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## “But Opa, I want to kümmern mich um die snails” gieren plurilingualler Interaktionen

Die Studie erforscht, wie ein simultan mehrsprachig aufwachsendes Kind im Vorschulalter Erwa-  
aktionen navigiert, und konzentriert sich dabei auf die Mikroebene des individuellen sprachliche  
gements in situ. Ergründet wird, wie das Kind durch „linguaging“ in mehrsprachigen Kontexten in  
Bedeutung konstruiert und vermittelt. Mittels der konversationsanalytischen Methode der se  
wird seine sprachliche Ressourcenwahl in videografierten, transkribierten Interaktionen untersu  
lyse zeigt, dass das Kind in Abhängigkeit der pragmatischen Erfordernisse der Kommunikatio  
sprachlichen Wissens und seines wachsenden soziolinguistischen Bewusstseins die sprachlichen  
fiziert, die sich zur Verwirklichung seiner kommunikativen Ziele am besten eignen.

Schlagwörter: Linguaging, Agency, Plurilingualismus, Mehrsprachenerwerb, Interaktion

## “But Opa, I want to kümmern mich um die snails” gating plurilingual interactions

The present study examines how a preschool-age multiple language learner navigates adult-child  
ing on the micro-level of individual linguistic resource management in situ. It addresses the resear  
this child constructs and conveys meaning through “linguaging” in familial plurilingual communic  
conversation analysis method of sequential analysis is used to examine the child’s linguistic cho  
transcribed interactions. Data analysis reveals that the child identifies the linguistic resources be  
her communicative objectives as a function of the pragmatic needs of the communicative situ  
knowledge and her growing sociolinguistic awareness.

Keywords: Linguaging, agency, plurilingualism, plurilingual language acquisition, interaction

### 1 Theoretical framework

The experience of multiple language exposure and use from birth affects p  
dren’s language behavior, i.e. their linguaging (= using language resourc  
posal), in a myriad of ways (see de Houwer 2009, 46-47, 145; Wei & Garc  
the course of simultaneous contact with and acquisition of two or more lan  
associated disproportionality of monoglot language encounters compar  
growing up monolingually, the linguistic knowledge of children with bi- and  
language acquisition (BFLA<sup>1</sup>) tends to develop asymmetrically and at times a

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<sup>1</sup> Following de Houwer, the abbreviations BFLA and MFLA are used to refer to children with bi-  
with monolingual first language acquisition respectively (see 2009, 4).

i.e. at different speeds (see Tracy 2020, 189-190, 196; Unsworth 2016, 103-104). Contrary to an idealized notion of linguistically identical competence in two or more languages, simultaneous bi- and plurilingualism cannot be equated with double or multiple language proficiency because "a single person does not lead two lives" (de Houwer 2009, 310) (see Tracy 2014, 31). As the linguistic input is spread across two or more languages, BFLAs are exposed to an uneven distribution of opportunities in life, „sich in verschiedenen Sprachen mit entsprechenden Themenbereichen zu beschäftigen“ (to deal with different subject areas in each of their languages) (Keim & Tracy 2006, 226) (see de Houwer 2009, 194-195, 310; Tracy 2020, 189; Unsworth 2016; 103-104).

### 1.1 Languageing and plurilingual competence

BFLAs develop useful strategies to navigate this dynamic state of a constant disequilibrium of plurilinguistic know-how when languageing to construct a meaning in social interaction (see Coste, Moore & Zarate 2009, 19-20; de Houwer 2009, 242). As Pennycook puts it, favoring the notion of "language as doing" (2010), we view language as a practice, "as an activity rather than a structure, as something that is done by selecting appropriate resources from our semiotic repertoire to tailor our communication to specific audiences in specific contexts (see LaScotte & Tarone 2019, 96; García & Wei 2018). Languageing both structures, and is structured by the social space in which communicative acts are embedded, rendering it a dynamic, open-ended process (see Wei & Unsworth 2018, 8). Thus, adopting the term 'languageing' highlights BFLAs' agentive potential to interact with the world lingually to gain knowledge and to express their own ideas (see Wei 2018, 17).

