in Turkey and many of these studies have been conducted through quantitative data collection tools such as questionnaires and surveys (Güler, 2004; Derintuna, 2006). Moreover, qualitative research has not gone beyond attitude and perception studies using mostly interviews (Sert, 2008). Although such studies have contributed to our growing body of knowledge on what participants think about EMI practices, it has provided less on how EMI functions as an instructional tool in classrooms. These studies are important in that they shed light on the multiple challenges stakeholders face in adopting EMI as well as on the benefits EMI brings together. To the best of our knowledge, however, the interactions between students and teachers in EMI classrooms in Turkey have remained under-researched. In other words, what seems to be missing in the previous literature related to EMI research is a close analysis of what actually happens when teachers and students interact within the walls of the classrooms. The current study is an attempt to deepen our understanding of actual practices in EMI classrooms, via unpacking how situated practices, i.e. teacher’s dispreferred turns designs, are co-constructed in pedagogical activities.

A strand of research which focuses on the negative effects of EMI in education reveals that EMI leads to difficulties with comprehending the concepts, lack of knowledge about the subject content, feelings of isolation and separation and unwillingness to participate because of the inadequate language proficiency (Kocaman, 2000). Sert (2000) attributes lower levels of academic attainment of students to EMI, while Zok (2010) maintains that students’ insufficient involvement in the classroom activities and their difficulties with writing and note taking result from the policies and applications that are inherent in EMI. Dalkız (2002) highlights that students mainly have difficulties in grasping questions in EMI settings, and thus they cannot formulate a proper response to them. In brief, what has come out as a general finding from the relevant research is that language development is positively affected by EMI, whereas disciplinary learning is impacted adversely as EMI seems to have a negative impact on the acquisition of academic content (Arkin, 2013). However, we take the position that such claims regarding L2 use and learning of academic content require a micro-analytic, empirical investigation, and this is one of the aims of the present paper.

4. The data and context??

English has been adopted as the ‘medium of instruction’ by certain universities in Turkey. The Middle East Technical University, founded in 1956, is the first higher education institution in Turkey to provide EMI in all its degrees. Following this initiation, Boğaziçi University was established in 1971 to do the same service and as the first private foundation-funded university to provide instruction in English, Bilkent University was founded in 1984. As of January
2017, there are 185 universities in Turkey, serving 7 million students (Higher Education Council) and most of these universities offer one-year intensive English preparation courses for all incoming students. Apart from the three universities mentioned above which provide education in English in all their degree programs, the rest of the universities in Turkey offer EMI partially, not employing English as the ‘officially approved language’ in their institutions.

The data for this study come from detailed transcriptions of 30 h of video recording of two classes, which were observed for twelve weeks at a university adopting EMI for all its degree programs in Turkey. The contents of the recorded course were the same in both classes, which were taught by the same lecturer. The title of the course is ‘Guidance’, offered to senior (4th year) undergraduate students as a compulsory course by the Department of Educational Sciences. The classes met every week and the sessions were two hours and fifteen minutes. The data was collected during the spring term of the 2014/2015 academic year, between February and May 2015.

The focal teacher of this study is an associate professor of psychological counseling and guidance at the Department of Educational Sciences. She is an experienced lecturer with a teaching background over 20 years. The participants, altogether 78 in both classes, were fourth year undergraduate students studying at the Faculty of Education. The classes were heterogenous in terms of language proficiency as the students were majoring in different educational departments, including computer education and instructional technology, elementary education, foreign language education, and secondary science and mathematics education. Students are required to be at least at B2 level according to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) to be able pursue their undergraduate studies. As the participants had been exposed to English as the only medium of instruction during their past 4.5 academic years (one year at preparatory school and 3.5 years in undergraduate program), they supposedly had reached the C1 (CEFR) level during the time of data collection, but there is no concrete evidence for their level based on a standard language test. In the first class, there were 37 female and 2 male students and their ages ranged between 21 and 25 during the time of the recordings. In the second class, there were 30 females and 9 males, their age ranging from 22 to 26. In the second class there were 4 foreign students, all able to speak and understand the local language (i.e. Turkish). Before the collection of the data, written consents were signed by the participants, and the data collection procedure was approved by the university research ethics committee. The anonymity of the participants has been guaranteed by pseudonyms.

