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Interpreters in intercultural communication: How to modulate the impact of their verbal and non-verbal practices?

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1. Active participation in social interaction

Taking part in a conversation is an everyday activity that all members of a human group perform regularly during their social lives. Nonetheless, achieving an orderly and fruitful participation in a spoken interaction, with two or more participants at a time, is a complex issue, requiring a finely tuned interplay of both verbal and non-verbal elements. According to Goodwin & Goodwin (2004: 222):

> In order for human beings to coordinate their behaviour with that of their coparticipants, in the midst of talk participants must display to one another what they are doing and how they expect others to align themselves toward the activity of the movement. Language and embodied action provide crucial resources for the achievement of such social order. The term *participation* refers to actions demonstrating forms of involvement performed by parties within evolving structures of talk.

The various forms in which interactants participate in a conversation have been subject to a vast debate, starting from Goffman's (1974, 1981) groundbreaking studies on "footing", where the roles of "speaker" and "hearer" are problematized, and subdivided into more subtly nuanced categories (e.g. animator, author, principal, ratified participants, overhearer, etcetera). Building on Goffman's analysis, authors such as Goodwin (1981, 1984, 1986); Levinson (1988); Irvine (1996); Hutchins & Palen (1997) have demonstrated that participation stems from the joint efforts of all interactants, who constantly and actively re-negotiate their roles in the ongoing conversation, on the basis of a complex array of verbal and non-verbal factors. Within a single stream of talk, different speakers may take the conversational floor in different ways, e.g. by alternating, by overlapping, or even by splitting the conversation into multiple simultaneous interactions.

This paper will show how local negotiation takes place within hierarchically structured settings, such as medical consultations or parent-teacher meetings, mediated by an interpreter. During these encounters, conversation can easily assume diverse configurations, involving different participants

with different roles, rights and responsibilities. The focus of this article will be on interpreters' active participation, how it manifests itself, how it is co-constructed with the other parties-at-talk and its impact on the overall communicative event.

1.1 Negotiating participation in interpreter-mediated scenarios

The first scholar to provide empirical evidence that face-to-face interpreters are fully-fledged participants in a complex communicative event was Wadensjö (1998), who unveiled the double role of interpreters as *translators* and *coordinators*, and stated that they cannot avoid taking active part in the interaction and functioning as intercultural mediators. Interpreters are therefore expected not only to translate orally what is said by the parties-at-talk, but also to maintain a bi-directional flow of information, anticipating or clarifying potential communication pitfalls, monitoring mutual understanding and facilitating participants' contributions by creating opportunities for them to voice their thoughts, concerns, doubts and feelings. Hence the term "dialogue interpreting", which acknowledges the active role played by the interpreter and the dialogic nature of this form of communication.

This is particularly important in asymmetrical situations where immigrants (adults-in-mobility, AMs) are confronted with a different language and different rules and regulations characterising the host country's institutional system. Providing access to them requires, on the one hand, that messages are conveyed clearly from institutional representatives (adults-in-contact-with-mobility, ACMs) to AMs. As explained by Wadensjö (2004: 107):

> A general feature of institutional encounters is that a professional party normally is in charge of them. That is, the representative of the institution is by definition in control of how topics are selected, of how much and how often clients/patients/suspects etc. normally are expected to talk and how their contributions will be evaluated […] In interpreter-mediated institutional interaction, the person in charge occasionally may have to lose some of this control. The interpreter – willingly or unwillingly– ends up taking a certain responsibility for the substance and the progression of talk.

Ensuring that messages are successfully conveyed from ACMs to AMs itself is not, however, enough to guarantee effective communication. On the other hand, AMs need to be given the opportunity to express themselves, react to what is said to them, thus actively contributing to the ongoing conversation. To this end, interpreters need to participate in the interaction as active agents and monitor closely participants' verbal and non-verbal actions/reactions to ensure that AMs are effectively empowered.

As explained by Baraldi & Gavioli (2012: 14), participation can be seen both "as the active participation of the interpreter who takes part in the encounter with different types of contributions, and as the eliciting activity that interpreters and institutional representatives perform in order to favour lay participation, that is, to better serve the end-user". The question is, however, *how* can interpreters participate in the interaction to ensure effective, smooth communication. Furthermore, interpreters' interventions are not necessarily positive or negative, but their impact needs to be evaluated on a case-by-case, moment-by-moment basis.

Given the lack of clear, shared guidelines or standards of practice, particularly for non-verbal and paraverbal behaviour, a close look at transcribed real data can help identify some good and bad practices displayed by both interpreters and service providers. A collection of practices across various settings will ultimately raise awareness, among interpreters and ACMs, of the impact that specific interactional features may have on the unfolding interaction, particularly in terms of inclusion or exclusion.

This paper explores how active participation is manifested in interaction through the analysis of a recurrent phenomenon implemented by interpreters in the data analysed, namely "expanded renditions", i.e. translations which include more material than the original (or "host") utterance. In particular, it investigates the nature of such expansions and whether they ultimately facilitate (or do not facilitate) active involvement of AMs.

2. Description of data

The data consists of two separate corpora of interpreter-mediated communication in two different institutional settings: pedagogical and medical. The dataset collected in the pedagogical setting comprises approximately 3h10m of authentic meetings between teachers and parents from migrant families that were video-recorded in Italian and British pedagogical settings. The two extracts analysed here are taken from two different meetings, one recorded in the UK (extracts 1), the other one in Italy (extract 2). Both meetings involve four participants: two teachers, one mother from migrant backgrounds and one professional interpreter. Mothers represent AMs, as in both cases they have just moved with their families to the host country. The mother from extract 1 is originally from Egypt, but has spent most of her life in Italy, where her children were born and raised; Italian has therefore become her second language, which she speaks during the meeting. The mother from

extract 3 is of Indian origin, and her second language is English. In both cases, the children are facing many difficulties trying to integrate within the new classroom and cope with the workload; they do not speak the language of the host country fluently, and find it difficult to follow the lessons and socialize. These meetings with teachers take place regularly during the academic year: their purpose is for teachers to talk parents through their child's performance at school, address any problems or issues that may have arisen and ask parents to read and sign the school report.

