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Designedly Incomplete Objects as elicitation tools in classroom interaction

Introduction

Engaging students as active contributors in classroom interaction is important for a number of reasons. It promotes classroom participation, with teachers being able to draw on student input as a source for topic generation and development. It encourages students to remain focused on the activities, as they may be called upon to provide an account of the subject matter being discussed. It affords the teacher access to a student’s operational mastery of the target of instruction, and as a consequence, presents opportunities to better guide students towards proficiency where this is deemed necessary. This is embedded within the assumption that student verbal contribution is essential for learning, for example, mastery in a target language.

However, not every contribution is treated as appropriate, or in line with the situated moral order of the classroom (Hazel & Mortensen, 2017; Mortensen & Hazel, 2017). Indeed, teachers may seek to constrain the types of contribution offered at any given stage of the classroom activities and pedagogical focus. Policing students’ talk not only involves a restraining of students’ contributions, but it also entails the eliciting of contributions that are deemed relevant to the business-at-hand (Seedhouse, 2004).

In this chapter, we look at second language classroom interaction and in particular how inscribed objects are used by teachers as tools for eliciting particular contributions from students. More specifically, we look at how participants orient to what we here call designedly incomplete objects as providing a framework for designing upcoming actions. For instance, in cases such as gap-fill
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tasks where in some printed matter a section of text is left intentionally empty, the graphic structure of the layout provides a framework around which the interactionally accomplished activity is organized. This is done by indexing a specific part of the inscribed object as relevant for the activity at hand, most typically through bodily visual displays that act as deictic gestures (C. Goodwin, 2003). Such artifacts, included in hand-outs, or as text in a textbook or as emergent graphic structures on a whiteboard, provide participants with incomplete objects of shared attention.

The study adds to a growing body of interaction research that investigates the ways in which material artifacts are embedded within courses of interaction (Nevile, Haddington, Heinemann, & Rauniomaa, 2014) and the ways in which objects are worked up as components of turn-design (e.g., Day & Wagner, 2014; Keisanen & Rauniomaa, 2012; Mondada, 2007). More specifically, it adds to current work on paper documents, notepads and white boards as not just material artifacts, but as sites for inscription (Day & Mortensen, forthc.; see also papers in Mondada & Svinhufvud, 2016).

In doing so, we build on previous research on objects in social interaction (e.g., Streeck, 1996; Streeck & Kallmeyer, 2001; Nevile, Haddington, Heinemann, & Rauniomaa, 2014), a body of work which has demonstrated how objects are constituted by and constitutive of interaction. Nevile et al (2014) describe objects,

“[…], as either practical accomplishments, emerging as the outcome of processes of interaction (e.g. in craft, cooking, surgery), or as situated resources, somehow involved in and even enabling social interaction for whatever it is participants are doing” (Nevile et al 2014: 44).

In our study, we focus on objects that are drawn on as situated resources, here mobilized to organize contributions by other co-participants in the interaction. We are, however, interested in a particular design feature of this category of objects, which can be either pre-formatted in classroom
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materials, or in structures produced as *practical accomplishment* in situ, an outcome of the processes of pedagogically-focused activities. As such, we deal both with ‘bounded objects’ (Star & Griesemer, 1989), namely objects that can be transported from one event to another (for example, graphic objects included in classroom textbook materials); but also those objects that are produced locally to address a unfolding pedagogical task, and which have no life beyond the event for which they were occasioned.

We describe how specific graphic structures - produced on different types of layout (books, papers and white boards) - are indexed through participants’ verbal and bodily conduct as relevant sites of orientation, which in turn serve as elicitation devices for determining a next relevant action. We note how the objects in question are mobilized in such a way as to elicit particular contributions from the students, whose input results in the ‘completion’ of the structures. This chapter demonstrates how participants display an orientation to the ‘noticeable absence’ or incompleteness of such graphic objects, and argues that members’ orientations to this absence projects an understanding of a desired trajectory of the emergent pedagogical activity.

*‘Incompleteness’ and ‘absence’ as pedagogical tools for elicitation*

Within an Ethnomethodologically-inspired Conversation Analytic (hereafter CA) framework, ‘noticeable absence’ refers to participants’ displayed orientation to something being missing, and is in particular linked to the notion of conditional relevance. In his 1968 paper on conversational openings, Schegloff poses the analytic question: “How can we, in a sociologically meaningful and rigorous way, talk about the ‘absence’ of an item; numerous things are not present at any point in a conversation, yet only some have a relevance that would allow them to be seen as ‘absent”’\(^i\). That is, absence refers to what participants treat as absent – for instance the lack of an answer following a question - thereby orienting to the social norm of the prior action and what it makes conditionally
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relevant to perform in the next sequential slot. In this paper, we will refer to absence in the same way, that is we aim to show how participants show an orientation to some inscribed object as incomplete, ie. there is something absent in it, typically by orienting to writing or suggesting the annotation of graphic material that completes some linguistic or graphic structure.

*Turn construction and turn allocation*

In interaction, turns-at-talk deliver social action, and the ways in which linguistic, prosodic and embodied resources are composed and combined have a long research tradition within interaction studies. In their seminal paper, Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974) propose a ‘machinery’ through which participants in ordinary conversation take turns in an orderly, systematic way. They describe two interactional components. First, turn constructional units, TCUs, which are primarily linguistic but also prosodic, pragmatic and embodied units whose completion provides a position in which transition to another speaker may be relevant. Second, a turn-allocation component that describes how transition to another speaker is organized – the current speaker selects the next speaker or a next-speaker self-selects. Once a speaker launches a turn-at-talk, or more specifically initiates a proper turn constructional unit (Sacks et al., 1974; , see also Schegloff, 1996), its beginning provides clues as to what type of (linguistic) TCU is emerging and thus an idea of what it might take to bring it to a possible completion; a position in which turn-transition may be relevant. In this way, once a TCU has been initiated, co-participants are able to project roughly what it takes to bring it to a possible completion. This projection provides co-participants a rich resource for preparing and designing a possible next-turn. For instance, a next-speaker may start on the next-beat following the possible completion of the ongoing TCU or slightly before (Jefferson, 1984), engage in a collaborative completion (G. Lerner, 2004) by providing the final (possible) linguistic elements, typically word or words, and so on and so forth.
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Of particular relevance to the aim of this paper is the observation that speakers may indicate that abandoning a TCU prior to a possible completion is not a position in which turn-allocation is relevant, for instance during word searches (M. H. Goodwin & Goodwin, 1986). In a similar fashion, a speaker may abandon the incrementally emergent TCU prior to its possible completion and mark that turn-allocation is relevant. Koshik (2002) has referred to this as ‘designedly incomplete utterances’, and our use of ‘designedly incomplete objects’ builds on her study. Koshik describes a practice through which teachers enlist students’ participation in the completion of an initiated language form by formatting it in such a way that it is recognizable as incomplete and requiring the student to continue where the teacher left off. The suspension of the language form – for example a sentence or noun phrase – mid-production, coupled with particular formatting features such as flat or raised intonation and a stretching of the final vocalization, allows this suspension to be recognizable as a particular social action, one that makes a complementary action on the part of the student conditionally relevant. Here, what is treated as a relevant next action is that the student identifies what it takes to complete the suspended language form, and produces this as an increment to the teacher turn.