5. Analytic procedure

The analyses in this study follow a conversation analytic methodology (Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1974), with a multimodal approach to the data. CA insists on naturally occurring data, and analyses are drawn on transcriptions of audio-visual recordings that capture as much detail as possible with regards to talk, embodied conduct, and the material world. Therefore, with a multimodal focus, the data was collected using three cameras, one of which was positioned in the back of the class focusing on the lecturer and the slides. The other two, located in the right and the left front corners of the rooms, were screening the students so that the data would be viewed and analyzed from multiple perspectives, allowing the researchers to bring evidence to social phenomena based on visual details including gestures and gaze movements. The initial stage of the data analysis began with watching each video over and over again to get ourselves familiar with the data, a procedure that is also known as unmotivated looking (ten Have, 2007). Later, all of the recorded data were transcribed using Transana software, a computer program for transcribing, databasing, and analyzing video and audio data.

Based on a CA framework, the transcriptions were done paying close attention to fine details of talk-in-interaction, including timing, prosody, and embodied actions. The transcription conventions were adopted from Jefferson (2004), with additional notations describing embodied behaviors. With a close investigation of these detailed transcriptions together with the video recordings and by focusing on turn taking, repair, and preference organization, a recurrent phenomenon, namely ‘the teacher’s dispreferred turns-of-action to student responses’ has been identified. These recurrent cases, which consist of 39 instances of the teacher’s responsive turn design that display “less than agreement”, have built up the collection for the present paper. The final stage of the analytic procedure involved analysis of each excerpt with a meticulous inspection.

6. Analysis and findings

In this section, we will provide a close analysis of the phenomenon under focus by depicting (1) how the teacher prioritizes content and activity over language use (Extract 3), (2) the ways these dispreferred turn designs are performed at the multimodal level (Extract 4), and (3) how such teacher turns potentially push students to produce complex L2 utterances at turn and grammatical level (Extracts 5 and 6).

Extract 3 follows a task in which the students have helped each other in co-constructing different roles, namely helper, helpee, and observer. The lecturer (T) wants to hear about their reflections on this activity and asks about their experiences during the task. In this segment, one of the students shares her experience. The extract shows how the students and the teacher establish divergent institutional goals in a task and how these different orientations to the task at hand unfold in interaction within dispreferred turn design.

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1 A sample curriculum with course titles can be found at https://catalog.metu.edu.tr/program.php?fac prog=412.
In this fragment, Evi starts talking about her experience with the activity. In line 3, she initiates a word search marked with her open palms (see Fig. 1), an explicit embodied conduct in a word search activity (Goodwin & Goodwin, 1986). The turn-final word in line 3 (any:) is produced with rising intonation and is stretched along with maintaining mutual gaze with T, thus potentially making relevant an ‘other-repair’ in the follow-up turn which is followed by a hesitation marker. In the following turn, a 1.6 s silence emerges during which Evi closes her eyes and moves her two hands upwards with her palms open (see Fig. 3); a combination of embodied conduct signaling a solitary word search activity. In line 7, prefacing her turn with an acknowledgment token (>okay<), T displays understanding by repeating Evi’s utterance that has been produced before the initiation of the word search (it wasn’t a problem): a turn that receives a confirmation by Evi. In line 9, T overlaps with Evi, and by starting her turn with the contrastive conjunction ‘but’, which functions as a predisagreement, she shows that the way Evi has performed with her group members does not serve the pedagogical purpose of the task. More precisely, the students (in particular Evi) and the teacher approach the task under focus differently. What is interesting in this excerpt is that although Evi demonstrably orients to a linguistic trouble with a word search, T does not attend to this. That is, T prioritizes task requirements and content over language (by not attending to the word search) in this specific context as how Evi has performed with her group friends does not align with the pedagogical goal of T. This lack of orientation to the word search and the maintenance of the focus on content and the task can be evidenced by the dispreferred turn design of T, marked by the pause (Margutti, 2004) in line 6. It is worth noting that T manifests her dispreferred turn design by not attending to the immediate need of the student, which is a candidate word to be offered by T. T’s specification of the intention of the exercise in line 9 also receives laughter from other students in line 10, leading Evi to produce an alignment marker with audible laughter (Eyes::£); bypassing the face-threatening effect of the dispreference as has previously been shown in L2 classrooms (Sert & Jacknick, 2015). Between lines 12–13, prefacing her turn with
another pre-disagreement token 'okay (.). but', T justifies why they have to perform in a different way in the helping process. Subsequently, Evi acknowledges this comment ('huh'). There is 1.9-s of silence in line 15, possibly signaling to T that further elaboration is required, and therefore she obtains the floor again and talks about the ways talking together might be useful (lines 16–22). In other words, T makes it obvious that what she has expected from this exercise is not what Evi and her group members have done, thus specifying the intention of the exercise once more.

