Lifting the pen and the gaze: Embodied recruitment in collaborative writing

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Abstract

This article investigates sequences of collaborative writing that are part of classroom

interaction in student dyads and triads working with a digital device and a paper worksheet. In

analyzing instances from a corpus of 18 hours of video recordings made in five high-school

classrooms through an ethnomethodological and conversation analytic approach, I focus on

two embodied practices which do the work of recruiting assistance during the course of

inscribing: lifting the pen and lifting the gaze. These practices are viewed as ordinary

digressions from the basic posture of the writing body. I demonstrate that lifting the pen as a

recruitment practice can be done as a brief stopping of the pen in its movement, as wrist

rotation, or as hand elevation. Lifting the gaze can have varying temporal properties and occur

synchronously with hand-on-face gestures. I conclude that collaborative writing underlines

the indeterminacy of bodily practices as either recruitments, requests or contributions to joint courses of action. I also suggest that the identified re-engaging practices may be further investigated as components of the specific speech-exchange system inherent to the activity of writing together.

1. Introduction

"You are alone when you write," wrote Loren Barritt (1981: 130) in a phenomenological reflection on writing. Yet, although writing can often be quite lonely, people also frequently create texts and documents together. This occurs in a variety of settings, with various interactional resources and instruments ranging from remote asynchronous collaboration to joint effort in co-presence, in miscellaneous material environments and using digital devices or pen and paper. Different social aspects of writing have been explored in a number of contexts: e.g., writing in academia (Paré 2014; Ritchie and Rigano 2007; Lunsford and Ede 2011), children's education (Krishnan et al. 2018), second language (L2) education (Storch 2013), psychotherapy (Francese 2019), conversation therapy in aphasia (Beeke et al. 2014) and poetry (Manning 2018). In a number of respects, writing is profoundly consequential to human social life (Coulmas 2013).

The purpose of this article is to contribute to the line of research on language and interaction that challenges "the pervasive commonsense assumption that writing is inherently and necessarily a solitary, individual act" (Lunsford and Ede 1990: 5) by conceiving of "writing as social action" (Heap 1989). The aim is to contribute to the body of literature by documenting how writing together and specific methods of recruitment within the course of this activity are produced in and through two distinct bodily practices, glossed as *lifting the pen* and *lifting the gaze*. The analytic orientation of the article is grounded in ethnomethodology and conversation

analysis (EM/CA), and I provide detailed analyses of video-recorded sequences of small student groups composing a short handwritten text, which makes it possible to "empirically investigate how writing is actually carried out as a temporally organized, embodied situated practice" (Mondada and Svinhufvud 2016: 2).

Specifying the phenomenon of analytical interest, the next section provides a review of the relevant EM/CA literature on writing and recruitment. The data and methods are described in section 3. Section 4 presents analysis of selected excerpts from classroom interactions where the students work together on a handwritten text. Finally, in section 5, I discuss the key findings from the analysis against the backdrop of the EM/CA work on requesting and recruitment.

2. Literature review

Providing an initial conceptualization of the interactional phenomenon that is the focus of this article, this section situates my research within earlier relevant studies of "writing-in-interaction" (Mondada & Svinhufvud 2016), "recruitment of assistance" (Kendrick 2021) and other related work.

2.1 Writing together and recruitment in inscribing

Writing together is achieved via a multitude of precisely coordinated practices related to the process of transforming talk into text (Komter 2006). In addition to collaborative writing mediated by a computer in copresence (Due & Toft 2021) or online (Abe 2020), work in EM/CA has also focused on handwriting (e.g., Mondada & Svinhufvid 2016). For an inquiry into handwriting activities, which is also the case of the present study, it is important to distinguish between writing and inscribing. *Inscribing* is a paramount practice of writing and comprises the actual embodied production of a handwritten text. Producing an inscription is the

fundamental purpose and aim of collaborative writing, and the gradual realization of inscribing reflexively establishes the temporal progression of the writing-related tasks. Although inscribing is done by a single individual hand, in collaborative writing, it is not just one participant who conducts the *writing* as an activity: the authorship of the text should not be (and, in fact, *is* not) ascribed to her alone as an "originating subject" (Foucault 1977 [1969]: 137). Apart from the skillful work of the inscriber's hand, writing together in the investigated settings also consists of further practices, such as formulating and revising the "writable" (Mondada 2016), reading aloud what is just being written (Mortensen 2013), consulting the available materials (van der Houwen 2013), sharing knowledge with others (Herder et al. 2020), joint decision-making (Magnusson 2021) and more.