For example, in the following extract from a beginner level Danish class, the teacher (LEC) is eliciting the Danish word *i går* ‘yesterday’ within a plenum discussion of past tense verb forms.

Extract 1: CALPIU-DK-M1-e5-C-00-CI; Teacher: LEC; students: Stu1 and Stu2

25 → LEC: if it wasn't i morgen if it was probably iyeh i::,

tomorrow ye::,

26 → STU2: i gør? ((mispronounces vowel))

27 LEC: i går?

yesterday?

28 STU2: i går?
In line 25, we see how the teacher produces a turn that elicits from the students a contrastive Danish term for *i morgen* ‘tomorrow’, targeting the term for yesterday, or in Danish *i går*. In the elicitation format that he uses here, he introduces *i morgen*, framed here as the term they were *not* looking for, then subsequently introduces the first part of the contrastive term (which would be *i går*), albeit suspended mid-structure. The suspension is further formatted with ‘continuing’, flat intonation, and is stretched, as has been described by Koshik as formatting components identified elsewhere in her data in these sequential positions. In line 26, Student 2 produces a try-marked candidate in the form of *i gør*, approximating the correct term, albeit using the vowel sound for ‘ø’ rather than ‘å’. The
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teacher responds by acknowledging the answer, while performing an embedded correction in line 27 (Jefferson, 1987) of the pronunciation of the term. We see the student repeating the word with correct pronunciation in the next position. Having secured the correct term, the teacher moves to have the students incorporate it into a full sentence, with the use of a verb in its past tense form.

The example illustrates how participants orient to a linguistic structure not being complete at the point of what is being treated as a transition-relevant place (TRP), and that in the slot immediately following the suspension of the utterance it is for the co-participant, here the student, to take up the baton and bring the formulation to completion. It must be stressed however, that it is not the structure on its own that invites an additional increment on the part of the student. Even the most cursory look at instances of natural talk-in-interaction shows how utterances are often not brought to full grammatical completion, in the traditional sense of constituting fully formed linguistic structures (see e.g., Chevalier, 2008; Drake, 2015). Yet when this occurs, there appears to be no onus on co-participants to complete the structure on the behalf of the speaker. Rather, in these classroom data, it is in how co-participants format the turn-final item that constitutes the place of suspension and subsequently treat the act of completion as a relevant next action that evidences a particular elicitation-response turn organization. Of particular interest to us in this paper is the graphic incompleteness of the structure as indexed by participants’ verbal and bodily displays of orientation through what Mondada (2014) has referred to as a complex multimodal Gestalt.

In producing action formats such as these, both parties treat the space beyond where the utterance is discontinued not simply as empty, but as constituting some form of absence that requires resolution. Embedded within a larger pedagogical activity involving teacher- and student-participants, the sequences are teacher-initiated and appear to follow similar principles to the known-information question or display question formats found in classroom discourse (Banbrook & Skehan, 1990;
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Mehan, 1979) where we see teachers typically asking questions to which they already know the answer. With the teacher producing the first component of the linguistic structure, participants orient to the absence of relevant structural materials, and the utterance is treated as incomplete, or rather as to be completed by the student(s). Consequently, this affords teachers one elicitation device for encouraging student participants to contribute actively to the production of some linguistic structure, be it anything from a single word (or part of word) to a full sentence.

Our current study builds on observations of these elicitation devices in other types of action sequences where we see a similar orientation to how some structure is brought to completion during pedagogical activities. Here, however, our interest is in how other types of classroom materials, namely graphic structures, are treated as being incomplete and in need of additional input from students to bring them to their full realization. In investigating interaction within Second Language (L2) classroom settings, a number of objects appeared to be produced within similar sequential environments, as devices that encouraged students to contribute materials in order to complete the structure (Mortensen & Hazel, 2011). Although similar incomplete objects in other pedagogical settings can include such inscriptions as graphs and other pictorial materials that require completion, the L2 classroom setting of the current study foregrounds an orientation to the completion of target language associated structures such as syntactical units or noun phrases. We turn to these below.

**Data and method**

The data for the study are pooled from a number of data sets of video-recorded adult L2 classroom interaction in Luxembourg and Denmark, with English and Danish both featured as target language and a variety of L1 among the participants. The sub-set of Danish L2 classrooms data include recordings from four proficiency levels, ranging from beginner to advanced classes, and included 3
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teachers. The Luxembourg sub-set concerns beginner classes in English. For both data sets, successive lessons were recorded over a longer period of time. The data included in the current chapter is taken from the recordings of a beginner module 1 (equivalent to the Breakthrough (A1) level of The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages).

The recordings were produced using 3 stationary cameras, in order to cover as large an area as possible in the classroom. A collection of illustrative extracts was transcribed in CLAN\textsuperscript{ii}, a tool which allows for close integration between transcript and digital media files. This in turn enables researchers to remain sensitive to both the sequential organization of the unfolding talk as well as the embodied features that co-constitute the interaction (MacWhinney and Wagner, 2010).

Transcripts of the vocal conduct have been produced using transcription conventions modified from those common in Conversation Analytic research (hereafter CA; Sacks et al., 1974) and attributed to Gail Jefferson (see e.g., 2004). Where visual features judged relevant to the activities are included in the analysis, supplementary video-stills are provided. As such, readers will be in some, albeit limited, position to reference the visual features described, and to judge the strength of the claims made.

Analyses

*Designedly Incomplete Objects*

Koshik (2002) shows how written sentences are read aloud by teachers, but that during this activity a sentence, phrase or word is suspended in a non TCU-completion position with ‘continuing’ intonation as a designedly incomplete turn-at-talk, which is treated as a prompt for the student to self-correct a mistake in the written sentence. As such, it is not the written text itself that functions as an elicitation device, but rather the way in which what is missing from the written sentence is made publicly salient in and through the formatting of the turn-at-talk. Elsewhere, Chazal (2015)
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describes how inscriptions on pedagogical artifacts such as chalk-boards and PowerPoint presentations are mobilized as resources through which to manage students’ second turn responses in language classrooms. In her data from L2 French classrooms, she demonstrates how self-corrections are elicited from students, where teachers suspend the writing up of a student’s response on the chalk-board or PowerPoint presentation, and orient to the missing component through embodied displays such as deictic gestures.