In sum, this excerpt demonstrates how a student engages in a word search through vocal and visual practices, and how the teacher does not attend to this need, showing preference for maintaining the pedagogical agenda (a focus on the task and content in this EMI context) through her dispreferred turn design. The analysis in a way describes how divergent orientations are managed in educational discourse. It can be noted here that the way the teacher designs her turn in two parts; first the repetition/formulation of Evi's answer gist and then producing the 'but' clause, demonstrate that the teacher treats the response as 'less than preferred', more particularly marks their different interactional goals in the current task.

Extract 4 takes place after the class has received a handout which lists 'distorted thoughts' with examples. The teacher asks the students to look through the list and find if they have ever experienced any of these thoughts. The fragment is an example of how repair is conducted using multimeiotic resources, drawing on the teacher's embodied conduct and learning materials to manage the clarification of a terminological item. The repair trajectory is other-initiated other-repair where the teacher initiates repair and completes it, thus showing her dispreferred turn-of-action.

Extract 4: Doing filtering, 15.04.15

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01  T: >for instance< how many of you are doing (0.2) filtering?
02  (1.0)
03  Nil: "filtering"
04  +T looks and smiles at Nil
05  (3.7){(T scans the class for a potential answer)}
06  T: "you see only the=
     +looks at the handout in her hands
07  Fer: =it depends on the person actually
08  (1.2) #4
09  Nag: situation
10  (1.1){(Teacher points at Fer with her index finger)}
11  Fer: +yeah "when we"
     +nods
12  T: huh
13  Sx: "situation"
14  Fer: i mean=
15  T: +#i am talking about you:
16  Fer: if i have to filter (0.3) something (1.2) i just do it
17  actually (.). if i'm- i am telling this to my close
18  friends maybe i don't do filters but (0.8) for example
19  +T nods
20  when i am talking to my instructor or my mother or my
21  father (.). i should filter (0.3) some information
22  (0.5)
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Figure 4

Figure 5
T initiates the sequence with a question inviting students to tell if they are doing filtering. By self-selecting herself in line 7, Fer obtains the floor and specifies a condition (it depends on the person actually). This utterance precedes the silence in line 08 (1.2 s) during which T looks at Fer with furrowed eyebrows (see Fig. 4), prefacing a potential repair to be offered in the follow-up turns. In the following turn (line 9), Nag adds on to the formulation provided by Fer previously by offering another condition, 'situation'. Nag’s contribution to the interaction illustrates how T’s embodied behavior is interpreted as a sign of forthcoming trouble as Nag performs a peer-repair through verbal conduct. At this point, through nonverbal selection, T assigns the rights to the floor to Fer by using her index finger (line 10). In the following turn, through nodding and with a rising intonation, Fer displays alignment with Nag with the acknowledgment marker ‘yeah’, and marked as in a quiet tone, her following words receive a minimal contribution from T in line 12. In the next turn, one of the students (Sx) provides the same formulation (situation) and this contribution is also not oriented to by T. Fer’s attempt in the following turn to elaborate on her ideas is interrupted by T (i am talking about you:) accomplished using a deictic gesture (see Fig. 5), thus repairing the previous contributions. In this case T does not employ overtly negative correction, but she initiates the repair sequence by making her pedagogical focus clear and this reminder is enriched by T’s embodied conduct (pointing gestures directed toward the respondent).

Between lines 16 and 22, Fer elaborates on her answer by providing examples from her own life, receiving embodied displays of listenership from T. Fer’s explanation of the concept ‘filtering’ is followed by half a second of silence. According to Scaglione, Jefferson, and Sacks (1977) after a repairable utterance is brought to a transition-relevance place, other recipients generally withhold talking, and thereby withholding correcting the other. In this sense, it promotes a more affiliative environment for the speaker to correct themselves. However, in the following turn prefacing her turn with ‘okay but’, T foreshadows a rejection or at least a contrast in her upcoming talk. As in the previous extract, ‘okay but’ appears in the same design but unlike Extract 3 in which there is the formulation of Evi’s answer, in the present case T goes straight to stating what is wrong in the understanding displayed by Fer. T specifies ‘what filtering is not’ by reading out from the handout (see Fig. 6) and thus uses the learning material as an interactional object for bringing off teacher explanation and supporting students’ task work (Guerrettaz & Johnston, 2014; Jakonen, 2015). Immediately following this, Fer shifts her gaze toward her worksheet (see Fig. 7) and in the following part, T states clearly what she does not mean by ‘filtering’ and clarifies the difference between ‘censoring’ and ‘filtering’. Here, the dispreferred turn is marked by the silence before T’s turn and the turn initial discourse markers ‘okay but’ are designed to demonstrate something less than agreement (Steensig & Asmuss, 2005; Szczepak Reed, 2015).