The medical data are taken from a corpus of approximately 6h of video-recorded interaction between Italian doctors and foreign patients, with or without the presence of an interpreter. It comprises 24 gynaecological and paediatric consultations, involving 7 different Italian doctors, 2 nurses, 5 interpreters and 38 patients (or patient's parents, in the case of paediatric consultations) of different ethnicities, nationalities and native languages (Chinese, East-European, Middle-Eastern, North-African, African, Romani, Latin-American). The interactions were collected in two Italian primary care centres, one in Forlì (2006-2007), one in Perugia (2009-2010). Fieldwork took place within a research project on doctor-patient interaction in multilingual/multicultural settings, held by the Department of Linguistic Sciences of the Università per Stranieri (University for Foreigners) of Perugia, Italy.

The two medical sequences analysed here (extracts 2 and 4) are part of a sub-corpus of 6 visits, lasting a total of 1h46m, all involving Chinese patients and an Italian interpreter. In both cases, the patients are Chinese mothers, who speak Mandarin Chinese and have little or no command of Italian; none of the doctors involved has any understanding of Chinese. Extract 2 is a paediatric consultation, extract 4 a gynaecological one. The interpreter is the same in both visits: a professional interpreter, Italian native speaker, who works regularly in the primary care centre, particularly with the language pair Chinese-Italian.

In both datasets, the encounters were video-recorded employing two stand videocameras, oriented so as to capture all participants in the encounters. AMs, ACMs and interpreters were given a detailed explanation about the possible use of data, including the publication of transcripts and images in books or journals; they signed an informed consent form, granting permission to be videotaped and for the researchers to use videos, images, and transcriptions solely for scientific purposes.

3. Methodology

This paper is based on the methodologies of Conversation Analysis and Multimodal Analysis. Conversation Analysis (CA - Sacks *et al*. 1978; Atkinson & Heritage 1984; Sacks 1992; Schegloff 2007) is an approach to human communication which studies spontaneous conversation taking place in real-life settings, relying on natural data, without any use of laboratory simulation. Its primary focus are the procedures by which participants in a communicative event organize the interaction, in order to achieve orderly sequences of talk.

The basic unity of analysis is the "turn (at talk)", which can be defined as any stretch of talk produced by any single speaker. In natural conversation, interactants are able to detect and project the points where another speaker's turn is potentially complete and it is possible for them to take the floor, either by "self-selection" or "other-selection". A key concept in CA's methodology is *sequentiality*, i.e. the assumption that each turn is interpreted as the direct consequence of the preceding one(s), and, at the same time, as a constraint to the following one(s); therefore, interactants constantly monitor the development of conversation, in order to respond consequentially to the previous speaker's moves, and to check whether their own contributions are being correctly interpreted.

The analysis tries to account for the way parties-at-talk cooperatively organize their communicative moves on the spot, e.g. by anticipating ("projecting") other participants' moves, responding to them, or triggering a response to their own moves. CA posits that any feature of speech, even apparently irrelevant ones (pauses, overlaps, fillers, in-breaths, repetitions), may be crucial in the co-construction of the ongoing interaction, and needs to be analyzed and motivated. By analysing the formal characters of each turn, as they are observable during the actual interaction, the analyst is able to bring to light the "inner machinery", which guides the development of the interaction. However, the main focus of interest of CA is not language *per se*, but rather language as a vehicle for social actions. Thus, the final goal of the analysis is to discover what social actions are performed through language, and how.

In the last two decades, a growing body of CA-based studies has focused on the way social actions pass not only trough verbal language, but also through other semiotic resources, such as gaze (Lerner 2003: Rossano 2012), gestures (Ford *et al.* 1996; Hayashi *et al*. 2002), mutual spatial orientation (Goodwin 2000). Multimodal analysis considers semiotic resources not as ancillary to talk, rather as an integrated system to be studied as a whole. Hence its focus on where multimodal

resources are placed in the sequential development of talk and how they are used to complement or replace specific verbal features in conversation, with a view to accomplishing social actions.

Although non-verbal features have been recognised as part and parcel of human social interaction as well as important vectors of meaning and co-ordination (Goodwin 1981; Kendon 1990; Rossano 2013), their use by interpreters is still a largely uncharted territory. Since the groundbreaking work by Lang (1978), little research has integrated gaze and other semiotic resources in the analysis of the interpreter's (and participants') verbal output (Wadensjö 2001; Bot 2005; Mason 2012; Davitti 2013; Pasquandrea 2011). The present study will integrate both dimensions, thus showing how accounting for non-verbal features in interaction can provide a richer understanding of interactional dynamics.

4. Analysis

In this section, some instance of "expanded renditions" by the interpreters will be analyzed, in order to show what their impact on the interaction is, particularly with regard to the implementation of AMs' participation in the interaction.

4.1 Evaluative expanded renditions

Extract 1 is taken from an instance of parent-teacher meeting between a mother of Egyptian origin (AM) and two teachers (ACM1, headteacher, and ACM2, Science teacher). The meeting took place in a secondary school in Manchester (UK). AM has just moved to Manchester with her husband and sons after spending most of their lives in Italy (where the children were born). The eldest child is struggling to settle down and is facing problems at school, both in terms of proficiency and integration in the classroom. AM and ACMs have met before, but only once. INT is a professional interpreter (Italian native speaker) who has never worked for the school before.

In the previous turn (not transcribed here), ACM1 explicitly invited AM to ask any questions about what had been said up to that moment. In line 1, AM asks whether ACM2 thinks that the child is ready for the chemistry exam, due to take place the week after. This question reveals AM's concern about the situation, which is very delicate, as it is very likely that the child will fail the exam and have to repeat the year at school.

Extract 1

01	AM	voglio sapere se (.) >per il suo livello adesso lui è pronto per< la prossima settimana *I want to know if for his level now he is ready for next week*
02		per l'esame di (chimica) *for the chemistry exam*
03 04	INT	judging from the his eh actual level would he be ready for the (.) next exam (.) the exam next week?
05 06 07 08	ACM2	ah: (.) it's sort of (.) it it's an improvement on what he'd done (.) in November so he's making progress (.) ah: (.) I feel that part of the process is (.) just <u>doing</u> the exams (.) going through (.) the (.) habit) (.)you know >have the pressure of having to revise< and (.) go into the whole process of actually (.) filling in the exam papers
09	INT	allora c'è (.) si vede eh u- già un miglioramento da novembre a adesso (.) [no?] *so there is one can already see the improvement from November up to now right*
10	AM	[mhm]
11	INT	e (.) e la signora dice che (.) parte del processo (.) è quello di (.) <u>dare</u> l'esame (.) *and and the lady is saying that part of the process is that of doing the exam*
12		eh senza badare al risultato (.)((clearing throat)) >andare attraverso la procedura di *without worrying about the result going through the procedure of*
13		riempire le< (.) queste (.) scelte multiple (.) e e: (.) farsi la mano diciamo a:: questo *filling in these multiple choices and and getting used to let's say*
14		sistema di esami (.) e questo è già è (.) è in- (.) è incoraggiante ecco *this exam system and this is already is is is encouraging right*
15	AM	°°mhm°°
16	INT	per cui c'è (.) c'è una progressione comunque ha già mi[gliorato] per cui= *so there is there is a progression anyway he has already improved so*
17	AM	[migliorato] *improved*
18	AM	=°°capito°°= *I understand*
19	INT	=quindi anche se il risultato della prossima settimana non sarà (.) ehm bellissimo (.) *so even if the result next week won't be beautiful*
20		però si vede la (.) la progressione che è importante *but one can see the progression which is important*
21		(1.92)
22 23	ACM2	there's (.) there's no (.) penalty for (.) having done the exams and then doing them again (.) next year [so]
24	INT	[sicuramente] non c'è una (.)una penale (.) una una punizione *surely there is not a a penalty a a punishment*