In the same way we will show that it is not only the graphic layout or physical placement of some visible text or graphic structures that marks something as ‘incomplete’. However, through participants’ public orientations to vacant space itself in a particular visuospatial relation to the structure, they index this space as constituting an absence, and consequently treat the graphic structure as requiring further material to bring it to its full realization. The objects in question are manifold, can be pre-fabricated or produced as emergent structures, and can be found contained in and on such regular classroom materials as textbooks, hand-outs and the classroom black- or whiteboards. In some instantiations, students appear to identify from the outset what the projected next actions are from the layout of the materials, while in others this is done through how a teacher constitutes the incompleteness through various embodied resources and drawing on vocal, gestural, and postural resources, as well as material resources at hand.

We will discuss this with the help of a number of extracts from our L2 classroom data. In what follows, a variety of inscribed objects are brought to bear on the classroom business-at-hand, and students demonstrate an orientation to these as elicitation devices relating to the completion of some element of the publicly available graphic structure.

*Identifying tasks in the materials*
Designedly incomplete objects

In the first fragment from the Luxembourg data set, we see how the teacher projects a new activity by distributing a hand-out to each of the students (lines 16-17), which has the header “TALKING ABOUT HOLIDAYS” (Fig. 2a). At this point, the students are filing their papers and thereby closing down the prior activity. Once they receive the hand-out, we see the students orienting to them as relevant for the upcoming activity as they arrange them within their visual fields.

Extract 2

15 TEA: that's enough.
16 /(#1.6) /(#3.1)
  /TEA passes handout to AND with right hand
     /TEA passes handout to CAM and SAB with both hands
     /AND holds handout in front of him and looks at it
   #Fig. 2
17 CAM: /thank ↑you
     /CAM and SAB receive the handout
18 /(#10.0) /(#1.0)
  /CAM places the handout on the desk, and rearranges her papers
  /SAB holds the handout in llf until she has rearranged her textbook
  /AND continues to hold handout in front of him
     /SAB places the handout on the desk in reading position
19 TEA: okay /↑holida:ys:.
     /SAB positions pen in writing hold at the handout
20 it's a very good subject.
21 /(#2.2) /(#2.2) /(#1.0)
Designedly incomplete objects

/TEA monitors the three students as they prepare their papers
/AND folds textbook away, places handout on desk in writing position
/CAM places handout on desk in writing position
/AND taps pen and places it in writing hold at the handout

22 TEA: “yeah”
23 and the instruction it says, (0.2)
24 /a- a friend has <just come back from> holiday.
/CAM places pen in writing hold at the handout
25 (1.4)
26 TEA: he has just (0.3) returned from his holiday.
27 (2.7)
28 TEA: and you ask him some questions.
29 (0.5)

Already during the teacher’s re-positioning of his chair, Sabine rearranges her surrounding objects – textbook, hand-out and pen, so that she ends up with the hand-out in front of her with the pen in a ready-to-write position (see line 18). A moment later, the teacher marks the beginning of a new activity with a boundary marker, ‘okay’, and verbally announces the upcoming pedagogical activity with ‘holidays’ (line 19) and an assessment of the topic, ‘it’s a very good subject’ (line 20).
Following this, Camilla readjusts her position on the chair, puts the papers she was sorting through aside and moves the pen from her left to her right writing hand (line 21). To her left in turn completion position, André closes the textbook, puts it aside and grabs a pen with his right hand. All three students end up with the hand-outs placed flat on the table in front of them, all gazing at the hand-out and with pens in their writing hands (Fig. 2b), either close to or touching the document, that is they orient to writing as relevant to the upcoming activity, as the teacher is announcing the topic of the upcoming activity.

If we look at what is actually printed on the hand-out we see the title of the task written in capital letters on the top of the page, and two lines of instructions. Although the instructions provide the students with a clue about the emerging activity, the hand-out could be used in many other ways and therefore requires that the teacher make explicit what the task is. Below the instruction is a set of word combinations on the left side of the paper, and an empty line to the right of each, with a question mark at the end of the line (as represented in Fig. 2.1).

TALKING ABOUT HOLIDAYS

Your friend has just come back from holiday. You ask him about it.

Write your questions and then answer them for your holidays.

1. where | go
   where did you go?

2. XXXX | XX
   ____________________________________________?

Fig 2.1 Schematic representation of hand-out task
Designedly incomplete objects

The line which is marked on the far left with ‘1’ provides an example – on the left it says ‘where go’ and on the right ‘where did you go?’ . The text thereby provides an example for how the two items fit together and provides a framework for the students’ upcoming task – to turn the key words on the left into full ‘questions’ on the lines to the right. This might be further indicated by the handwritten font on the right side of the paper suggesting that students should write something here and, consequently, on the ‘empty’ lines below. Note that the vertical line between ‘where’ and ‘go’ on the left might suggest that these two elements are not syntactically arranged, but relevant components to be included in the pedagogical task. Indeed, the task is made explicit by the teacher as he reads aloud the first sentence of the instruction (line 24) and reformulates the second sentence (line 28), but only at the end of the extract, and therefore only after the students have ended up in a configuration in which they all orient to the paper in front of them with pens at the ready.

It may thus be argued that the graphic layout of the hand-out – and, indeed, the very distribution of it – is immediately recognizable as indexing a certain kind of pedagogical task – a task that consists of the students producing inscriptions or completing graphics on what is marked as incomplete, and therefore to-be-filled-out in the area of the horizontal lines on the right side of the document. The printed matter could be said to constitute a kind of puzzle, the different components of which – the word sets, the underline, the question mark, the different fonts and the two instructions lines - provide cues for what the students are projected to do with the artifact. We see in this case, that their analysis of the printed matter leads the students each to orient to filling in the space between the lines as being the appropriate next action before the task is both indexed and explained by the teacher. Furthermore, the task initiation is oriented to as contingent on the classroom interactional organization. It is as the teacher displays a readying of himself to start the activity that all three students take up writing positions.
Designedly incomplete objects

**Textbook gapfill tasks**

Classroom interactional organization is similarly at stake in the next extract, this time with another pre-produced artifact: a classroom textbook. Hand-outs such as the one featured in the previous extract are often produced in-house by the language school or by the teachers themselves, and are often designed for the particular composition of the classroom, i.e. the adjudged needs of the specific classroom students, and the activities in which the artifact may possibly be used by the participants. The language teaching textbook on the other hand is commonly produced by publishers unconnected with the teaching institution by (supposedly) drawing on more general ideas and theories on pedagogy and (language) learning. Here, teachers are given some structure to the pedagogical procedures, but are also constrained by the included materials, and must activate the different sections of the textbook as class-internal tasks. One type of task, the *gap-fill* or *fill-in-the-blanks* category of task design, leaves sections of text blank, and task engagement involves students analyzing the surrounding text with a view to adding appropriate linguistic material to the empty space to render the text complete.

In the beginning of the next extract, the teacher projects and initiates a new activity (line 1).