In Extract 5, along with the findings of the previous extract (e.g. silences, partial agreement), we exemplify how the teacher marks dispreference resorting to (1) hesitation markers, and (2) gaze movements, following a formulation and understanding offered by one of the students. The extract also showcases how the resources to display dispreference push the student to extend her turn using a prepositional phrase, thus increasing the syntactic complexity of her utterance. Before the extract starts, the teacher has been lecturing on interpretation skills in counseling.
Extract 5: Interpretation and summarizing, 15_04_15

01 Fer: what is the difference between interpretation and summarizing,
02 T: in in [the interpretation]
03 Fer: [the information]
04 T: *okay* in the interpretation (0.3) you try to show
05 the reason of his or her behavior (0.3) by considering your theoretical perspective (0.3) in
06 the summary (0.5) you state (.) what you heard
07 (3.2)((Fer nods and moves her lips as ‘okay’ silently))
08 [1.0]([T keeps gazing at Fer and nods] so er: they are completely different skills (0.3)
09 in the summary we (.). try to show the pattern>
10 (0.7) that we observed (0.5) you stated
11 #this one (.) this one (.) this one

Figure 8

15 Fer: we just repeat what we heard.
16 → (0.7)
17 → T: er:--
#9

Figure 9

18 → Fer: with different words
19 T: in a more (.) in a more advanced way let’s say it’s not just the parroting er (0.3) er:
20 we try to er: help the person see the connections (.)
21 you acted (0.3) in your school in this way:

The extract starts with Fer’s information-seeking question, targeted at understanding the difference between ‘interpretation’ and ‘summarizing’. In line 3, T starts providing the second pair-part of the question-answer adjacency pair by explaining ‘interpretation’. However, her response turn is overlapped after the repeat of the preposition in turn-initial position by Fer, who completes her question. Starting with an acknowledgment token that shows the receipt of the question (‘okay’), T starts an explanation sequence. From lines 5 to 8, T explains what ‘interpretation’ is. This is followed by non-verbal (nodding) and nonvocalized listenership tokens by Fer, illustrating receipt of information. These listenership tokens are responded to by a nod from T, thus creating the grounds for alignment. Following these embodied actions that create mutuality, in line 11, T flags the difference of these two terms with a so-prefaced formulation, and goes on to explain what ‘summary’ refers to from lines 11 to 14, closing her turn with a gestural demonstration (see Fig. 8). This explanation, positioned as a first, prompts a formulation by Fer, and she formulates her candidate understanding (‘we just repeat what we heard’) in line 15. Taking the institutional nature of this interaction into account, such a claim of understanding invites a confirmation from the teacher.

What follows Fer’s utterance in this post-expansion is a long silence (0.7 s) that precedes a hesitation marker (er:) accompanied by gaze aversion as T shifts her gaze up (see Fig. 9); all being features of dispreferred turn design. In line 18, possibly analysing the teacher’s actions as manifesting a forthcoming disconfirmation of her understanding, Fer provides a turn-increment. Schegloff,
syntactically tied to her formulation provided in her previous turn (with different words). By adding an increment to her TCU, Fer appears to be handling the possible upcoming disagreement (Schegloff, 2000) or a possibly face-threatening action and thus becomes alert to a dispreferred action. That is, Fer perceives a problem with her preceding utterance and formulates her prior candidate understanding with an incremental expression. What follows from lines 19 to 22 is T's alternative explanation, building on Fer's formulation. In her explanation, T puts emphasis on the comparison marker and repeats it twice (more), as she proposes the alternative understanding by using a collective suggestion marker (let's say), thus avoiding explicit disagreement and negative evaluation, which may potentially have been face-threatening.