According to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), the term 'plurilingual competence' encompasses the full extent of plurilinguistic know-how of language users/learners<sup>2</sup>, its dynamic development and their increasing ability "to select and use linguistic resources in various contexts, audiences, and communicative intentions (see North & Piccardo 2016, 29-30; García 2018, 42; Council of Europe 2001, 4, 168). Starting from a sociolinguistic perspective on language learning and use, the CEFR advocates an action-oriented view of communication regarding us/ls primarily as social agents performing various communicative tasks in a fashion that suits both their own objectives as well as the conditions and constraints of a given situation (see North & Piccardo 2016, 29-30; Council of Europe 2001, 9). This approach recognizes that language mode along with linguistic decision-making and adaptive behavior arise out of the (perceived) pragmatic conditions of communicative situations. It allows BFLAs to slip into different plurilingual identities (mono-, bi-, pluri-, translingual or learner) within the same plurilingual space depending on their (changing) position on this situational continuum (see North & Piccardo 2016, 29-30; de Houwer 2009, 46-47, 145; Montanari & Panagiotopoulou 2019). We further expand this view to include a "sociosemiotic" perspective on commu-

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<sup>2</sup> U/I is used to abbreviate language user/learner (plural: Us/Is).

guage competence (Halliday 1978, 108), it becomes evident that managing interactions successfully involves not only an individual's overall language knowledge but also the selection of the most appropriate and effective linguistic resources. This involves making adequate semiotic (incl. linguistic) choices among numerous "meaningful linguistic resources" (Pinnow 2011, 384). Thus, it involves a speaker's "the capacity to act in the world" (Larsen-Freeman 2019, 62) and to language use flexibly and creatively (see García 2018, 47).

## 1.2 Linguaging and agency

Following Ahearn's provisional definition, "agency refers to the sociocultural capacity to act" (2001, 112) or more specifically, to the individual capacity to act and construct knowledge (whether to participate in a situation and use linguistic means) depending on the perceived contextual affordances of a given situation (Duran 2014, 74; Larsen-Freeman 2019, 62-63, 72-73). Agency is thus relationally and contextually defined, "ways related to the affordances in the context" (Larsen-Freeman 2019, 63). It emerges out of individuals' interactive engagement with their material and social environment (Larsen-Freeman 2019, 63; Duran 2017, 9). Affordance can be conceived of as opportunities for action available to individuals situated in specific social structures at a particular time (see ibid. 2017, 9). It is an individual's capacity to act upon the possibilities afforded by a certain social context, which is largely contingent on their perception of the personal scope for action as „affordances exist insofar as they can be detected" (ibid., 4) (see Mercer 2012, 43; Larsen-Freeman 2019, 62; Driver, Gao & Mercer 2021, 16). Hence, an individual's achievement of agency is not only socioculturally mediated but also intrapersonally developing dynamically through the use of available "economic, cultural, and social resources within a particular context" (Biesta & Tedder 2007, 137) and characteristics of the individual in terms of their cognitive, physical development and subjective experiences (see Larsen-Freeman 2019, 62-63, 72-73).

As to linguistic agency, us/Is need to take the interactional circumstances and the specific objectives of real-world language use into account when collaboratively negotiating meaning in the social world (see Council of Europe 2001, 9; Piccardo & North 2022, 30). Judging the adequacy of semiotic resources for various social contexts, taking into account the linguistic actions in pursuit of one's desired communicative aims, monitoring and adjusting one's own communicative choices<sup>3</sup> continuously requires individuals to draw on this knowledge tactically (see Piccardo & North 2022, 30; LaScotte & Taylor 2015, 10). Thus, the emergence of linguistic agency is closely related to the development of language competence (see Council of Europe 2020, 9-10, 13). It involves both us'/I's use of linguistic means to realize certain speech intentions by means of grammatical features, wording as well as pronunciation (pragmalinguistics) and their knowledge of the social conditions, rules and constraints governing (appropriate and acceptable) language use in interactions (sociopragmatics) (see Pinnow 2011, 384; Timpe Lau Schmidt 2015, 2, 6-8, 10).