**Extract 3**

```
3a
1       TEA: "okay" (.) good,
2       /(11.0) /TEA rises, takes the textbook in his left hand and holds his right hand in a horizontal position
3       TEA: /remember. /(1.0) be very careful
```

\[ \text{Complete the questions and short answers with } \textit{do, does, and don't.} \]
\[ \text{you like sushi?} \quad \text{your mother work?} \]
\[ \text{No, I } \underline{\text{_____}}. \quad \text{Yes, she } \underline{\text{_____}}. \]
\[ \text{What food } \underline{\text{_____}} \text{ you like?} \quad \text{Where } \underline{\text{_____}} \text{ she work?} \]

\[ \text{\textit{p.124 Grammar Bank 2B}}. \text{ Read the rules and do the exercises.} \]
Designedly incomplete objects

/TEA holds up textbook page, facing front at an incline towards him
/SAB and CAM gaze towards TEA

4 /have a look at /question cee here.
/SAB gazes at textbook, moves it to the left. Moves pen towards top of the page
/TEA points to ‘c’(Fig 3a)

5 /(4.5)
/TEA scratches his nose, holds book towards ss, retracts to earlier position
/CAM gazes at her textbook, moves book and writes on the top of the page

6 TEA:  "kay" (0.7) eh (0.2) /do:? (0.5) /does, (0.3) and /don’t.
/TEA points to ‘do’; see #Fig. 3a
/AND moves pen to the top of the page
/TEA points to ‘does’, looks up at ss
/TEA points to ‘don’t’
/TEA looks to SAB

7 /(1.0)
/TEA raises and lowers the book

8 TEA:  "kay"

9 TEA:  the first one Sabine is a /#<question>.
/TEA points to ‘c’
#fig 3b
Designedly incomplete objects

10  (0.6)
11  TEA:  #what's the answer.
    #Fig. 3c
12  (0.2)
13  SAB:  iyes.
14  (0.8)
15  SAB:  don't you like sush[i,
16  CAM:                     [no:.
17  (2.7)
18  TEA:  it's a question.
19  (1.8)
20  AND:  do (. ) you like (0.2) # sushi.
    #fig. 3d
21  (. )
22  TEA:  /# do you [like    sushi,]
    /TEA makes gestural beats
    #Fig. 3e
23  SAB:                     [°do you like su]shi,°
24  (0.4)
During the pause in line 2, the teacher puts down his pen on the table in front of him after having signed the students’ attendance lists, takes hold of the textbook, stands up straight and holds the textbook in front of his torso with the task-relevant page facing towards the students. During these
Designedly incomplete objects

stages, the teacher remains mobile, taking recurrent steps back and forward (line 2), and rocking side to side (lines 3-5 & 7-9). During this, his right hand is lifted into a horizontal position, which appears to be the preparation phase of some kind of hand gesture (Kendon, 2004; Streeck, 2009: 196ff.). At this point, the students are sorting their papers from the previous activity, clearly oriented to the closing of the prior activity. As Sabine puts her attendance document in her folder, the teacher says ‘remember’ (line 3), which here works as an attention-getting device, a summons that attracts the gaze of Sabine and Camilla. He then points at the relevant section on the top of the page while prefacing the upcoming activity with a ‘be very careful’ (line 3). Sabine turns the gaze to the textbook on the table in front of her, moves the book slightly to the left so that the relevant page is in front of her, and moves the pen to the top of the page. Only then does the teacher locate the activity in the textbook with a softly produced ‘have a look at question c’ (line 3). He then pauses and scratches his nose. The pause is taken by the students as getting ready for the upcoming activity and we see how Camilla slides the textbook in front of her, moves her pen in a ready-to-write position and makes an annotation on the top of the page.

The teacher then highlights the pedagogical focus (the use of do, does and don’t) (Fig. 3a). As he does so André briefly gazes towards the teacher’s textbook and moves his own pen to the top of the page on the textbook in front of him. At this stage, all three students are now sitting with their pens in a ready-to-write position and the open textbook in front of them, thereby displaying an orientation to writing as relevant to the emerging pedagogical activity. However, the teacher does not say that the activity is about making sentences with the highlighted words, that is he relies on the students being able to recognize the graphic layout of the activity as a gap-fill exercise.

During the 1-second pause in line 7, TEA gazes at Sabine and raises and lowers the book slightly, thereby re-presenting the relevant page to her, with his index finger in a precision grip marking the
relevant section of the activity in question. He builds on this with ‘the first one Sabine is a question’ (line 9), thereby selecting Sabine as the next-speaker, while keeping his finger on the first line. After a pause, he produces a question that works as an elicitation for Sabine – to produce an answer to what the teacher has identified as ‘the first question’. Sabine takes this as filling in the gap for the first sentence, and her answer correctly suggests one of the graphically highlighted words as fitting the demarcated gap in the text and producing a grammatically correct sentence. However, she immediately receives a negative evaluation from Camilla in line 16. In classroom interaction, it is common to find some evaluative TEA response at this position. However, here he withholding any immediate feedback, but after a lengthy pause, he provides a prompt (‘it’s a question’, line 18), thereby building on Camilla’s negative evaluation that the question formulated by Sabine was not the one he was after. After another pause, André self-selects and stresses the word ‘do’ (line 20) and brings the sentence to completion. In a transition-relevance place, the teacher releases the grip of the pointing gesture (fig. 3e) and repeats André’s answer while providing gestural beats that correspond to the syntactic construction of the sentence. Note that Sabine repeats André’s answer in overlap with the teacher, but after the teacher has produced the linguistic element in focus, do. In this way, the class works up the proper way of completing the task – a way that, as we have seen, extents the boundary of what’s linguistically correct. Indeed, although several answers might be deemed as linguistically correct, including Sabine’s answer in line 15, here it’s the task progression in and around the graphic structures including the highlighted focus elements that work as resources for what is treated as a proper answer.

Next, the teacher points to the subsequent sentence in the textbook, gazes at Camilla thus selecting her as next-speaker. His verbal turn is constructed through making the link to the previous sentence (‘the answer’), a clue as to the linguistic format (‘negative’) and reading aloud the beginning of the sentence as a designedly incomplete utterance. Here, Camilla provides a next turn by inserting the
Designedly incomplete objects

relevant ‘don’t’ in the blank position, displaying an understanding of herself being the next to-be selected student to respond to the next teacher prompt, following a round robin organization (see Mortensen & Hazel, 2011). Again, as the teacher confirms the answer, he releases the gesture and makes a series of beat gestures to match each syntactic component of the turn. In this way, pointing to a specific part of the page works as an elicitation device but leaves it to the students to work out a relevant way of responding to the elicitation. That is, the teacher relies on the graphic layout of the page and the sentences with clearly marked blanks for the students to provide pedagogically relevant turns.

Extract 3, contd.