In the activity of collaborative writing, constitutive features of situated text production can be examined by focusing on the local inventory of practices for requesting assistance (Drew and Couper-Kuhlen 2014) that are endogenous to the situation of writing together. Some of these practices consist of the recurrent bodily phenomena such as lifting the pen or lifting the gaze, which are "specifically unremarkable organizational objects" (Garfinkel 1993: 3–4). In the course of writing down the answer on the worksheet, the participant-as-inscriber may suspend the inscribing and without using speech receives assistance from another participant (cf. Drew and Kendrick 2018; Mondada 2014; Rossi 2014). Such on-the-go procedural practices that do recruitment (Kendrick and Drew 2016a) in the course of actual inscribing, i.e., within the pen-on-paper moments of interaction, can be analyzed as "the conduct through which a difficulty is made manifest or expressed in such a way that another may recognize that assistance might be needed" (Drew and Kendrick 2018).

This is exemplified in observations made by Mondada and Svinhufvud (2016: 31–34) in their analysis of the collaborative writing done by three students as they produced a letter together. In their analyzed excerpt, one participant (Médard) does the dictating and another

(Primo) inscribes. At one point, Primo "gets stuck, as the small movement of his hand shows: he does not progress in the writing and stays on the same location, moving the pen. This is *interpreted by Médard as a request for assistance*: he offers the continuation … promptly followed by Primo's inscription" (Mondada and Svinhufvud 2016: 34; italics added). The relevance lies particularly in the cowriter's displayed "interpretation" of the inscriber's embodied action – or perhaps rather the cowriter's *treatment* of the inscriber's embodied action *as a request*. Following the next-turn proof procedure (Sacks et al. 1978 [1974]: 44; Schegloff 2007: 15), embodied practices are possibly doing the work of requesting only when they are sequentially followed by a spoken utterance or otherwise recognizable action of another participant that is unequivocally related to the production of the emergent text at hand. Nevertheless, in the following, the notions of request and recruitment are used as temporary place-holders that aid the specification of the empirical observations. They serve as analytically-sensitizing concepts in identification of the interactional phenomena for detailed examination, and I will revisit the question of their propriety in the final discussion.

2.2 The writing body

Inscribing commences when the holder of the pen assumes a distinct and recognizable bodily position – a "writing posture" (Jakonen 2016) or "writing position" (Pälli and Lehtinen 2014) – which is contingent on the overall social organization and material configuration of the scene. It is the basic writing pose maintained during inscribing: a person visibly immersed in the production of an inscription; a solitary and quiet writing body. Sitting silently at the desk, back slightly bent, head bowed down, outstretched forearm resting on the desktop, the palm and the fingers guiding the pen smoothly across the paper, leaving the meaningful visible traces, gaze focused on the nascent text – or, as Barritt (1981: 127) reflected on his own action: "When I write: I sit down, pick up my pen, and begin to write words on paper". For the observer, an

inscriber is evidently involved in an activity that requires her or his focused attention (cf. Ayaß 2014). As shown in Figures 1 and 2, such an image of the writing body is a scene of enduring cultural intelligibility.

Figure 1. Artistic depictions of the writing body. Left, Attic red-figure kylix by the Eucharides Painter (c. 480 BC). Right, Hendrick ter Brugghen's "Old man writing by candlelight" (1957). Source: *Wikipedia.*

Figure 2. Writing pose assumed during the collaborative production of a written answer.

In "naïve perception" (Merleau-Ponty 1973: 9), as long as such a pose is maintained in collaborative writing, everything seems to be going well from the perspective of the cowriters: the answer is just being written down. During the moments of inscribing, the writing pose serves as a home position (Sacks and Schegloff 2002) for the inscriber's body. For the onlooking cowriters, any *ordinary digression* from this pose is a possible display of trouble and can be seen as a request for assistance or contribution, whereby the inscriber "can make sense of and make use of a vast experience that is not his own" (Rose 1992: 121). A detailed specification of what exactly such an "ordinary digression" can mean in praxis will become apparent later.

3. Data and method

The data comes from a Czech-language segment of an 18-hour corpus of video-recorded classroom work with an educational webpage that included texts, images and oral history video clips (see Mlynář 2021 for more details). The online materials dealt with emigration from Czechoslovakia to Switzerland at the time of World War II. Students in dyads or triads progressed through several thematic fields on a computer or tablet screen, while continuously filling in a paper worksheet as part of their collaborative work.

I have identified and analyzed 27 sequences of collaborative writing in the corpus. These sequences were transcribed using Jefferson's (2004) conventions for speech and the description system developed by Mondada (2018) for bodily action. An explanation of the transcription symbols is given in the Appendix. The progressive production of the handwritten text, as reconstructed from the video recording and the final document (see Mondada and Svinhufvud 2016: 19), is captured in blue lines and indicated with "name-w". Before beginning their video-

taped classroom work, all students signed an informed consent form. All names used to refer to the individual participants in the transcripts and the analytical commentary are pseudonyms.

4. Analysis

In this section, I analyze five data excerpts to provide a detailed description of two embodied practices of recruiting assistance as identified in the collaborative writing sequences in classroom work: lifting the pen and lifting the gaze. For a better comprehension of the activity rendered in the data excerpts, it is useful to know that early on during their work on the educational tasks, the members of the student dyads and triads had established an impromptu local division of work – one of them was responsible for the inscribing. Such a stable organization of work in terms of personal responsibilities, involving "dynamically invoked identities" (Balaman 2021), was a common feature of the analyzed sequences across the corpus and contributed to its specific organization.