25		per aver (.) fallito all'esame e aver (.) e ridarli l'anno prossimo *for failing the exam and having and trying them again next year*
26	AM	si può ripetere *one can repeat it*
27	INT	può ripeterli tranquillamente *he can repeat them easily*
28	AM	°ah ora capisco° *now I understand*
29	INT	°poi li passa° *then he passes them*

In lines 1-4, AM firstly makes a request (lines 1-2) which is subsequently rendered into English quite closely to ACMs by INT (lines 3-4); in lines 5-8, ACM1 responds in English. From line 9 on, INT starts translating. The sequence can be divided into two main blocks, as follows:

Block 1 [lines 5-21]
Lines 5-8: ACM1's reply
Lines 9-21: INT <u>expanded rendition</u> (dyadic sequence between INT and AM)

Block 2 [lines 22-29]
Lines 22-23: ACM2 continuation of previous response
Lines 24-29: INT <u>expanded rendition</u> (dyadic sequence between INT and AM)

Relevant to this paper is the way INT renders ACM2's talk to AM in lines 9-20: at lines 9-14, INT delivers quite a close, factual rendition of the host turn, without adding any personal evaluation. The translation seems completed at line 15, where AM produces an acknowledgement token. At lines 16-20, however, INT produces an expansion, adding a coda to his translation. The expansion initiates a dyadic sequence, in which INT interacts with AM exclusively.

Looking at the nature of INT's expansion in more details, it becomes apparent that it mainly consists of a series of evaluative remarks. The first one is produced at line 14 (*e questo è già incoraggiante, ecco*): it provides reassurance and clarifies something that was not explicitly uttered

by ACM2. The same happens at lines 16 (*per cui c'è una progressione, ha già migliorato*) and 19-20 (*quindi anche se il risultato della prossima settimana non sarà bellissimo però si vede la*

progressione che è importante). These expansions are interspersed with AM's signals of acknowledgment and noddings (lines 15, 17 and 18), which show understanding but not necessarily alignment with what is being said.

INT's expansions develop ACM2's utterances by reiterating and reinforcing the positive points about the progress made. By doing so, INT seems to pursue two goals: on the one hand, it reacts to the format of ACM2's talk, which is characterised by a high degree of indirectness (conveyed by the avoidance of a clear yes/no answer to AM's question and by the shift to more factual information regarding the exam format), by making the evaluative element more explicit. On the other hand, it stresses the positive nature of ACM2's contribution, thus making it more acceptable to AM.

Non-verbal behaviour is also crucial to disambiguate the interactional dynamics of this extract: at line 21, during the 1.92s lapse in conversation, INT clearly shifts his gaze and turns his head back to ACMs, thus displaying that the sequence has come to an end. Through this move, INT also opens up a space for ACM2 to take the floor again, while no opportunity for AM to respond is created. This is represented in Figure 1, which captures INT's movement at this point, showing how he detaches his gaze from AM and gradually shifts it towards ACMs.

Figure 1: INT's gaze withdrawal at line 21

In line 22, the second block of the sequence starts: at lines 22-23, ACM2 takes the floor to add a clarification, i.e. the fact that, in case of exam failure, an exam can be taken again without penalty. INT's rendition starts at line 24, and is characterized once again by a series of autonomous remarks which seem to show affiliation with AM. Firstly, the certainty of what was uttered by ACM2 is enhanced by the use of the adverb *sicuramente* (i.e. surely). AM responds to this by rephrasing the gist of INT's utterance about the possibility of resitting the exam (line 26); her intervention asks for confirmation on behalf of INT. The latter confirms AM's statement by means of a repetition enhanced by the adverb *tranquillamente* (i.e. easily), followed by an expansion (*poi li passa*, line 29) which depicts a very positive scenario (i.e. that the child will succeed in his exam once he resits it).

Once again, INT's expansions are performed through the production of autonomous evaluations; these make ACM2's utterances more explicit and seem to promote affiliation with the mother while reassuring her. However, multimodally, INT produces another gaze shift while uttering the expansion at line 29, thus signalling sequence end before AM's explicit response, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2: INT's gaze withdrawal at line 29

Similar phenomena can be observed in extract 2, which is drawn from the medical corpus. The sequence takes place during a paediatric visit with a Chinese mother, who takes her daughter, only few months old, to the primary care centre because the baby has red pimples on her face and body. The participants are the mother (AM), an Italian doctor (ACM1), an Italian nurse (ACM2) and an Italian interpreter (INT). AM has not seen this doctor before; INT works with this primary care centre on a regular basis.

In the previous turns (not transcribed here), AM has reported to INT that she had a high temperature a few days before; nonetheless, she had continued to breastfeed the baby. Similarly to extract 1, the issue at stake is a delicate one, in that the mother is concerned that breastfeeding may have affected the baby's health. In the first lines of the extract, INT is translating AM's turns to the ACMs.