32 (2.7)

33 TEA: °okay° and andré a second question.

34 (0.3)

35 TEA: /what food,

/TEA beating gesture with palm up -->

36 #(1.8)

3h #Fig. 3h

37 AND: does you like;

38 /(1.0)
Designedly incomplete objects

/TEA retracts gesture and moves hand to hip, negative face mimic

39  AND:  "no."
40          (0.9)
41  AND:  hhh[h
42  SAB:    [Hh
43  TEA:  >DOES< you;
44  SAB:  "hu huuu"
45          (0.3)
46  SAB:  what food [do you like?]
47  AND:  [((what food) ]
48  AND:  do you like;
49  TEA:  what food (0.3) <do(h) yo(h)u like;>
50          (.)
51  TEA:  okay,
52          (0.2)
53  TEA:  good.

The announcement of the ‘second question’ is done in a similar way as in line 28. The initial part of the written sentence “what food ___ you like?” is read aloud as a designedly incomplete utterance, ‘what food’ (line 35) with a continuing intonation that leaves the selected speaker André to complete the sentence after ‘food’. The vocal production of the designedly incomplete utterance is given an additional formatting component here, with the absent material made ‘visible’ through the teacher’s extended arm held in a clearly suspended gesture, see fig. 3h (Cibulka, 2016) – a position that is only released upon completion of the second pair part by André. This format not only relies
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on students being able to relate text and talk, but also on the two prior written sentences providing a framework for how to respond to the teacher’s elicitations.

In sum, we observe how the orientation to incompleteness is also witnessable in the teacher’s visual conduct. Whereas he is prone to be physically quite mobile during the opening stage of the activity and during the elicitations, he suspends this movement as part of each elicitation; that is, in a sequential position in which a second pair-part of a student is relevant and expectable. In this way, what is graphically marked as incomplete and to-be-filled-out in the textbook is enacted by the teacher through the suspended movement of his torso, gestures taking on a holding position, deictic hand gestures to the ‘blanks’ on the page, and by reading aloud the parts of the written sentences that lead up to the suspended constructions and which mark them as designedly incomplete linguistic structures. Once he receives a satisfactory response from a student, this suspended hold is released, and we see him revert to more dynamic bodily movement as he transitions to the next step in the task.

Emergent structures

The designedly incomplete objects used in the first two analyses concern pre-manufactured artifacts that have been brought into the class by the teacher, and which form some of the many graphic and material objects used by teachers as pedagogical resources through which to build classroom activities. In the following two sections, we turn to designedly incomplete objects produced in situ, here two different structures produced on a whiteboard (Pitsch, 2007).

At the start of the next sequence, we observe how the students each have in front of them a copy of a printed hand-out, one which contains a number of pictures set out in a grid (Fig. 4e). Each document is aligned in front of the student in a similar orientation, albeit with Camilla holding hers in her hands (in a position that projects her viewing of it), André who has positioned his hands
across the bottom of the page, with his upper body alignment in line with the document, while Sabine’s is lying on her desk in front of her. At this stage, it has not as yet been made clear what the function is of the hand-out, but the students do already project in their postural orientations that it will be a relevant artifact for an upcoming stage in the classroom activities.

Extract 4

1 TEA: ‘kay remember /it's a student,

/TEA writes ‘a student to’ -->

2 (2.5)/

----*/

3 TEA: from the /ve:rb, (.) #↑to:,

/TEA turns towards ss

#Fig. 4a

4 #(4.8)

5 TEA: yeah- (.) /Andre (.) to,

/TEA inviting gesture

6 (1.0)

7 CAM: *stju:dy,*
Designedly incomplete objects

8 (0.2)
9 CAM: "non"
10 /(1.2) /(0.8)------------------------
   /TEA turns to ss and leans towards Camilla
   /TEA cups right hand to right ear
11 TEA: "Camilla (.) I didn't hear,"
12 (0.2)
13 CAM: to student;
14 /(1.1)
   /TEA turns to whiteboard
   /starts writing 'stud'
15 CAM: "to #student;"
   #Fig. 4c
16 TEA: to:
17 (1.4)
18 AND: study;
19 (0.2)
20 TEA: #study::;

#Fig. 4c

#Fig. 4d
With the students displaying attentional orientation to the hand-out, the teacher turns to the whiteboard, picks up a marker pen, and as he starts writing ‘a student to’ on the left side of the board, he prompts the students to ‘remember’ that it is ‘a student’ (line 1), with ‘a student’ produced in a markedly slower velocity than the preceding imperative prompt (Mortensen, 2013). We note also that he places increased stress on the indefinite article ‘a’ and following the subsequent noun ‘student’ that he produces a pause.

At this point it could be projected that this is not the start of a full sentence (‘a student walks into a bar’), but that he is to introduce some contrastive form, along the lines of a formulation such as ‘remember it is a student, but an assistant’ or ‘remember it is a student, and many students’ (compare G. H. Lerner, 1991). This is further reinforced by the visual gap on the board, that he marks out between “a student” and “to”, which could be a preposition (to the bar), an indefinite marker (to order a drink), or even an adverb (he pulled the door to). Whereas its use as preposition within the inscription on the board would be possible, inviting a student for example to consider
what could fit in the gap between ‘a student’ and ‘to’ (“a student opted to continue her studies elsewhere”, “a student sought to overturn his low grades”), this would not however align with the accompanying contrastive formulation produced by the teacher.

Once written on the board, the teacher torques his body, rotating his upper torso towards the students while keeping his lower body oriented towards the board. Drawing on Schegloff’s (1998) observations regarding this twisted body configuration, we may surmise that this configuration indicates that the board is being displayed as the primary orientation, with addressing the students the secondary orientation, acting to coordinate a link between them and what is inscribed on the whiteboard. At this point, he also produces a verbal indication of what the compound construction projects: “from the verb, (.) to:,” (line 3), with ‘verb’ produced with slight stress, elongated and with rising intonation. He then verbalizes the written inscription “to”, elongated and with flat intonation. As he does so, he turns towards the students, and brings his left hand to immediately below where the word has been written (Fig 4a), upon which he moves it to the space on the board immediately to the right of the word (Fig. 4b), the space where the infinitive form of a verb would normally be written.