4.1 Lifting the pen

While an answer is being written down on the worksheet, the pen and paper are of crucial importance. This is not only true in the instrumental sense, meaning the pen and paper as two separate pieces of equipment "ready-to-hand" (Heidegger 1962: 99) for the answer to be written down. Rather, perhaps, as it moves across the paper and shapes words, the pen is important; the pen and the paper in their joint ordinary use become the focus of action as material objects (cf. Tuncer et al. 2019). Lifting the pen from the "inscriptional space" (Magnusson 2021) on the paper interrupts inscribing as a course of action, as it suspends the operative unity of the pen-and-paper being put to use. In order to inspect the basic properties of this practice, in this section, I analyze occasions when lifting the pen accomplishes the work of recruiting without

being accompanied by spoken utterances or changes in gaze direction. The only digression from the writing pose is lifting the pen, while the gaze is oriented to the inscription on the paper and the inscriber does not speak.

Considering that lifting the pen up from the paper belongs inherently to the skill of inscribing itself, it is surely not just any lifting that can work as a request for assistance. The course of inscribing is publicly available to and monitored in its course by the onlooking participants. They seem to monitor the fluency of the writing and utilize any noticeable hitches, marked by a lack of movement of the pen across paper, as occasions of hesitation that are suitable slots for providing input. In Extract 1, we join Eva, Romana and Barbora as they finish watching two video clips in which the narrators describe their journey to Switzerland. After subsequent discussion of the question on the worksheet, and reaching the possible content of their answer, Eva is now doing the inscribing while Romana "surveys and corrects" (Svensson 2017) her activity. (Barbora has left the classroom for a moment.) Just before the beginning of the excerpt, Romana has suggested that they could also, in their written answer, include another aspect of the narrator's life story as told in the clip. Eva responds by making a "proposal for layout" (Herder et al. 2018) in line 1, and resumes the inscribing in line 2.

Extract 1 (20_3_GPV_W5; 01:01–01:28)

```
01 EVA    no tak to napíšeme pod to potom
          so we will write it below after
02        $ (15.6) $
   eva-w $ Martin Spitzer se do Švýcarska dosta $
            Martin Spitzer to Switzerland arriv
03        $#(1.2)
          $pen stops moving ──────────
   fig    #fig.3
04 ROM    ilegálně
          illegally
05        (0.6) $ (4.6) $
   eva-w        $ l   i l e g á l n ě $
                   e d   i l l e g a l y
06 EVA    ve vlaku zdř- ve vlaku s dřevem (.) (vedl[e to]ho)
          on train wid-on train with lumber (ne[xt t]o it)
07 ROM                                        [°hm°]
```

After 15.6 seconds of silent inscribing (in line 2), Eva "gets stuck" (Mondada and Svinhufvud 2016: 34; see also Juvonen et al. 2019). The pen stops moving just one letter shy of finishing the word "dostal" ("arrived" or "got to"). It is held motionless above the paper, remaining in the same position for 1.2 seconds, upon which Romana proposes the next word to potentially be written: "illegally" (line 4). The motionless, stationary hand holding the pen slightly above the paper appears to convey Eva's hesitation. Romana orients to this moment as a request for assistance and provides her proposal of a writable, which is silently accepted and inscribed in line 5. Yet, Eva does not resume inscribing immediately, but holds the pen above the paper for another 0.6 seconds before doing so. She then inscribes the word as suggested by Romana, and moves on to proposing a formulation of what could be written next (line 6).

Nevertheless, it appears that, in this case, Romana might *not* have provided exactly what Eva needed: notice that Eva's embodied hesitation in inscribing appeared *before* the word "dostal" is finished (line 2); there is a brief pause in line 4 between Romana's turn at talk and Eva's resumed inscribing, and the first next thing Eva does after Romana's utterance is inscribe the last missing letter of the word preceding the one uttered by Romana. It seems, thus, that Eva

was not hesitant about the next word, but about how to finish the current word: the verb conjugation suffix could be the source of the displayed inscription trouble, rather than the next adjective that was offered by Romana. Whatever the exact source of the trouble, it was seamlessly overcome.