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<sup>3</sup> Adjustment of language mode and (dis)regard for sociocultural norms

Us'/ls' capacity to act in acquiring and/or learning and using their various sources is further "temporally embedded" (Emirbayer & Mische 1998, 963) and mediated by their "history in person" (Duran 2014, 74), i.e. their accumulated current experiences of co-constructing meanings in social interactions with peers in particular spaces (see Larsen-Freeman 2019, 66; Mercer 2012, 57). It is important to conceive of space (part of context) as "an active, agentive as communication" (Blommaert, Collins & Slembrouck 2005, 203). In keeping with Collins and Slembrouck (2005), each social space "does something to people vis-à-vis communicating" (203), as it is hardly ever void of sociocultural norms and of what is deemed proper and normal (see Piccardo & North 2022, 30; Duran 2014, 74). For instance, in terms of language use, social spaces frame the way in which individuals contribute to interactions and select features from their repertoire in the semiotic directed communicative behavior (see Duran 2014, 75). Spaces may (de)legitimize and convey the (un)desirability of certain language practices and assign "different functions to individuals' multilingual repertoires" (Miller 2012, 445) thereby denying individuals certain affordances, limiting their ability to express themselves and negotiating hybrid identifications (see Blommaert, Collins & Slembrouck 2005, 203; Piccardo & North 2022, 30). Conversely, spaces embracing individuals' plurilingual repertoires as desirable, legitimate and valued expand rather than restrict individuals' linguistic resources for action, facilitating their perception and exploitation of the "latent potentialities of spaces" (Mercer 2012, 43) (see *ibid.*, 5, 9; García 2018, 47), i.e. "the vast array of affordances that are available to the agent" (Piccardo 2017, 4).

### 1.3 Linguaging and plurilingual spaces

By and large, agency should be understood not as an attribute or power of individuals but as an achievement by individuals actively engaging with the opportunities and constraints that cultural environments afford or deny to optimize the conditions for their own actions (see Biesta & Tedder 2007, 136; Larsen-Freeman 2019, 62, 73). While Blommaert and Slembrouck (2005) contend that individuals' communicative actions are primarily determined by "what the environment, as structured determinations and interactional affordances enables and disables them to employ", Wei (2011) argues in favor of plurilingual agency and empowerment (213). Following Wei, plurilingual spaces, also termed 'translingual spaces' (TS), are above all "interactionally created by the individual through the negotiation of the semiotic resources available to them (see 1234). Thus, TS are not only plurilingual spaces designed to welcome and facilitate a translingual mode of communication but also inter- and intrasentential<sup>5</sup> TL, but are moreover spaces created precisely by individuals themselves actively choosing to engage in TL "[r]ecognizing that they have t

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<sup>4</sup> 'Translanguaging' (TL) comprises BFLAs' dynamic translingual practices transcending "the boundaries between named languages, language varieties, and language and other semiotic systems" (Wei 2018, 9).

<sup>5</sup> Intersentential (ITE) TL occurs between sentences and typically consists of hybrid use of semiotic resources across sentence, phrasal, or discourse boundaries, while intrasentential (ITA) TL occurs within a sentence vis-à-vis semiotic features within the same sentence.

assert their own identities” (Darvin & Norton 2015, 47) (see Wei 2018, 23).  
ceived) growing plurilingual competence empowers them and activates the  
namically shape interactive situations (see Duran 2014, 74, 81; Piccardo 2  
lowing for ample opportunity to explore one’s environment as well as for s  
zation of and experimentation with one’s semiotic means, plurilingual spa  
ditions conducive to purposeful, creative and critical meaning-making (see  
9; García & Wei 2018, 2).