At the same time as suspending the progression of the phrase (which would arguably be “from the verb to study”) he produces a full hand deictic gesture to the empty space, and the absence of the infinitive form on the board (fig 4a and 4b). At this point, all three of the students have now focused their gaze on the board, and André has also physically disengaged himself away from the document in front, leaning back in his chair while attending to the board work (not shown in transcript). In Koshik’s (2002) research, the slot following the suspension of the turn, marked by a lengthening of the final word(s), is oriented to as requiring material from the co-participant to complete the phrase. We appear to see something similar here. With the students’ lack of uptake here, the teacher
pursues a response, thereby treating the absence of 2\textsuperscript{nd} pair part from the students as accountable. Keeping his hand positioned in the same area and the body torqued, he produces a slight lean in the direction of the students, and when Sabine produces a facial gesture appearing to suggest her inability to answer, the teacher produces a smile, and reproduces the prompt. This time, however, it is accompanied by an other-selecting of André as next speaker, formatted with what can be seen as gestural encouragement (line 5)\textsuperscript{iii}. The teacher then starts rotating his upper torso back to the board, this time bringing the marker pen back into play by moving it toward the empty space indicated previously. Camilla then offers a candidate completion to the verb form, the \textit{sotto voce} formatted ‘\textit{stjudy}’ (line 7). The teacher suspends the trajectory of the writing hand being brought to the board, and rotates again toward Camilla, eliciting a second try from her by cupping his hand behind his ear (Mortensen, 2016) and a verbal repair initiation that marks the trouble as related to hearing the prior turn. Here she opts for ‘\textit{to student}’ (line 13). In response, the teacher moves the pen toward the board and starts writing “study” as he re-produces the flat elongated form ‘\textit{to:}’ (compare Seedhouse, 1997). Finally, André produces the correct form (line 18), and this is accepted by the teacher in an evaluative third turn position. At this point, we see that the three students all redirect their gaze away from the board and back to the paper hand-out in front of them.

In some artifacts and graphic structures used in the examples above, there are ready-made inscribed elements that, incrementally, can be brought to bear on the emergent practice of the classroom interaction (e.g. in the textbook example, and the hand-out example). And as we saw in this example, there are other graphic structures that are created \textit{in situ} as part of the unfolding task.

\textit{Diagrammatic objects}

Although up to now all extracts have involved textual artifacts, these are not the only types of visual structures used by teachers in our data. They can also include such diagrammatic objects as grids,
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family trees, and other types of visually organized representation, each of which can then act as a blueprint for an emerging graphic to be co-constructed between the participants. In these instances, an incomplete graphic generated by the teacher may act to prompt students to contribute to its development and completion.

The following sequence concerns a vocabulary exercise designed as an activity to review lexical items relating to category ‘family members’. In it, the teacher develops the graphic depicting a family tree on the whiteboard, and students take turns adding the lexical items to the emerging graphic (see also Mortensen & Hazel, 2011).

Extract 5: Lux-pl090610

The TEACHER draws a stick-figure on the whiteboard, writes TEA’s name under it (#Fig 5a), turns to the students

01 TEA: it’s /me

/TEA points to stick-figure

02 /(5.1) /TEA turns to board and adds another 2 stick-people, female and male to the graphic

03 TEA: sabine who is (. ) /that

/TEA points to the male of the stick figures

04 SAB: /°him° /TEA raises hand and points to andré, then returns it to desk

05 /(5.3) /TEA raises finger again, indicating andré and mouthing "him"

06 TEA: that’s /me, (0.5) who’s /#that;

/TEA points to lower figure

/TEA points to upper figure
At the start of the sequence, the teacher draws a stick-figure in the center of the whiteboard, and writes his name beneath it. He then turns to the students and tells them ‘it’s me’ (line 01), making a brief pointing gesture to the pictograph. He subsequently returns to the board and draws a three-part zigzagging line above the figure, adding another stick-figure at its end, this time female, with the figure positioned directly above the first. Another horizontal line of an equivalent length is then added off in the opposite direction, where a male stick-figure is drawn.

At this point, the teacher points to the second male figure, and prompts Sabine to identify who it is (line 03). Sabine responds with a *sotto voce* ‘him’, producing a deictic gesture in the direction of André. The teacher looks back towards the board, and then returns his gaze to Sabine, who repeats the gesture towards André, and can be seen mouthing ‘him’ (line 05). It seems apparent from this that Sabine has not yet been able to identify the graphic as constituting the beginnings of a family
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tree. Rather, she has read the pictograph as a representation of the class, perhaps depicting its layout. The teacher has a second attempt, this time linking the initial figure representing himself to the target figure, ‘that's me, who's that?’ (line 06) and picking out the figures again with two deictic hand gestures. Sabine in turn repeats her deictic gesture to André. Unsuccessful, the teacher announces that they will restart the task, and he redraws the graph lower down on the board, this time adding the phrase ‘My family’ towards the top.

Extract 5: Lux-pl090610 continued

09 (11.8)
10 TEA: /remember this is my family uh?
       /TEA writes 'my family' at top of whiteboard
11 (4.0)
12 TEA: /okay (0.4) so (.) that's me?
       /TEA points to lower stick-figure
13 (0.5)
14 SAB: ye↑s:
15 (0.3)
16 TEA: /who's this
       /TEA points to top stick-figure
17 /#(1.3)
       /TEA writes ‘Paul’ next to bottom figure
#Fig. 5c
Designedly incomplete objects

18 SAB: boy
19 (1.3)
20 SAB: heh
21 TEA: no
22 SAB: huhhuh
23 (3.5)
24 CAM: father
25 /#(5.9)

/TEA draws a line and writes ‘father’ near the top figure

By providing the additional indexical token ‘My family’ as header to the graphic (line 10), the teacher provides the pictograph with a framing device that indexes the reading of the graph. With
Designedly incomplete objects

Sabine still unable to grasp its significance, Camilla self-selects in line 24, providing a candidate response to the teacher’s question (‘father’). This shows that she at least has been able to identify the graphic structure as part of a family tree. Having secured this response, the teacher proceeds to anchor this family tree to his own family, eliciting from the students the relationship of the figure to him, albeit as part of a third person possessive structure.

Extract 5, contd.: Lux-pl090610

26 TEA:  uhm, (0.2) what’s missing,
27  (8.7)
28 CAM:  ↑your; (0.3) ↑your father;
29  /(0.9) /(0.5) /(2.3) /(1.6) /(2.4)-----------------------------
      -------
      /TEA rotates to board with extended index finger
      /points to the name ‘Paul’ under the initial stick-
      figure
      /torques body towards students
      /rotates back to board, bringing marker
      into writing position at the start of
      underline
      /writes ‘Paul’ along the line
30 TEA:  pau/1:,
31  (#1.5)-----------------------------
      /removes pen from board, slowly torques body to students
With Camilla having displayed recognition of the type of diagram that he has started to produce, the teacher proceeds to elaborate on the initial structure with additional building blocks, each constituted of a package of either a male or female stick-figure, a straight vertical or horizontal line connecting the figure to the larger diagrammatic body, and a descriptor detailing a familial relationship written next to the stick-figure. However, we note how these task instructions are collaboratively produced between the teacher and students with the use of a number of designedly incomplete objects (line 29-34).