Stopping the pen in its movement is an elemental inscriber's practice that is noticeable only through cowriters' close monitoring of inscribing in its course, which makes unmarked (production-related) liftings distinguishable from marked (trouble-related) liftings. Embodied recruiting builds heavily on trust in cowriters' proper response: "The less I specify what I'm requesting you to do, the more I rely on you to make the correct inference" (Rossi 2014: 329). This is a demanding task whose practicability depends on the material configuration of the currently inhabited classroom segment (e.g., the position of the chairs or the exact location of the worksheet on the desk), and in the case of handwriting it is necessarily complicated by the inscribing hand blocking the view. Therefore, we often encounter the more overt practices of wrist rotation and hand elevation. A rendering is provided in Extract 2: just before line 1, Honza has told Martina what to inscribe.
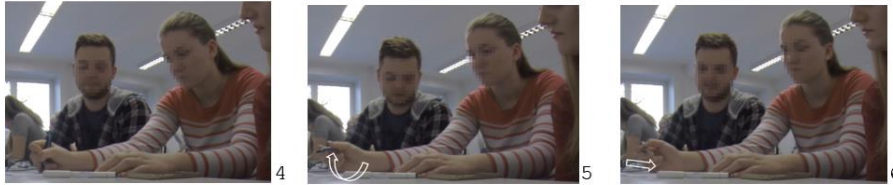
Extract 2 (7_3_GPM_W5; 00:11–00:37)

```
01    MAR   $           (17.6)                        #        $#  (1.7)  #
      mar-w $ E. Kornfeld se dostal do Švýcarska až po válce $
              E. Kornfeld got to Switzerland after the war

                                                            $rotates wrist
      fig                                           #fig.4   #fig.5  #fig.6
```



```
02    HON   a z vlastní iniciativy nebo$ tak něco:? (2.0)
            and upon his own initiative or something like tha:t?

      mar-w                             $ a   z    v l a s
                                          and  from  h i s   o

03    HON   no to je%hloupo:st# (.) ↑ah to je asi jedno tak to
            well that's stupid (.) but it doesn't matter so you

      mar-w t  n  í
            w     n
      mar           %rotates wrist ──────────────
      fig                  #fig.7
```
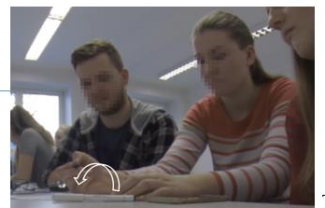


```
04    kl%id(h)n(h)ě nap(h)iš
      can st(h)ill writ(h)e it
      mar    %resumes inscribing
```

In line 1, after 17.6 seconds, Martina finishes the inscribing and rotates her wrist clockwise. Not only is the pen lifted up from the paper, but the writing hand is also synchronously involved in a movement marking that the inscribing is paused and the text-so-far is being shown to the cowriters. Although the palm is closed, still holding the pen in its operative position, the wrist turns slightly upwards, suggesting a kind of offering gesture (see Figures 5–6; cf. Streeck 2009: 184). Once Martina moves her hand, Honza's gaze (briefly diverted, see Figure 5) reorients to the inscribed text (Figure 6) and he responds to the request for assistance by providing the next tentative writable, which Martina starts inscribing despite Honza's expressed doubt about the exact form of his contribution ("or something like tha:t?" in line 2). After 2 seconds, while Martina is inscribing, he tries to withdraw the writable ("well that's stupid" in line 3), and Martina responds by stopping the inscription and rotating her wrist again (see Figure 7). This appears both to indicate that the inscribing is put on hold as well as to furnish Honza with visual

access to the written text, overcoming the "opaque" character of inscribing (Komter 2006). However, this second wrist rotation does not seem to accomplish the work of recruiting assistance or a contribution; rather, Martina puts her inscribing on hold in order to let Honza finish his turn at talk and clarify whether he is withdrawing the previously suggested writable.[1]

In regard to recruiting, a usage similar to wrist rotation appears to inhere in the practice of hand elevation, i.e., lifting the hand with the pen above the desk, in the direction of the inscriber's chest. Two instances of this practice are displayed as Figure 8. As noted by Mondada and Svinhufvud (2016), although in a whiteboard-writing constellation, moving the hand with the pen away from the inscription "both treats the [inscription] as complete and makes it visible for the co-participants" (p. 36).

Figure 8. Hand elevation as a recruitment practice.

Showing the text is part of the achievement of public visibility and accessibility of the emergent answer for the cowriters, so that they can "have direct visual accessibility to the document under construction" (Nissi 2015: 16). Through wrist rotation and hand elevation, or the successive

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[1] I would like to thank one of the anonymous reviewers for drawing my attention to the difference between the two wrist rotations.

combination of both, the interactional status of freshly inscribed words is transformed from *text-in-production* to *text-just-produced.* The gesture turns the ink traces into a standalone object – i.e., this particular chunk of "our answer" is provisionally complete for now. In thus becoming a new component of the intersubjectively available world, the inscription on the sheet also reflexively reconstitutes the relevant features of the material environment; it "contributes to the production and sense of the activity at hand" (Hindmarsh and Heath 2000: 557). Considering the relative irreversibility of longhand writing with pen, compared to computer-assisted text production, it is not that easy to introduce retrospective corrections in handwriting. Although not impossible, corrections take substantial time and possibly spoil the final product, which is perhaps why Honza abandoned his objection in lines 3–4 of Extract 2. So the revealed text as a worldly object limits and establishes, here and now, the field of possibilities for what to do next. It is "what we have" and "what we have to work with".
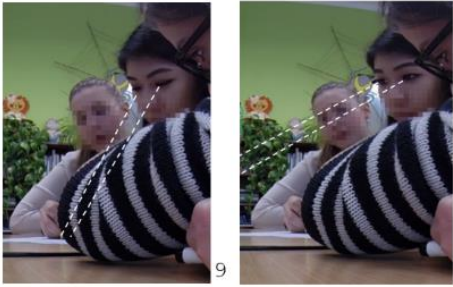
4.2 Lifting the gaze