Extract 2

1	INT	ho chiesto ma:: (.) e::h sei andata dal: m:edico ha detto <u>no</u> *I asked but... uh did you see the doctor she said no*
2		perché era di:: lunedì- *because it was...Monday*
3	ACM1	((nods)) =°°( )°°
4	INT	=DI:::: sabato? *it was..Saturday*

5 ACM1 ((nodding)) =°di sabato°
Saturday

6 INT =.hh sono venuta qui:: c'era:: hm (.) la (xxx)? (.)
I came here... there was hm... (xxx)...

7 e gli ha detto- q:uale tipo di: antipiretico pren[de]re.
and she told her what kind of fever reducer to take

8 ACM1 [°(certo?)°]
sure

9 INFT ha preso un antipiretico e gli si è- le si è abbassa:ta.
she took a fever reducer and her..her temperature went down

10 ((ACM2 enters and stands beside the doctor))

11 ACM1 °°si è abbass-°° perché a volte cioè: quando c'è la febbre
went d... because sometimes I mean when there is fever

12 così: (.) nel corso delle prime settimane dopo il parto?
that way during the first weeks after childbirth

13 può esser dovuta proprio, (.) a un problema a volte di inGOlfo
it may be actually due to a problem sometimes of engorgement

14 cioè vi[sto che=]
I mean given that...

15 INT [hm::.]

16 ACM1 =il latte ce n'è t[an]to,
there is so much milk...

17 INT [hm:.]

18 ACM1 .h=

19 INT =yǒushíhòu ne jiùshì::
sometimes I mean

20 shēng háizi bùjiǔ ne (.) jiùshì:: nín fùmǔ fāshāo le shì yīnweì
soon after childbirth I mean (mothers) get fever it's because

21 kěnéng jiùshì gēn nèige (.) nǎi yǒu guānxì=
maybe I mean because well there are problems with milk

22 =jiù shìshūo nǐ kěnéng nàduàn shíjiān (.)
it means that you maybe during that period

23 z- zìjǐ (.) quánshēnde nàge nǎi hěnDUŌde ne (.)
in all of your body have a lot of milk

24 suǒyǐ fāshāo le ne (.)
so you get fever

25 ((NUR moves towards the opposite side of the room and starts arranging the
26 examination table))

27 INT kěnéng méiyǒu shénme:: (.) bìng ne
maybe there is no kind of... disease

28 méiyǒu shénme jíbìng de jiùshì gēn [nàge,]
there is no kind of illness I mean because of...

29 AM [nándào] nǎi zhī::,

even if the baby has only

30		xiǎohái °>chīle yě méiyǒu guānxì (ma)<° *taken milk isn't there any problem?*
31	INT	MÉIyǒu guānxì tā [shuō] ((shakes head)) *there is no problem she says*
32	AM	[méi]yǒu guānxì (de) *isn't there any problem?*
33	INT	=°hm. ((nods)) méiyǒu guānxì ((shakes head))° *there is no problem*
34		(0.4)
35	AM	(wǒ) fāshāo dào sānshíjiǔ dù:: (.) °kuài [sìshí dù°] *I had fever up to thirty-nine degrees..nearly forty*
36	INT	[KĚSHÌ] NÀGE: nàge: kěnéng *but well well maybe*
37		zìjǐ méi shénme bìngdú de méiyǒu shénme bìng ne *you don't have any kind of virus don't have any kind of disease*
38		kěnéng jiùshì yīnwèi nǐ nǎi tàiduō [le ba]= *maybe I mean it's because you have too much milk*
39	ACM1	[((to ACM2)) °puoi pesarlo.°] *you can weigh him*
40	INT	=suǒyǐ fāshāo le *so you got fever*
41	ACM2	°°<tocca andar di là>°° *I need to go in the other room*
42	ACM1	°(lo) porti di là vestito così lo pesi così.° *you take him there with his clothes on like that you weigh him like that*
43		((NUR gets near to MOT and stretches her arm towards the baby))

In lines 10-18, as soon as INT has completed the translation of AM's turn, ACM1 formulates a tentative diagnosis for AM's fever, i.e. breast engorgement. In lines 19-34, INT translates the ACM1's turn into Chinese. The structure of this long sequence is very similar to the one already observed in extract 1.

Initially (lines 19-24) the translation stays very close to the source utterance; then, in line 27, INT expands her turn by adding an evaluative remark ("maybe there is no kind of disease"). This expansion marks the start of a long dyadic sequence between INT and AM, which goes on until line 40. The dyadic sequence can be divided in two parts: lines 27-33 and lines 35-40.

In lines 27-33, INT repeatedly reassure AM, by re-formulating several times her positive assessment ("there is no problem"). Then, in line 33, she turns her gaze away from AM and towards the desk (Figure 3).

Figure 3: INT withdrawing gaze away from AM

The gaze withdrawal displays INT's disengagement from the ongoing sequence. A short pause (line 34) follows INT's gaze shift. This time, contrary to what happens in extract 1, it is AM who reopens the interaction, by explicitly stating her concern ("I had fever up to thirty-nine degrees... almost forty", line 35). INT responds by producing once more a reassuring remark ("maybe you don't have any kind of virus, don't have any kind of disease", line 37) and then by restating the doctor's diagnosis ("maybe I mean it's because you have too much milk […] so you got fever", lines 38 and 40). In lines 39 and 41-43, the sequence is interrupted by ACM1 and ACM2, who take the baby to the other room, in order to be weighed.

4.1.1. Discussion

Extracts 1 and 2 show similarities in the actions performed by the participants. In both cases, INTs expand their turns by adding a series of personal evaluations which make explicit some pieces of information originally left implicit by ACMs (in extract 1, that the child's progress is encouraging and that the exam can be repeated without any penalty; in extract 2, that the mother's fever has no relationship with any kind of 'disease', potentially affecting the baby's health). At first sight, INT's expansions and evaluations may look like reassuring moves, displaying emotional affiliation with AM. Actually, a closer observation of the sequences allows for a different interpretation.

Firstly, INTs' reassuring expansions tend to downgrade the seriousness of AMs' concerns, thus implicitly discarding their viewpoint and reinforcing ACMs' position. Secondly, INTs seem to be eliciting AMs' agreement with the institutional viewpoint, as shown by the fact that they withdraw

their gaze as soon as AMs' agreement seems to be achieved, thus bringing the sequence to an abrupt close. Thirdly, INTs display active engagement, influencing and redirecting sequential development. In sum, they tend to create a unidirectional flow of talk, from the institution to the mother, without leaving any chance for AMs' viewpoint to be conveyed to ACM.