In line 26, the teacher provides a partial acceptance of Camilla’s suggestion ‘father’, and prompts a continuation of the answer as he specifies that there is something missing from the form: he draws a horizontal line to the right of the stick figure, writes ‘father’ at the end of it (Fig. 5d), then moves his writing hand back to the line, lingers there for a beat, and says ‘uhm’. He then torques his body...
and gaze to Camilla and asks ‘what’s missing’, thereby making it explicit that the line represents the absence of some relevant linguistic material. Camilla then expands on her initial bid with one possessive pronoun, which she subsequently fits to the descriptor: ‘↑you: r; (0.3) ↑your father;’ (line 28). The teacher withholding any verbal response to this, but instead turns to the board, points to the name ‘Paul’ written next to the initial stick-figure, looks round to the students, and subsequently turns back to the board and writes ‘Paul’ along the line preceding ‘father’. Rather than providing the full linguistic form that would link the initial ‘Paul figure’ with the ‘father figure’, i.e. ‘Paul’s father’, the teacher suspends the writing after the name, leaving the possessive marker absent from the form. He utters the name, slightly lengthened and with flat intonation, keeps the pen in a writing grip and still directed at the relevant gap between ‘Paul’ and ‘father’, then slowly torques his body to the students. In overlap with each other, Camilla and André complete the sought-after component by adding the possessive marker to the name (lines 32 & 33), which is in turn accepted by the teacher, as he turns back to the board and adds the missing material to complete the structure.

We see how the particular target form that will feature as the linguistic focus in the upcoming task is worked up by the participants, without any explicit instruction having been formulated by the teacher. Rather, the teacher manages to elicit contributions from the students by treating structures inscribed on the whiteboard as being incomplete: first the stick-figures in the diagram are treated as requiring descriptors; the familial relationship descriptor is treated as incomplete and requiring a possessive form as part of the target form; and the 3rd person possessive structure is constructed as incomplete by leaving the possessive marker off the name. In each case, it is the students who orient to being the ones who must find the appropriate materials to complete the sought after structural properties constituting the task focus.
Designedly incomplete objects

With the task properties having now been made clear, the teacher builds on this in the next elicitation. Now he is able to point to a stick-figure that is drawn as part of the larger structure, and to simply ask ‘who is this?’ (line 35).

Extract 5, contd.: Lux-pl090610

35  TEA:  /yeah (0.5) okay (.) sabine who is /this?
  /takes step back from board       /finger points to stick-
  /figure on left

36  /(0.6)--------------------------------------------
  /TEA moves hand to the left of figure,
  rotates marker pen from hold grip to writing grip,
  #positions pen at board
  #Fig. 5f

37  CAM:  paul's mother;

38  /(0.7)

39  SAB:        mother,

40  (4.0)--------------------------------------------
  /TEA writes ‘Paul’s mother’ to the right of the stick-figure

41  TEA:  okay:, andre /who is (.) this:.
  ((name sounds like 'and'))
  /TEA draws 2nd vertical line down from the
Designedly incomplete objects

horizontal line

42 \/(2.0) /\/(1.0)-----------------------------

/TEA draws male stick-figure at the end of it,

/#torques to the students, revealing the stick-figure

to the students

#Fig. 5g

43 CAM: his: broth/er;

44 (0.2)

45 TEA: ↑is your name /#andre;

/TEA rotates fully towards the students

/places hands on his hips

#Fig. 5h

46 CAM: ah excusez m\[oi;\]

47 AND: [yeah]

48 AND: °hah hah hah hee° ·hhhh

49 AND: er paul's er bro/ther;
Designedly incomplete objects

/TEA rotates back to board, brings pen to writing grip

50 TEA: okay

51 /(3.7)

/TEA writes ‘Paul’s brother’ under the stick-figure
By pointing to an unidentified stick-figure and asking who it is, the teacher now appears to take the family tree diagram as understood by the students, and as a diagrammatic blueprint the students should now be able to read the larger structure and its component features, as well as what type of material is missing from each ‘branch’. The teacher moves his writing hand to the space adjacent the female stick-figure, and holds it there in a ready-to-write position (line 36, Fig 5f). Camilla displays that she has now understood the language game at hand, and provides the descriptor ‘Paul’s mother’, which the teacher then writes on the board. He then proceeds to add another connecting line and stick-figure, and again asks who this is, torqueing his body to the students (Fig 5g). Again, it is Camilla who provides a candidate answer, thereby bypassing the teacher’s selection of André as next-speaker⁴. However, she appears to build on her preceding contribution by providing an anaphoric ‘his’ in place of the name (line 43). The teacher proceeds to repair the intended turn allocation with what is treated as a jocular admonishment (Mortensen & Hazel, 2017; Hazel & Mortensen, 2017, Fig 5h), following which André produces the target form ‘er paul's er brother;' (line 49). This is accepted by the teacher, who then adds it to the space adjacent to the
focus stick-figure. In what follows, the participants continue along these lines, building the family tree until it covers most of the whiteboard (see Fig. 5i).

The extract shows how by providing an initial pictorial representation of himself and parents in a diagrammatic drawing on the whiteboard, the teacher has been able to produce a designedly incomplete object, with the students subsequently orienting to their contributions being relevant to its development. Although a single family unit could be represented by the initial three figures, an extended family structure would also include parents of parents, possible siblings and the like. Here, we note for example how the teacher’s initial representation is reproduced further down the board, thereby making more space available above it, which ends up being filled with representations of grandparents.

The students contribute to the building of this graphic on a step-by-step basis, while organizing the order of their contributions accordingly (Mortensen & Hazel, 2011), the teacher providing the next prompt when the appropriate designation for the family member has been provided by the student, and the teacher has added the next part of the emerging family tree to the graphic. The indexical
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labeling of a stick-figure in its respective place within the graphic is treated as a constitutive feature of the structure, and in its absence, the object remains incomplete. Of course, for this to be able to work, it is incumbent on the students that they understand how a family tree representation works and what one looks like, so that they can use this as a blueprint for the emerging graphic.

When a graphic gap in not indexed as incomplete

In the final extract, we would like to demonstrate how the ‘empty’ slot or slots are not always constituted as ‘absence’, i.e. as some component in the structure that implies incompleteness, and where a relevant next action would be the providing of materials to complete the structure.

In this extract, one student is oriented to producing the Danish form for ‘I came to Denmark two months ago’, or in Danish ‘jeg kom til Danmark for to måneder siden’.

Extract 6: CALPIU; Teacher: TEA; student: Stu1

1 STU: er: jeg kom:: (0.5) um (1.3) to::: (0.9) måneder,
er I came um two months,

2 (0.6)

3 TEA: siden;
ago;

4 STU: siden;
ago;

5 TEA: så jeg kom,
so I came,

6 (1.3)

7 two months ago, for,
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8  

/ (0.7) 

/ TEA walks over to the board 

/ Students switch gaze from STU to TEA 

9  

for, 

10  

(3.1) 

11  

œh (0.8) for, 

12  

/ (4.3) 

/ #TEA writes ‘for ___ ___ siden’ on the blackboard 

6a  

#6a 

13  

for (0.2) #ago? / (.) / and then we / can, / 

/ two students look down to their notepads 

/ pen click   / pen click 

/ two students look down 

to their notepads
Designedly incomplete objects

TEA writes ‘to måneder’ on the board immediately below the dotted line.