Extract 5 has shown that the turn design that includes embodied as well as verbal elements of dispreference (in particular line 17) is visually available to students and it pushes turn completions by students themselves, creating more space for meaning negotiation. Since the implicit evaluative nature of the teacher's follow-up actions also (from lines 19 to 22) helps avoid face-threatening potential of dispreferred turn designs, it thus also creates alignment. Keeping in mind that this is an EMI context and content is generally prioritized over linguistic accuracy, this may facilitate student engagement. Furthermore, if we take an L2 use perspective, we observe opportunities created by the teacher for relatively complex language production. By syntactic complexity, we refer to the complexity of sentence structure and the degree of sophistication in language production at phrase and utterance level. That is to say, the action performed by the teacher in line 17 generates pushed output, in which the student produces a prepositional phrase, syntactically tying this new utterance to her previously produced turn; a phenomenon known as formatting (Goodwin, 1990). Thus, negotiation for meaning at content level and production of complex L2 morpho-syntax are simultaneously enabled; preference organization acting as a catalyst for this interplay.

Extract 6 illustrates how the teacher deploys verbal and embodied resources to indicate dispreference. We will again argue for the complexity of L2 production enabled through dispreferred turn design; this time pushing the student to produce a subordinate clause tied with a conjunction. The segment takes place when a student bids for a turn and poses an information-seeking question while the teacher is engaged in lecturing.

Extract 6: Consulting and counseling, 25.03.15

01 Emi: hiiii (0.3) a point was the my teacher
02 difference between consult and (0.6) counselling? (0.6)
03 T: (0.6)
04 o: kay > what < is the difference?
05 + looks at the class
06 o: kay what is the difference between consulting and + walks towards the middle of the class
07 (0.3) er: counselling?
08 (5.0) ([T scans the class and smiles])
09 #10

Figure 10

09 (1.1) ([Fer raises her hand])
10 ([Fer nominates Fer by pointing])
11 Fer: i think er:
12 (2.7) ([Fer looks down and T nods])
13 Fer: you consult someone and he or she (0.3)
14 gives you counselling

Figure 11

15 → (0.9) #12

Figure 12
The extract begins with Esi's information-seeking question that queries the difference between 'consulting' and 'counselling'; a question related to a past learning event. Prefacing her question with the Turkish honorific address term ("hocam") (tr: my teacher) and a stance marker ("I think"), Esi makes her K(-) epistemic status (Heritage, 2012a, 2012b) recognizable (I have missed a point). In line 4, T acknowledges the question with ‘οκα:γ’ and by orienting to the class, redirects the question back to the students simply by asking what the difference is. Immediately after that, by also changing her place and walking toward the middle of the class, T asks specifically what the difference between ‘consulting’ and ‘counselling’ is. In line 7, during a long silence, T scans the class for a potential answer and smiles at the students. In the following turn, by moving her hand to the left side (see Fig. 10), she invites participation from the students. This embodied invitation of the teacher is an interesting example of promoting progressivity of the interactional sequences in the classroom context. In line 11, Fer starts her turn with the stance marker ‘I think’, which is followed by a hesitation marker (er:). What happens next is that a lengthy silence (2.7 s) emerges during which Fer looks down and T keeps nodding at her. In the following turns Fer manages to complete her utterance (lines 13–14).

An approximately 1 s silence takes place when T breaks the mutual gaze with Fer and looks up (see Fig. 12). The gaze shift here conveys dispreference (Park, 2015), which works as a repair initiation. In line 16, Fer attempts to build more on her previous formulation with the elaboration marker ‘I mean’. During the 1.4 s silence, T shifts her gaze up (see Fig. 13), and displays a thinking face (Goodwin & Goodwin, 1986) accompanied by movement of her body to the right (see Fig. 14); a combination of these embodied resources might be indicating dispreference. Fer's formulation in line 18 is followed by a 1.4 s silence, and in line 20, by using the minimal acknowledgment token ‘mhmm::’ which may function as a weak agreement (Davidson, 1984), T displays that Fer's answer is
not what she is looking for; marking dispreference again. Overlapping with the teacher’s turn, Fer qualifies her display of epistemic status when she utters the phrase ‘as far as I know’, where she makes it obvious that the piece of information she has provided is within the scope of her epistemic domain but it might be wrong. This also resembles what we have observed in Extract 5, in which the dispreferred turn design of T and embodied indicators of this push the student to produce an additional clause (a subordinate clause with ‘as far as I know’ in this extract, and a prepositional phrase ‘with other words’ in Extract 5); thus promoting complex L2 production at syntactic level. While the former one hedges the level of certainty of the answer, the latter one serves to elaborate the answer; in this sense, they do different jobs in interaction although they both come out as increments. After half a second of silence in line 22, by giving an opportunity to Fer to repair, T acknowledges what Fer has uttered with a downward toned ‘o|ka|y’. The incorrectness of Fer’s response becomes more apparent when T aborts her own turn to allocate the turn to Mec, that is, T is still looking for something else as the received answer from Fer is insufficient. Between lines 28 and 31, Mec responds to the question as an attempt to provide the response T is looking for and T keeps nodding at Mec as an indicator of listenership. In line 33, T acknowledges what Mec has uttered with ‘<oka:y oka:y>’ and assesses her contribution ‘some|how correct’, which functions as a partial agreement. That is, her assessment characteristically manifests something less than agreement. Following her laughter, T produces another assessment ‘partially correct’ (line 36) and closes the sequence with final explanations with which she provides a full account for the question.