It is also noteworthy that, in both extracts, INTs' gaze withdrawals close the sequence before AMs have had any possibility to reply, and without actually checking for their agreement. This becomes evident in extract 2, where AM reopens the sequence (in line 35), clearly displaying her dissatisfaction with INT's answer and triggering a new expansion of the dyadic sequence, subsequently interrupted by the ACMs. In other words, INT's expansions actually align with the institutional viewpoint and do not provide AM with the opportunity to voice her concerns effectively. On their side, ACM1 and ACM2 do not seem to take part in the ongoing interaction, as it is evident by their lack of monitoring of the conversation, and by the fact that they never sanction INT's behaviour. Finally, AM seems to be constructed as a "non-competent" conversational member, whose viewpoint is not made immediately relevant to the unfolding of the interaction. As a result, no actual empowerment of AM is obtained.

The practices seen in this section may be seen as negative, in that INTs' active participation limits AMs' opportunity to engage in the interaction, ultimately disempowering them. In the next section, we will see how INTs' participation can, instead, bring a positive contribution to the development of the interaction.

4.2 Factual expanded renditions

Extract 3, video-recorded in an Italian school, starts towards the end of a meeting between two Italian teachers (ACM1 and ACM2) and a mother of Indian origins (AM), whose three children attend the same school but different classes. The aim of the encounter is to inform the mother about the children's performance at school and ask her to sign the school report, a compulsory practice in Italian schools.

The Math teacher (ACM1) has just finished reporting on the attitude and performance of the youngest child and is ready to have the school report signed by the mother. The extract starts with ACM1 asking INT to proceed with this: INT and AM start reading the report, INT clarifies a few points for AM while ACM1 engages in a parallel conversation with her colleague, ACM2.

Extract 3

1	ACM1	questa è la parte finale della scheda se vuoi leggere se vuole firmare *this is the final part of the report if you want to read it if she wants to sign it*
2 3 4	INT	instead this is the evaluation they write about him a kind of summarising of what he does and how he behaves and how he is in class (.) [ehm* let'see what they: (wrote)
5	AM	[ok
6	SCHISM 22:59 23:19	((ACM1-ACM2: start a parallel conversation.)) ((INT-AM: INT reads in a low voice the report that she has never seen before (only partially audible due to the background noise). Both INT's and AM's gaze are directed to the report.))
7	AM	scrivere in italiano? *to write in Italian*
8	INT	yes (.) si è scritta in italiano *written in Italian*
9	ACM2	@
10	INT	now I will tell you in English (.) ok?
11	AM	((slight nod, looking down))
12 13 14	INT	˚ok (.) eh:: the teacher said that (.) he's (.) he gets along well (.) with th- the mates in class (.) with his classmates (.) and he has good relationships both with the classmates and with the teachers
15	AM	ok
16 17	INT AM	eh: he knows well the rules of the classrooms and he respects those rules ((nod))
18	INT	and: he he is always interested in what they do
19	AM	((gaze down, facial expression))
20 21 22	INT	and he he does a lot of efforts (.) in order to overcome the difficulties he meets (.) he faces a lot of difficulties because above all beca- because of the language (.) of the problems with the Italian language
23	AM	˚ok
24	INT	that's it (4.28) do you wanna read it by yourself ?
25 26	ACM1 ACM2	[@@ [@@
27	INT	if you don't understand I can help you
28	24:27- 24:39	((INT passes the report to M and they start reading it and translating the same passage word-for-word. Teachers are listening to what is happening in interaction.))

29	SCHISM 24:40 26:39	((ACM1-ACM2: start a parallel conversation.))	((INT-AM: INT helps AM read the report by herself.))
30			INT: I think now you should sign (.) have
31			you signed already (.) qual era la scheda di (.) *what was the report to*
32			ah this I think you should sign (.)
33	INT	dove deve firmare? *where does she have to sign*	
34	ACM1	quassù ((T1 pointing to the point in the report where M has to sign)) *up here*	
35	INT	here	
36		(3.63)	
37	ACM1	va bene per cui abbiamo detto tutto quello che c'era da dire *right so we've said all that had to be said*	

The sequence starts off with ACM1 performing a double request, i.e. that the report is read out to M and consequently signed (line 1). The signature on the part of AM can only follow her acknowledgment and understanding of the information contained in the report itself, hence the crucial role of INT to ensure that the message is conveyed effectively and clearly. Such request is subdivided into two phases by INT: firstly he introduces the document producing an autonomous expansion about its function (lines 2-4). The actual action of reading and translating it is subsequent to this explanation and takes up most of the sequence; signing is only mentioned by INT at lines 30-33, after the first task (i.e. reading) is accomplished. The sequence ends with AM fulfilling the request by signing the document and with ACM drawing the sequence to a close before moving on.

The sequence is constellated with expansions autonomously performed by the interpreter, which show different features with respect to the ones analysed in 4.1. The first expansion is performed at lines 2-4: it concerns the term *scheda* (school report), an official document whose significance and evaluative bearing is deeply rooted in the education system in which it is adopted. It may, however, not be immediately recognisable by someone coming from a different socio-institutional background. The expansion produced by INT seems to work towards anticipating and filling a potential knowledge gap by explicitating the purpose of the artefact at hand. Such clarification shows an attempt on the part of INT to convey meaning more effectively, without leaving room for doubts that may not be voiced by AM; it could thus be seen as a way of empowering the mother through knowledge of a culturally-embedded term. This is in line with a modern conceptualization of interpreters in face-to-face scenarios as interlinguistic and intercultural mediators (Wadensjö 1998). The use of *instead* as a connector to start the utterance at line 2 is also worth highlighting: it

is justified by the fact that immediately before introducing the school report, participants were dealing with another document concerning the subject religion. As a connector, *instead* marks the difference between the document dealt with before and the current one, thus distinguishing between different phases and transitions within the encounter which may not be immediately inferred from the context by AM.

At this point in interaction (line 6), the first of two symmetrical phenomena occurs: a schism, i.e. the splitting of the conversation into two simultaneous dyadic sequences (cfr line 29). At line 6, while INT takes a few moments to skim through the report before translating it, ACM1 and ACM2 engage in a parallel conversation, thus completely disengaging from INT and AM, whose attention is drawn to the artefact itself. AM gazes at the report and leans towards INT, who is reading it. The clear transition from joint attention to the report to the breaking up of the conversational floor is shown by two subsequent screenshots in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Schism in the conversational floor

Re-engagement on the part of ACMs is brought about by AM, at line7: she seems curious about the artefact that INT is inspecting so closely and takes the floor to ask whether the document is actually written in Italian. She clearly addresses INT, who emerges as her main interlocutor. Autonomous interventions on the part of AM are very rare in the dataset, where mothers normally refrain from intervening. AM produces her question in a broken Italian (*scrivere in italiano?*), which seems to attract ACM's attention: at line 7, a single conversational floor is restored, as demonstrated by ACMs' laugh following INT's confirmation at line 8, also produced in Italian (*sì è scritto in italiano*).