In the previous section, I focused on the instances in which the work of recruiting is achieved solely by lifting the pen from the paper as the single ordinary digression from the basic writing pose. In collaborative writing, however, this practice is only rarely employed just by itself. Inscribers routinely combine it with talk (which is deliberately outside the scope of this paper), as well as other embodied practices, such as shifting the gaze direction. As noted above, the writing body in its "home position" is characterized by gaze directed to the pen inscribing on paper. As Korbut (2019: 126) remarks, in the course of note-taking the student "visibly directs his/her gaze to the paper". Lifting the pen can recruit assistance from cowriters while the gaze of the inscriber is directed to the paper, as demonstrated by Extracts 1 and 2. Conversely, lifting the gaze from the paper is in almost all instances accompanied by lifting the pen. In other words,

it is not necessary to look up in order to lift up the pen, but it appears to be only convenient to lift up the pen or at least stop its movement in order to look up from the paper.

To inspect the basic properties of gaze-lifting, I analyze occasions when it accomplishes the work of recruiting without being closely accompanied by utterances spoken by the inscriber. Extract 3 provides an example of how this practice is routinely employed by inscribers. At the beginning of the extract, hearably in "writing aloud voice" (Kristiansen 2017), Romana (closest to the camera) formulates the writable for Eva, who is sitting in the middle.

Extract 3 (20_3_GPV_W1; 02:09–02:19)


```
01  ROM   no: (.) tak se i stalo (.) a v roce třicet tři
            well: (.) so it happened (.) and in the year thirty-three
02          (.) $   (5.3)#  &* (.)#
    eva-w     $ v roce 1933
              in the year 1933
    eva                     &lifts gaze-->
    eva                      *lifts pen
    fig             #fig9    #fig10
03  ROM   se stal &
            he became
    eva          --->&
04  EVA   >to& už tam je< napsaný
            >there it's< written
    eva     &points to worksheet
```

In line 2, while still inscribing the final digit of the year 1933, Eva already lifts her gaze and slightly raises her head. She briefly looks up from the pen and paper to the tablet screen, where the informative text about Hitler's rise to power is displayed (see Figure 10). At this point, Romana produces the next writable (line 3) as a continuation of the sentence being written. As the next immediate action in line 4, Eva does not inscribe it, but raises an objection (which they subsequently discuss). In this article, my interest remains only in the unproblematic working of

lifting the gaze as a situated practice that possibly recruits assistance and contribution from the cowriters, as captured in line 2. Putting the inscribing on hold, Eva is not looking down at the paper or another participant, and produces a variant of the "thinking face" (Goodwin and Goodwin 1986) which in this moment consists solely of the observable digression of her gaze direction from the basic writing pose. When Eva lifts her gaze in precise synchrony with stopping her pen and lifting it up from the paper slightly, this appears to prompt an immediate contribution from Romana (cf. Extract 1).

Although the lifting of the gaze can be rather fleeting, as I have just demonstrated in Extract 3, this practice seems to have varying temporal properties. Extract 4 shows a sequence in which Tereza and Jana write an answer pertaining to the national identity of the narrator, based on some text on the screen and a short oral history video clip that they have just watched together. As Extract 4 begins, they already have part of the answer written down (see Figure 11 for a reconstruction derived from the scanned final artifact).
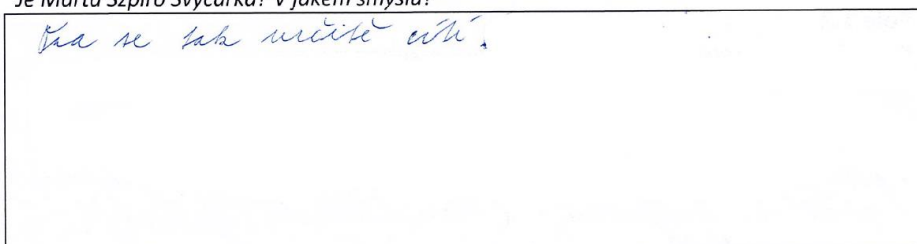

Figure 11. Unfinished answer on the worksheet at the beginning of Extract 4. The printed Czech text says "Field 4.1 – Is Marta Szpiro Swiss? In which sense?" The handwritten sentence says "She certainly feels that way."