Overall, Extract 6 demonstrates that by marking the student’s response as problematic and inadequate through a variety of verbal and nonverbal resources, the teacher delivers dispreferred actions with dispreferred design features. By employing specific embodied conduct such as pointing at the student, shifting gaze or moving her body to the right side, the teacher treats the student contribution as something repairable. Considering the interactional function of the increment it serves, we can say that produced as a post-gap increment along with the weak agreement of the teacher, it functions as a repair practice through which the student addresses her less than preferred response (Schegloff, 2000). The last two extracts are also important for us in that they demonstrate how preference organization can become a site to show the ways a teacher’s turn design triggers L2 complexity at multiple levels. In this sense, the significance of increments should be acknowledged within the context of conversational turn taking in L2 classroom discourse.

7. Discussion and conclusion

Our findings have first empirically demonstrated how dispreferred turns of action are co-constructed in two EMI classrooms in a higher education setting in Turkey. Extract 3 has illustrated the teacher’s preference for maintaining her pedagogical agenda (a focus on the task and content, rather than a word that is searched by the student) through her dispreferred turn design. From a multimodal perspective, Extract 4 has showcased how dispreference is marked visually, for example by gaze aversions and orientations to materials. In this sense, the extract illustrates how bodily-visual practices along with learning materials are at play in dispreferred turn designs.

The focus on subject content rather than on language in EMI classroom interaction, as has been revealed in our study, has also been confirmed in Jiang et al.’s (2016) research. Their investigation into a Chinese EMI higher education context has demonstrated only few instances of teacher-initiated ‘focus on form’ on lexis and grammar. These findings are also in line with Arnó-Macía and Mancho-Barés’ (2015) results, in that their findings also revealed very few language focus episodes caused by linguistic limitations. Given that language focus can be a prominent feature in CLIL interactions (e.g. Jakonen & Morton, 2015), our findings then can display at least some aspects of the institutional dynamics of EMI interaction embedded in preference organization, as subject content is prioritized over language. With these findings, we documented the micro-level details of a macro-level policy (i.e. a focus on content rather than on language) in action, embedded in the local contingencies of sequential actions.

Furthermore, Extracts 5 and 6 are important from both EMI and ‘L2 use’ perspectives, as they indicate the intricate relationship between dispreferred turn designs of a teacher and their potential to push complexity in students’ use of English at syntactic level, facilitating extensions of student turns, and enabling students’ reanalyses of their own turns. These extracts outline how increments, which are turn constructional unit extensions, are designed to address different issues in interaction (e.g. handling possible upcoming disagreement). Such findings are important in particular with regards to meaning-and-fluency contexts (Seedhouse, 2004) in L2 classrooms, which look “similar to daily interactions in many ways, and aim to promote use of language in meaningful interactions in classrooms” (Sert, 2015, p. 29). The findings show that teachers can promote extended learner turns through specific turn designs when the focus is on meaning and subject rather than language, which is a feature of classroom interaction that can be transferred to L2 teaching. From this perspective, the interplay between dispreferred turn designs and the syntactic complexity of English language at turn level has potential to inform L2 classrooms and CLIL classrooms, where English is also ‘content’ rather than the medium of communication only.