While INT translates the report (lines 10-23) a single floor is maintained, although ACMs at times engage in parallel but individual activities (e.g. rearranging sheets). At line 24, INT clearly signals to AM that the sight translation of the report is over (*that's it*): this is followed by a significant lapse

in conversation, lasting more than 4 seconds. At this point in the interaction, AM is expected to respond to INT's turn by (preferably) acknowledging that the task is over and confirming her understanding. Instead of taking the floor, AM does not produce any verbal or non-verbal response: she continues to gaze at the report, while INT gazes at her. In the meantime, ACMs gaze at INT, but do not take the floor.

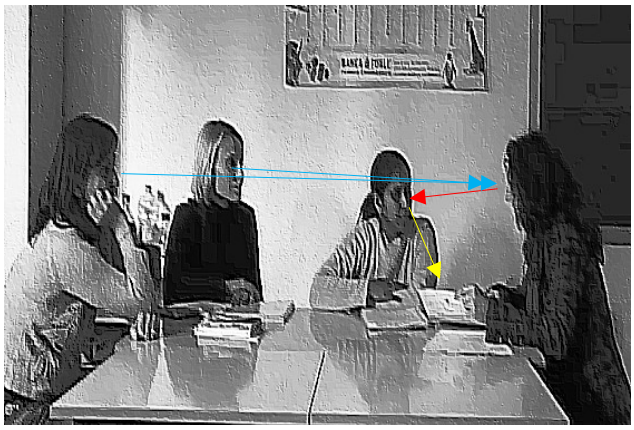

Figure 5: Gaze configuration during the lapse at line 24

At this point, INT self-selects (lines 24 and 27) and produces two expansions, which are aimed at triggering a response from M (*do you wanna read it by yourself*) and offering help (*if you don't understand I can help you*). This offer is accompanied by a gesture through which INT brings the report closer to AM, who then starts reading. This passage clearly shows the coordinating role taken up by INT in triadic exchanges.

During the whole dyadic exchange, ACMs follow what is going on without, nevertheless, engaging directly or suggesting an alternative course of action. As previously in the interaction, while AM and INT read the report, ACMs engage in a parallel conversation, which results in another split of the floor (lines 29-32). A single floor is restored only at line 33, when INT produces one more autonomous expansion. In particular, she asks in Italian where AM should sign (*dove deve firmare*); this is uttered in a higher tone of voice, possibly in the attempt to be noticeable for ACMs. Such interpreter-promoted move calls for a response from ACM1, who stops talking and shows where the signature has to be placed. It is only once AM has signed that ACM1 autonomously takes the floor and explicitly brings the sequence to a close (line 37).

Differently from the extracts analysed in section 4.1, here INT's autonomous expansions provide AM with the opportunity to express herself when she does not produce any explicit response. INT's expansions analysed in this section do not add any personal evaluation to ACMs' turns, neither show any tendency to alter the action's trajectory. Rather, they are aimed to clarify factual matters and to restore a common conversational floor, when it is split in separate lines.

Moreover, these dynamics also show a clear tendency on the part of ACMs to pass the baton of the interaction entirely to INT while engaging in a parallel conversation, thus self-excluding from the participatory framework and avoiding to monitor what is happening. Through the expansions analysed in extract 3, in which multimodal features play an important role, INT seems to trigger responses or participation from one party or the other when they are missing, thus restoring a triadic exchange and encouraging direct engagement from the primary parties (ACM and AM).

Similar practices can be observed in extract 4, taken from the medical data. The sequence takes place during a gynaecological visit with a Chinese woman, who came to the primary care centre to be visited for vaginal discharge. The participants are an Italian gynaecologist (ACM), an Italian interpreter (INT) and the Chinese woman (AM). In the first lines, ACM has just finished the physical examination of AM and is going back to her desk, while AM dresses up. INT sits in front of the doctor's desk, turning her back to the examination table, where AM is still lying (see Figure 6).

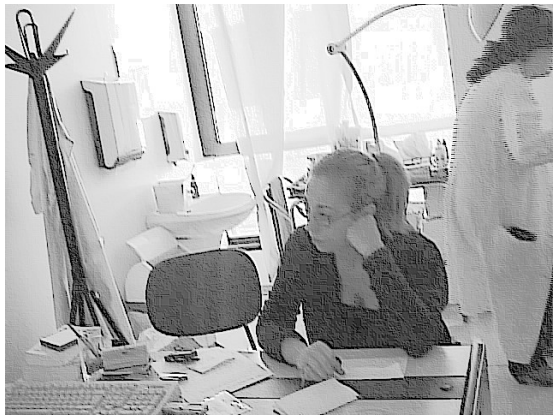

Figure 6: initial spatial and gaze configuration in extract 4

The sequence can be divided in two parts: from line 5 to line 26, ACM reports the results of the physical examination, which INT translates into Chinese. Then, in line 28, AM asks for a clarification, thus initiating a dyadic sequence with INT, which goes on until line 42.

Extract 4

1 ACM okay (1.5) ((goes to the sink)) .hh allora si può rivestire?
so, she can get dressed
2 INT ((slightly turned towards AM)) kěyǐ zài chuānshàng yīfu
you can get dressed
3 AM o
okay

4 (8.0) ((ACM goes back to the desk and sits down))

5 ACM allora i fili della spirale sono ben posizionati e visibili ((starts typing))
so, the IUD's wires are well positioned and visible...

6 INT ((turns slightly towards AM, without looking at her directly))

7 nàge:, (.) huánde nàge xiàn ne
well... the IUD's wires

8 AM [hm

9 INT [hái kěyǐ jiùshì kànde: qíngchǔ ne=
are still, well, clearly visible,

10 =suoyi:, zhege:, de yisi jiushi fa-
so, this means, well, (the IU...)