Extract 4 (9_3_GPM_W6; 00:29–01:19)

```
01   TER   tak já napíšu ž'se tam cítí jako: (0.4) doma: (.) ale:
           so I will write that she feels at (0.4) home (.) bu:t
02         (0.7)
03         ale neni to Švýcarka
           but she isn't Swiss
04         (2.1)
05   JAN   no neni to Švýcarka ale jako v jakém smyslu takže jako=
           well she isn't Swiss but in which sense also like=
06   TER   =hm=
07   JAN   =cítí se tak no
           =she feels like one
08         (3.4) $ (3.9)
     ter-w        $ ( j  a  k
                     ( a  t
09   TER   >°jako dom:: (1.4) $
           >at hom:: (1.4)
     ter-w o    d  o   m  a ) . $
                h  o   m  e ) .
10         (.) $ (2.2) $
     ter-w      $ A  l  e $
                  B  u  t
11   TER   ale (.) $ (1.4) <°Švý-car°> (4.3) $
           but (.)         <°Swi:ss°>
     ter-w         $ Š  v  ý  c   a    r    k    a    t    o $
                     S  v  i  s   s                   i    t
12   TER   to↑% (.) @#
           it
     ter      %lifts gaze to comp. screen--->
     ter              @lifts RH with pen--->
     fig              #fig12
```



```
13         (5.1)
14   JAN   já nevim
           I dunno
15         (2.9) %%   (4.2)       %% (1.9)
     ter     --->%%looks at paper%%looks at comp. screen-->>
16   JAN   je fér říct že neni Švýcarka když:
           is it fair to say she's not Swiss when:
```

After discussing whether the narrator is indeed Swiss (in lines 1–7), Tereza starts inscribing in line 8, adding "at home" in parentheses after the previously written sentence. Then she resumes the inscription by starting a next line in the worksheet (line 10). Although Jana closely monitors the writing and has direct visual access to it, Tereza is also simultaneously doing "writing

aloud" (Mortensen 2013), pronouncing the components of the writable as they are being written, or immediately after they have been written. She does this in a way that tends to "extend the length of time taken to utter each item … [so that it] corresponds to the length of time utilized to write down the … material" (Goldberg 1975: 275). Tereza then visibly pauses her inscribing in line 12. While uttering the pronoun "it" ("to" in Czech) with a rising terminal intonation just after writing it down, she lifts up her gaze and raises her hand holding the pen up from the paper (see Figure 12), displaying readiness for reception. Interestingly, taking into account the preceding structure of the emerging sentence that has been "written aloud", the inscribing is paused at a place of "maximum grammatical control" (Schegloff 1996: 93). Jana does produce her talk 5.1 seconds later (line 14), possibly orienting to having been recruited, but – unlike in, e.g., Extract 3 – she does not provide a next writable. She rather treats the direction of answering suggested by Tereza as problematic, which is already hinted at by the delay in response (cf. Kendrick and Torreira 2015). Although the syntax of the text as written (e.g., the use of a contrast conjunction) would hardly allow for anything other than "isn't" at this point, they remain silent for another 9 seconds (line 15), while Tereza returns her gaze to the worksheet, and then lifts her eyes again. Within this growing silence, the whole unfinished sentence (lines 10–11) has been called into question. Only in line 16 is the inscribing effectively adjourned when Jana reopens the more substantial points discussed earlier in lines 5 and 7, and they continue their discussion for some time afterwards.

Lifting the gaze up from the worksheet is also routinely accompanied by other bodily movements, as illustrated by the final excerpt. After listening to an oral history video clip, Adam and Pavel are responding to the third question on the worksheet, which asks the reasons why the narrator could not leave Slovakia at the time of World War II. Extract 5 starts right after they have reached a consensus regarding the writable.

```
01              $ (1.8)  $ (3.3) $
        ada-w $ byla   $ ž i d o v k a $
                she was    J e w i s h
02      ADA   omlouvam se za svojí ruku (.)% >levou ruku
              I am sorry for my hand (.) >left hand
                                      %LH lifts pen--->
03      PAV   jo (.) tyvo*le je to &(hrozný)
              yeah (.) man it is (terrible)
                                  &shakes head, smiles
        ada               *lifts gaze and turns head left, gaze twd PAV--->
04      ADA   echHEH* heh .hhh *
              --->*           *gaze to paper, LH prepared to write
05      ADA   (3.0) * >.nh<
                    *lifts head up
06      PAV   *(.)#byla židovka a židé nes**#měli opouštět(0.5)*%(.)Slovensko
                 she was Jewish and Jews weren't allowed to leave Slovakia
        ada   *puts RH to mouth-----------**moves RH to chin---*
        ada                               --->%resumes ins.
        fig       #fig13                   #fig14
```
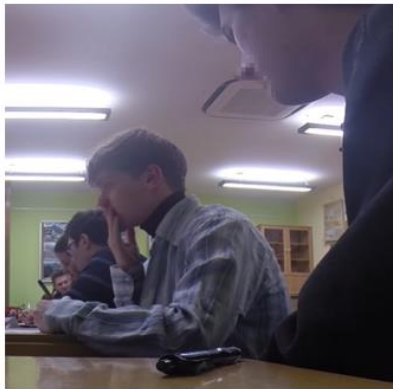