TEA: to (. .) måneder (.) siden jeg kom for to måneder siden,

two months ago I came two months ago.

The student’s apparent difficulties with the phrase display her as an early learner of Danish. The turn is produced incrementally, with each step demarcated by relatively lengthy gaps, and includes stretched components, and hesitation markers. The teacher offers some assistance in completing the correct linguistic form by offering siden ‘ago’ following the pause in line 2, with the student repeating this in next position.

The teacher treats this as a slot for highlighting the structure of the linguistic form. In a så/so-prefaced formulation, he starts repeating the student’s prior turn (‘så jeg kom’, line 5), then switches to English, where he provides a translation of the structure that the student had difficulties producing. This may act to make more explicit to the students which linguistic component his upcoming comment will address. The switch to English is also oriented to by the other students as
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indexing the larger group as recipients, and we see them withdraw gaze from Student 1, and their gaze follows him as he makes his way to the blackboard. Producing a pre-speech token as he picks up some chalk and raises his hand to the board (line 11), he vocalizes the initial part of the target structure (‘for’) as he writes it on the board. He then draws a horizontal dotted line to its right and then writes ‘siden’ at the end of it.

We note then that here he has left out the temporal phrase “two months”/”to måneder”, with the dotted underline drawn in its place, in much the same way we observe others use this device in what we have described as “designedly incomplete structures”. However, in this case there is no orientation in how he configures his body posture at the board, nor in his use of the writing utensil, nor in any suspension of movement that we observed earlier, nor in how he formats his turns (with flat intonation and lengthened vocalization), that could be indicative of him treating the structure as requiring students to complete it. Rather, he appears here to be directing the students’ to attend to the structural components either side of the underline. Indeed, the students appear to confirm this as they move to write in their notes at the point the teacher finishes writing the two-word structure “for____ siden” and translating it (line 13). This, we note, is before the teacher proceeds to give a candidate for the slot in between the words, here “to måneder” written immediately below the underline.

**Conclusion**

The preceding analysis has been concerned with artifacts that are mobilized by teachers in the eliciting of contributions from students in classroom activities, here drawing on data from L2 classrooms. Two of the graphic objects were pre-fabricated – sections of a hand-out and a textbook – and two produced *in situ* as part of the classroom interaction between teacher and students – here, visual structures incrementally produced on the classroom whiteboard. We have shown how in
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each case the classroom participants understand and treat the structures as being incomplete. More importantly, we note how at these junctures, the participants orient to these structures as requiring students to produce linguistic material to resolve this absence of some structural component. When a section of a material object – e.g., a whiteboard or a hand-out - is marked out as constituting a location where additional material could bring an adjacent partial structure to completion, students treat this as a deficiency that requires remedial work on their part, a puzzle which they are to solve. As such, the contribution adds to previous research on action formation by providing an example of how participants' orientations to material and inscribed objects feature as central components around which participants fashion orderly sense-making practices, that is, what Goodwin (2000) has referred to as contextual configurations.

Of course, there are any number of sections of the same objects that do not contain graphic material, that are void of inscriptions, or graphs, or visual images. Indeed, at times an entire whiteboard may remain unoccupied for large sections of a lesson, without anyone in attendance treating this as a deficiency in the object that calls for materials to be added. In cases where a partial structure can be identified in an inscription contained on a page of a book or a chalkboard (as in extract 6), even here we note that participants do not necessarily treat it as incomplete and in need of remedial contributions from the students. This observation led us to consider what work teachers engage in in order to constitute some vacant space adjacent to or contained within the inscribed structure as requiring additional contributions from students.

The way an orientation to absence, or the incompleteness of a structure, is worked up relies on aggregates of resources – verbal, vocal, visual and material - being brought into play as embodied elicitation devices, with both teacher and student participants mutually monitoring one another and the teaching materials, be they inscriptions on the board, hand-outs, family trees, graphs and the
Designedly incomplete objects

like, as well as the sequential organization of how and when they are being brought to bear on the interaction. Designedly incomplete objects are therefore not simply layouts where some part might be recognized ‘from the outside’ as something to be completed. Rather, participants attend to the incompleteness as projecting an upcoming activity, for instance by making the incompleteness relevant through deictic displays that make it a salient feature to attend to, preparing to write in the space and complete the incompleteness, or in other ways that index the incompleteness as relevant to a next action. As such, absence or incompleteness in the way we talk about it here is embodied into being by participants’ publically available displays to graphic incompleteness in relation to surrounding or accompanying text or other kinds of graphic representation.

Schegloff’s (1968) discussion of ‘noticeable absence’ describes sequential environments where members treat an item as being missing, for example a second action in an adjacency pair. Our concern has been with members producing artifacts that are purposefully designed as incomplete, with a view to eliciting some complementary material from an interlocutor. We find parallels in Koshik (2002) observations of how teachers design utterances as incomplete in order to elicit a particular correction from a student in read-aloud activities. Chazal (2015) has also described inscriptions on pedagogical artifacts such as chalk-boards and PowerPoint presentations that serve to manage students’ second turn responses. She shows how students are prompted to self-correct where teachers suspend the writing up of the response on the chalk-board or PowerPoint presentation.

Our study contributes to this further by demonstrating that these designedly incomplete objects are not only produced or used by teachers to prompt particular self-corrections from students, but are also used in the design of turns that elicit other types of contribution, such as in initiating pedagogical task activities (extracts 2 & 3), focusing on particular linguistic forms (extract 4) or
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building categories of lexical items (extract 5). By designing some artifact – whether it be an inscribed sentence, or a graph, or a piece of text - as incomplete, and drawing attention to the absence of material that would bring the artifact to its full completion, teachers are able to produce this as a first pair part, the relevant next action of which would be to work out what needs to go into the highlighted space to bring the artifact closer to its full form, and to contribute this as a candidate suggestion. However, as we have seen, students orient to relevant next-action even prior to the teacher’s verbal elicitation. In this way, they orient to the teacher’s noticing and indexing of the graphic absence as more than just that (Sacks, 1992: vol II, part II, Lecture 1), namely as information that in the context of the classroom is taken by the students as projecting a future activity or task.

References


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\[\text{See also Schegloff (1993: 106): "For not every place that something may not be found is a place at which it is missing"} \]

\[\text{CLAN is a free software tool, which among other things allows researchers to produce transcripts with continual linkage between transcript and the audio or video data} \]

\[\text{(http://childes.psy.cmu.edu/clan/).} \]

\[\text{It is not clear why the teacher selects André at this point; there appears to be no indication that André wants to be selected.} \]

\[\text{Is it possible that Camilla mishears the name} \text{André} \text{as} \text{and.} \]