11 ((turns completely towards AM))

12 h.:m nàge huán nàge méiyǒu dòng ne (.) hm?
well, *that the IUD, well, has not moved. hm?*

13 AM hm

14 ((INT turns back towards the desk))

15 (9.0) ((ACM writes on the computer))

16 ACM ((still typing)) ha un po' di perditine effettivamente
she has a little bit of discharge actually

17 un po' di leucorrea
a bit of leucorrhoea

18 INT hm hm?

19 ACM le faccio fare un tampone vaginale .
I will make her do a vaginal tampon

20 INT <jiùshì::> tā yě jiùshì tándào nǐ yǒu yīdiǎn báidài ne
well, she also, well, says that you have a bit of discharge

21 AM hm

22 INT suǒyǐ jiùshì tā háishi hui jia nǐ qù zuò yīdiǎn jiǎnchá ne
so, well, she will make you do some check

23 AM ((coming back to the desk)) hm

24 INT kānkan nàbiān shìbushì yīnwèi xì-
to check there, whether it's because of bact...

25 nàge:: báidài shìbushì yīnwèi yǒu xìjūn yǐnqǐ ne
well... whether the discharge is caused by the presence of bacteria

26 INT hào ma
okay?

27 (1.0) ((AM sits beside INT))

28 AM nà xiànzài haiyou zài zuò yīcì
so, now I will do it again?

29 INT a? ((turns towards AM and gazes at her)
sorry?

30 AM haiyou zài zuò yīcì nàge báidài jiǎnchá shì ma
I will do the check for the vaginal discharge again, right?

31 INT o nǐ yǐq- yǐqián yě zuòguo le ma
oh, did you do it bef... before?

32 (0.7) ((PAZ points at the envelope on the desk, containing the results of the Pap smear))

33 AM hm:: gāngcái nàge (.) shìbushì zhège
hm... the one (I did) recently? isn't it this one?

34 (0.4) ((INT looks at the envelope))

35 INT o zhège jiù bushì le
oh, it isn't' this one

36 zhège shì lìngwài yīzhòng jiǎnchá (.) ((AM nods))
this is another kind of check

37 nàge shì (.) yùfáng (.) .hh hm:: yùfáng jiùshì zǐ- zǐgōngjǐng áizhèng de (.)
that is... to prevent... hm... to prevent, well, ce... carvical cancer

38 AM o:: ((nods slightly))
oh...

39 INT zhè bushì:: yī jiùshì tóngyīlèide nàge jiǎnchá ne a
this is not... the same, well, the same kind of check

40 AM ((nods))

41 INT zhège shì (.) kān yīxià nàge báidài ne ((AM keeps nodding))
this is... to look a bit at the discharge

42 shìbushì yǒu xìjūn nǎyàngde
whether there is some kind of bacteria

43 AM ((nodding)) °°hm°°

44 (3.0) ((INT and AM look back at ACM; ACM looks at some papers on the desk, then resumes writing at the computer))

45 ACM .hhh allora
so..
.

46 (12.0) ((ACM writes at the computer))

Similarly to extract 3, in the first part of the sequence (lines 5-27), INT translates ACM's turns by expanding them, in order to clarify and make explicit some pieces of information. The first

expansion occurs in lines 7-12: in translating ACM's turn (*allora i fili della spirale sono ben posizionati e visibili*, line 5), INT adds that "this means that the IUD has not moved" (lines 11-12), thus providing AM with the correct interpretation of ACM's words. Moreover, while saying so, INT also turns towards AM and establishes gaze contact with her (Figure 7).

Figure 7: INT establishing eye contact with AM in (lines 7-12)

The spatial disposition of the participants, up to this moment, makes it impossible for INT to keep eye contact with AM and ACM simultaneously. In addition, ACM also starts typing on the computer as soon as she reaches her chair: writing on the computer obliges her to detach her attention from the other two participants and to focus on the screen and keyboard. In other words, the interpreter acts as a "bridge" between the two parties at talk, and is responsible for keeping the (aural and visual) channel open between AM and ACM.

A long pause follows (line 15), in which ACM keeps typing on the computer, without gazing at INT or AM. In line 16, ACM takes the floor and produces a new turn, stating the diagnosis (*ha un po' di perditine effettivamente…un po' di leucorrea*) and prescribing a vaginal tampon (line 19). In lines 20-26, INT once again expands ACM's turn: she does not simply translate the technical term "tampone vaginale" (*vaginal tampon*), but reduces it to the lay term "check" (Chinese *jiǎnchá*, line 22) and then adds some further explanations ("to check there, whether […] the discharge is caused by the presence of bacteria", lines 24-25). At the end of her turn (lines 26), she ascertains that AM has understood.

The second part of the sequence (lines 28-42) stems from a misunderstanding on the part of AM, who thinks that the check prescribed by ACM is a new Pap smear, like the one she has recently made, whose results are in an envelope on the desk. The sequence is initiated by AM, who takes the floor in line 28 to ask for clarification. AM only start the request for clarification as soon as she has

reached the chair and sit besides INT, thus having established direct gaze contact (Figure 8).

Figure 8: INT establishing eye contact in line 28

The clarification is entirely managed by INT, without any intervention by ACM, who, however, is still engaged in writing at the computer and does not seem to pay any attention to the ongoing sequence. At the end of the sequence (line 44), INT looks towards ACM, although not at her face directly; her body position signals disengagement from the previous conversation and availability for a new one (Figure 9). Nevertheless, ACM keeps pursuing the action of typing and does not reopen the conversation.

Figure 9: INT looking at ACM

It must be noted that in extract 4, too, ACM is passing the baton to INT; during the whole interaction, from line 5 on, she never detaches her gaze from the computer, or from some papers on the desk, and never looks at AM or INT (Figure 10).

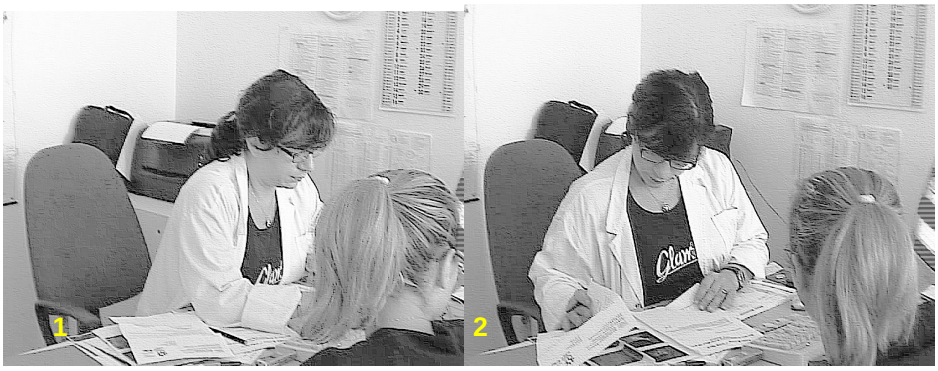

Figure 10: ACM engaging in a parallel activity

In this section, we have shown how interpreters' participation may play a positive role in the interaction and empower AMs, by adding required and necessary information, facilitating understanding and, more broadly, acting as coordinators and intercultural mediators; such a role is achieved both by verbal and non-verbal resources, e.g. by the use of gaze and body orientation, which contribute to maintain a shared conversational floor, or to re-establish it after a schism.