We argue that a micro-analytic investigation into EMI interaction has proven to be useful for extending our understanding of EMI in higher education. Successful EMI classrooms and their interactional architecture can feed into research and practice in EFL and CLIL classrooms, as revealing successful interactions through a micro-analytic lens in EMI contexts can create models of language use to maintain meaning through language repertoires successfully. For example, samples of specific turn designs can be used as training materials in L2 teacher education where the teachers are teaching to students at more advanced levels in terms of language proficiency. This would promote more communicative language classrooms, where teachers, through their dispreferred turn designs, could facilitate extended learner turns.

A number of turn-design features have constructed the teacher’s turns as disagreement-implicative but at the same time as a facilitator for more extended learner turns in our study. First, the employment of a temporal delay has been observed, which demonstrably creates a break in interaction (Schegloff, 2007). Second, hedging and delaying devices are deployed which delay the production of the actual response. Last, the locally contingent ways in which the teacher manages her body seems to be critical for the students to overview the adequacy of their prior responses. In other words, students orient to all these interactional resources employed by the teacher by attempting to produce increments over their just-prior contribution.

We also argue that the robust methodological tools of conversation analysis helped us better grasp the pedagogical dynamics of EMI classroom interaction, as they enabled us to see the value of embodied resources in establishing and co-constructing pedagogical practices. The field of EMI, in and beyond the Turkish higher education context, can benefit from more micro-analytic investigations, since teaching and learning are embodied in the micro-details of pedagogical interaction. Using conversation analysis, our study has documented an aspect of preference organization in a teacher’s turn design, but we need
more micro-analytic evidence to portray interactional and institutional dynamics of EMI. Future research should look into other interactional practices (e.g. teacher and learner questions, code-switching and translanguaging, repairs) in EMI classrooms so as to be able to conducive to teaching and teacher education in these contexts.

Acknowledgements
The data used in this study comes from the PhD study of the first author (Duran, 2017), supervised by the second author. We thank the lecturer and the students who gave their consent for this research. We thank the editor and the anonymous reviewers for their insightful comments. We also want to thank Leila Kâaânta, who provided very useful comments on an earlier version of the paper. Finally, we are grateful for the analytic insights of the participants in data sessions organized by HUMAN (Hacettepe University Micro-analysis Network) and the Finnish Center of Excellence in Research on Intersubjectivity in Interaction.

Appendix A. Transcription conventions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mark</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(.)</td>
<td>Numbers enclosed in parentheses indicate a pause. The number represents the number of seconds of duration of the pause, to one decimal place. A pause of less than 0.2 s is marked by (.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[]</td>
<td>Brackets around portions of utterances show that those portions overlap with a portion of another speaker’s utterance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>=</td>
<td>An equal sign is used to show that there is no time lapse between the portions connected by the equal signs. This is used where a second speaker begins their utterance just at the moment when the first speaker finishes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>:</td>
<td>A colon after a word or a phrase is used to show that the sound is extended. The number of colons shows the length of the extension.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(hm, hh)</td>
<td>These are onomatopoeic representations of the audible exhalation of air.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.hh</td>
<td>This indicates an audible inhalation of air, for example, as a gasp. The more h’s, the longer the inhale.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>?, .</td>
<td>A question mark indicates that there is slightly rising intonation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.-</td>
<td>A comma indicates a continuation of tone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>. ,</td>
<td>A dash indicates an abrupt cut off, where the speaker stopped speaking suddenly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>↑↓</td>
<td>Up or down arrows are used to indicate that there is sharply rising or falling intonation. The arrow is placed just before the syllable in which the change in intonation occurs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Underlines indicate speaker emphasis on the underlined portion of the word.

CAPS Capital letters indicate that the speaker spoke the capitalized portion of the utterance at a higher volume than the speaker’s normal volume.

Marks this utterance that is much softer than the normal speech of the speaker. This symbol will appear at the beginning and at the end of the utterance in question.

> < 'Greater than' and 'less than' signs indicate that the talk they surround was noticeably faster, or slower than the surrounding talk.

( ) 'When a word appears in parentheses, it indicates that the transcriber has guessed as to what was said, because it was inaudible on the tape. If the transcriber was unable to guess what was said, nothing appears within the parentheses. |

Sterling signs are used to indicate a smiley or jokey voice.

Mark the onset of an embodied action (e.g. shift of gaze, pointing, movement).

Describes embodied actions within a specific turn and time

Adapted from Hatchey and Woolfitt (2008)

References