Having just finished inscribing, Adam in line 2 not only lifts up his hand, but also utters an apology "for [his] left hand" before making this movement. Adam is actually writing with his left hand, and the cowriter Pavel is sitting on Adam's left-hand side. Owing to the reciprocity of perspectives (Schutz 1962: 11), Adam displays awareness that Pavel cannot see the inscription properly from his position, which would however be otherwise if Adam were writing with his right hand (cf. Extract 4). Furthermore, in the utterance formatted as an explicit apology, Pavel also displays his orientation to the local normative requirement of writing together, which I mentioned towards the end of section 4.1 – i.e., that all participants should

have visual or auditory access to the emerging text in order to establish intersubjectivity and synchronize their conduct. Pavel accepts the apology (line 3), but appears not to take the trouble overly seriously, expanding his turn after a micro-pause with a jokingly delivered complaint.

While laughing in line 4, Adam orients to the worksheet again. Although his entire bodily posture suggests that inscribing is about to commence, it is delayed. After 3 seconds, he produces a hearable nasal inhale (see Hoey 2020), and simultaneously lifts his head up – compare the position of his head in Figures 13/14 and Figure 2. In line 6, in addition to lifting his gaze, Adam covers his mouth with his non-inscribing (right) hand (see Figure 13), and subsequently transforms the gesture by moving his fingers to his chin (see Figure 14) in a publicly available, universally understood thinking position – famously materialized by the sculptor Auguste Rodin. Apparently, though, Pavel already recognizes the request for assistance from Adam's embodied action in line 5, since he starts speaking just a short moment after Adam produces the first hand-on-face gesture. Reading aloud the two words already written by Adam in line 1 ("byla židovka"/"she was Jewish" in line 6), he unpacks the task-relevant aspect of "Jewishness" while also clarifying the syntactic continuity and subsequently delivers a next possible writable, once again working within the field of possibilities delimited by the just-produced text as a worldly object. The pre-eminent production problem "what next" corresponds to "what more" and "what else" there is to be written.

5. Discussion

As a point of departure, my inquiry started with the *writing body* as a recognizable social object established and maintained by the inscriber's basic bodily posture in the course of writing together. But, as Garfinkel (2002: 210) has emphasized, it is not "anatomists' bodies, or biologists' bodies, but work's bodies", the "*bodies of practices*" that are at the center of EM(/CA)'s interest. I therefore sought to focus on visible ordinary digressions in the appearance

of the writing body that are – for the participants themselves – practically reasonable and accountable as an inventory of practices in the *writing's work*. Through its local reasonability and accountability, the embodied digression indicates a trouble in the progressivity of inscribing an answer on the worksheet. A hitch in the "private" inscribing becomes the group's "public" interest, for it is the accomplishment of the task at hand that orients the organization of the activity.

Much like in the university students' note-taking praxis, investigated by Korbut (2019), in which we can encounter "the observable alternation of writing and listening" (p. 126), here the participants in collaborative writing themselves rely on the observable alternation of actual inscribing and other related conduct. The two practices glossed as *lifting the pen* and *lifting the gaze* contribute to the intricate temporal order of collaborative writing as an organized course of inscribing and talk. Both sets of practices observably suspend the inscribing by terminating an object-centered sequence (Tuncer et al. 2019) focused on the pen-and-paper-at-work, and resume the interactional work of formulating and establishing the writable through talk. After the participants are "together individually" (Tiilikainen and Arminen 2017) during the inscription, these *re-engaging practices* reestablish the Schutzian We-relation (1962: 219–220) so that they may proceed collectively with writing. The practices bring about the situated shift from an "unilateral" activity (Goodwin 1987; Morita 2018) to a "face engagement" (Goffman 1963) – from *inscribing in the co-presence of others* to *writing together with others*.

I have used the notions of requesting and recruitment (Drew and Couper-Kuhlen 2014; Kendrick and Drew 2016a) to localize my analysis of embodied practices that have been recurrently observed in interactional sequences of collaborative writing. The embodied practices of immediate requesting are thoroughly contingent on the temporal organization and course of the activity. Although obtained in a very different setting, this aspect of my analytical findings could be compared with Mondada's (2014) analysis of surgeons' embodied requests.