4.3 Discussion

To recap, the extracts analysed above clearly show instances of good and bad practices implemented by three different interpreters. In particular, the moves investigated here are interpreter-initiated expansions: as highlighted in 1.1, various studies have shown the phenomenon of expanded renditions in authentic data. This has empirically demonstrated the untenability of the traditional "conduit" model, according to which interpreters in face-to-face scenarios merely perform language transfer activities. Conversely, authentic data has shown that interpreters' interventions can modify the impact of the action launched by the source utterance, thus leading to a different interactional impact. Very few studies, however, have explored more in depth the nature of such expansions, also in relation to non-verbal cues. The present paper argues that autonomous expansions on the part of interpreters are not negative *per se*, but need to be assessed on the basis of their interactional consequences.

On the one hand, extracts 1 and 2 clearly illustrate the impact that expansions through evaluative talk can have, especially when not accompanied by an equally engaged non-verbal behaviour. The two instances analysed show that what may seem affiliative moves towards AM, actually turn out to be attempts to fast-track agreement from her, without providing her with the opportunity to voice her own feelings. This goes against one of the main tenets of dialogue interpreting as understood by recent interactionist studies, according to which the interpreter should engage in behaviour that

promotes autonomy and personal choice of the individuals involved in the interpreted encounter. In extracts 1 and 2, on the contrary, the opposite effect is achieved: AMs are not empowered, because the apparently reassuring talk produced actually restricts their chances to intervene in the exchange. Gaze shifts at the end of the interpreters' renditions accentuate this aspect, thus providing an extra layer of analysis to disambiguate the import of the practice displayed. This behaviour ultimately promotes a monodirectional flow of information, from ACMs to AMs, but not vice-versa.

In this respect, it is important to point out that the issue at stake here is not whether these moves are performed deliberately or not by INTs. Conversely, the analysis carried out does not consider intentionality when analysing such dynamics, as it is something that belongs in a more intimate, psychological sphere and that cannot be accessed with the tools adopted in this study. Furthermore, this would exceed the scope of the investigation, which is actually to look at the impact of specific actions initiated by the interpreter on the unfolding interaction, regardless of whether these are performed deliberately or not.

On the other hand, extracts 3 and 4 show examples of a different type of expansion, which may be described as more factual and does not seem to influence the action trajectory, but rather aim to clarify (instead of seeking agreement) and resume gaze contact among the parties. The analysis demonstrates that the provision of factual expansions to clarify the import of culture-bound elements can make the action progress through the effective interaction of all the participants. The extra layer of analysis provided by gaze and body orientation also shows how the strategic use of gaze and body position at specific points in interaction can actually design actions so that they improve and empower AMs' participation.

5. Implications for good practices in interpreter-mediated contexts

The type of analysis carried out, which accounts for both verbal and non-verbal behaviour of all the parties-at-talk, is crucial to critically reflect on communicative practices within multicultural, mediated settings. It is useful both in order to raise ACMs' awareness of the impact of their behaviour and to develop concrete, context-specific strategies that can make the training of all participants involved more effective and in line with real-life scenarios.

Such analysis is certainly not exempt from some limitations: its results do not have universal validity, as the dataset used is too little. Findings account for apparently unimportant features in interaction, such as gaze shifts or pauses, and focus exclusively on what is displayed, without attempting to understand what participants' inner perceptions are. These should not, however, be considered downsides, rather strengths of the study: the patterns identified, which combine verbal and non-verbal cues, would probably escape a less fine-grained look at empirical data, and would be impossible to single out without availability of video-recordings. Furthermore, multimodal analysis contributes to disambiguating the impacts of patterns which, at first sight, may seem to serve a different interactional purpose. The method used here imposes a close, sequential look at how the interaction unfolds and provides a solid, scientific basis to develop claims. Such claims are therefore empirically verifiable, and it is possible to replicate the analysis across different settings and interactional situations.

In terms of training, isolating and defining specific attitudes, showing them in context through transcripts and videos and discussing the potential outcomes of different choices can greatly contribute to a general raising awareness process among both interpreters and service providers. This *modus operandi* provides a metalanguage and some tools to investigate how social interaction is constructed by all the participants, not only verbally but also non-verbally, thus refining ACMs' understanding of social dynamics and of the impact their own attitude may exert on communication.

As for interpreters, the empirical analysis of real data can help them realise that their function is actually not restricted to conveying content from one language to another; they also act as communication facilitators and intercultural mediators and any choice they make can affect the interaction. In particular, trainee interpreters can become more aware of the impact of expansions, and learn to handle them with care. Developing sensitivity towards these interactional dynamics can greatly support interpreters in their job, which entails constantly making choices about how to translate specific utterances, coordinating the flow of talk and ensuring active participation.

ACMs can also greatly benefit from these insights: in both scenarios analysed, they accept the dual functions taken up by interpreters, without ever questioning their behaviour or asking for clarification. As a result, even when they see the conversation going astray or a dyadic sequence starting between INT and AM, no action is taken. Instead of continuously monitoring the interaction, they step back and disengage, passing the baton of the interaction completely to INT. This can be seen as a bad practice; a good practice, instead, would be monitoring what happens throughout the interaction, even at times where they are not directly involved in it. Monitoring non-

verbal behaviour, asking for clarification of what happens (if not provided) after dyadic sequences between AMs and INT may eventually contribute to the effectiveness of the service provided and to smooth communication between the parties. Displaying a more open and engaged attitude towards AMs, also non-verbally, could be a strategic move in view of a successful interactional outcome.

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Appendix

Transcription conventions

(1.5)	pause (in seconds and tenths of seconds)	.	descending intonation
(.)	micro-pause (shorter than 0.5 seconds)	,	suspended intonation
?	ascending intonation	-	abrupt interruption of talk
=	latching with previous utterance	TEXT	loud volume
°text°	quiet volume	°°text°°	very quiet volume
<u>text</u>	emphasis	:::	lengthened sound
>text<	faster pace of speech	<text>	slower pace of speech
[	start of overlapping talk	]	end of overlapping talk
(text)	unclear or dubious words	((text))	description of non-verbal activity
( )	unintelligible	xxx	personal name deleted
.h	in-breath		