Unlike in Mondada's findings, the analyzed forms of requests in collaborative writing sequences are not "always complied with in a silent embodied way" (2014: 270). They are rather *never* complied with silently (although this would be in principle possible), and the response always involves talk, which is an effect of the specificity of the setting. The sequence organization described by Mondada (2014: 273–275, 287) is inversed, the first pair part being produced *without talk* and the second pair part being produced *as talk*. This is possible in settings of writing together as these are closely monitored interactional environments. The ongoing course of inscribing is unambiguous and self-actuated, resulting from "the projectability and anticipation of a requested action in the development of an activity" (Rossi 2014: 306). A hitch in inscribing that is displayed by lifting the pen or lifting the gaze recognizably indicates that a next writable is needed, because inscribing as a practice of situated text production is pursuable in its trajectory by the cowriters and observers.

Furthermore, in collaborative writing, the inscribers' embodied practices are "addressed to a recipient who has already committed to the wider project" (Zinken and Rossi 2016: 24). As re-engaging practices, *lifting the pen* and *lifting the gaze* invite action from the non-inscribing students who are currently working together on the task-at-hand. Consequently, we can now point to a difference between the two investigated practices of mutual engagement. The practice of lifting the pen appears to be closer to "embodied displays of trouble" (Drew and Kendrick 2018), with the inscribers' gaze still oriented towards the paper and visibly focused on the work of inscribing. The action produced in response by the attentive cowriter could then be more properly described as assistance, not unlike declaratives of trouble being oriented to as requests in other settings (such as service encounters; see Fox and Heinemann 2021). Lifting the gaze, finally, seems to belong more to "the solicitation of contributions to joint courses of action" (Zinken and Rossi 2016: 24), as it visibly indicates that the text production is no longer the inscriber's "individual" task but once again "everyone's" task.

Zinken and Rossi (2016: 24) note that "the *established commitments and respective roles in the joint activity* can function as an engine that progresses the sequence to its relevant outcome" (italics added). Kendrick and Drew (2016b: 33) agree with them that the "ad hoc division of labor" and arrangement of actions "in advance" may play a role. This may even explain why participants in routinized institutional interactions employ "an informing without reference to any projected action" as "an effective way of calling someone to their responsibilities" (González-Martínez & Drew 2021: 57). My analysis of the students' recruitment practices in collaborative writing contributes to this broader discussion by emphasizing that such "responsibilities", "commitments" and "roles" are never established once and for all, but rather continually and constantly re-established, maintained moment-by-moment in real time, through and within the ongoing courses of action. The mutual engagement in writing together consists of a complex infrastructure of requests and recruitments, as well as unsolicited contribution offerings or the act of "accomplishing a request without making one" (Gill, Halkowski and Roberts 2001: 55). The "boundary of recruitment" mentioned by Kendrick and Drew (2016b: 32) is not always clear. Indeed, in lived praxis, the quiet practices such as lifting the pen or lifting the gaze are methodically combined and aligned with spoken utterances, whose systematic analysis in sequences of collaborative writing I must set aside for another occasion.

6. Conclusion

This article connected two separate fields of EM/CA studies: investigation of requests and recruitment, and research on writing-in-interaction. I focused on two embodied practices – lifting the pen and lifting the gaze – that inscribers employ in recruiting their cowriters. I conceived these practices as more or less overt *ordinary digressions* from the basic posture of the writing body. They are related to the necessary specification of the next writable, yet how

exactly this writable is obtained can vary. On some occasions, once the inscribing is visibly paused, the writable is immediately provided by a cowriter and its pertinence quietly ratified by the inscriber's next embodied action. At other times, it is a matter of subsequent discussion during which the inscribing is temporarily adjourned.

Interactional work in sequences of writing together is related to the intersubjective problem of only one of the participants being able to do the actual inscribing. Practices of lifting the pen and lifting the gaze in collaborative writing sequences thus seem to serve as a method for producing a text as a truly cooperative and multi-authored creation in a situation marked by the inherent impossibility of working together on the actual inscription. As *re-engaging practices*, they provide a solution to the problem of intersubjectivity in doing writing not as single authors but as a "production studio" (Deleuze and Parnet 2006: 9). Further research will be needed to specify the import of the two embodied practices in a distinct speech-exchange system that seems to operate in sequences of collaborative writing.

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Appendix

Notation of speech (based on Jefferson 2004)

[ ]   Overlapping talk.

(.)   Micro-pause.

(2.1)   Pause in seconds.

.   Final intonation.

>yes<   Notably faster talk.

<no>   Notably slower talk.

(kuk)   Estimated hearing.

(   )   Inaudible segment.

a::   Vocal prolongation.

Ge-   Cut-off.

↑   Higher pitch.

=   Rapid continuation (latching).

.hh/hh   Inhalation and exhalation.

.nh   Nasal inhalation.

n(h)o   Laughter particle within word.

NO   Louder volume.

not   Emphasis.

Notation of embodied action (based on Mondada 2018)

* *	Two symbols delimit descriptions (one symbol per
% %	participant) synchronized with talk.
$--->	Described action continues across subsequent lines
>---$	until the same symbol is reached.
fig	Indication of video screenshot displayed as figure.
#	Exact position of screenshot within the turn.

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