When considering the language resources one brings to bear on the semi  
of social interactions, leveraging one’s linguistic means creatively and criti  
fest itself as follows: l. a. 1) by appropriating the words of others, slightly a  
arming them with one’s own intentions (see Dufva & Aro 2014, 38, 42), 2)  
or deviating from an interlocutor’s language practice to signal either identi  
dissociation from that interlocutor in terms of linguistic identity (see LaS  
2019, 97), 3) through strategic TL for “transformative impact” (Emirbayer &  
1003) thereby emphasizing or expanding the meaning potential of the reso  
Larsen-Freeman 2019, 72; Montanari & Panagiotopoulou 2019, 30), and 4)  
lecting the appropriate linguistic resources in context and adapting them  
dernisse der jeweiligen Grammatik“ (= the requirements of the respective g  
2014, 25), in particular with regard to the morpho-syntactic principles of the  
language systems involved (Wei 2018, 12; Montanari & Panagiotopoulou 20  
Successful implementation of these communicative strategies requires bot  
knowledge of the contextually appropriate use of plurilinguistic resources a  
linguistic awareness (or pragmatic differentiation<sup>6</sup>) on the part of the u/l  
374; Cheung, Mak, Luo & Xiao 2010, 191; Tare & Gelman 2010, 1-2). The  
tionalized as us`/ls` ability to adjust their languaging in sensitivity to the inv  
utors and their respective language proficiency (see Cheung, Mak, Luo &  
Barac, Bialystok, Castro & Sanchez 2014, 21).

As a monolingual lens would tend to portray instances of TL as error-ridde  
ther than as examples of linguistic innovation, it is crucial to break with the  
notion of double semilingualism<sup>7</sup> which is based on the long-standing practi  
plurilingual competence against the monolingual norm as a „valuable yard  
chini 2011, 350) (see Wei 2011, 370). What constitutes an error from a strict  
perspective, may in fact testify to a u’s/l’s strategic linguistic choices, will  
linguistic risks and creative linguistic processes, particularly since the tr  
norms can be construed as a sign of creativity (see Larsen-Freeman 201  
2017, 8, 10). As Larsen-Freeman and Cameron point out, precisely these inst  
language use “where systems are stretched, where conventional rules a  
where a point of criticality is reached” (2008, 102) allow for the emergenc

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<sup>6</sup> Tare and Gelman define pragmatic differentiation “as bilingual children’s ability to use their tw  
priately with interlocutors who speak different languages” (2010, 1-2).

<sup>7</sup> The term “double semilingualism” constitutes a deficit perspective on BFLA’s language comp  
guages implying they may never be “fully” proficient in either (Keim & Tracy 2006, 225).

(see Piccardo 2017, 10; Wei 2018, 23). However, they do not adhere to the expectations of a monolingual mindset (see Wei 2011, 374; Piccardo 2017, 9-10).

## 2 The present study

### 2.1 Research question

The present study examines how a preschool-age multiple language learner (CH) negotiates adult-child<sup>8</sup> interactions focusing on the micro-level of her linguistic resource use in situ. As successful navigation involves adequate use of one's meaning-making resources, the study addresses the research question of how CH constructs and conveys meaning through "linguaging" in familial plurilingual contexts (García & Wei 2018, 3). The study focuses on the "how" rather than the "why" of translingual interaction and how CH accomplishes with her individual resources instead of insisting on identifying reasons for her translingual behavior. Pursuing the latter while simultaneously relying on interaction-external aspects may mislead analysts to assign arbitrary weights to translingual contributions (Wei 2002, 166-167).

### 2.2 Method

According to the principles of conversation analysis, the how (and why) of language use cannot be determined separately from the conversational context in which it takes place (Hitzler & Messmer 2011, 308). Insight of how languaging develops thus requires a reconstruction of the sequential organization of communicative messages, patterns and structures, including the use of semiotic resources, by means of which interactants accomplish intended actions and recognition of these to one another to achieve joint understanding (Eberle 2007, 149; Hitzler & Messmer 2011, 308; Deppermann 2008, 49-50). Here, the data of the videographed sequences of naturally occurring talk-in-interaction are analyzed by means of detailed transcription using the Transana software in accordance with the 2 transcription system (Selting et al. 2009; Deppermann 2008, 25). The transcription conventions are illustrated in figure 1.

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<sup>8</sup> CH: Age 3-4; Adults: Ages 35-75

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Sequential structure</b>                   |  |
| [ ]   | Overlapping and simultaneous speech  |
| [ ]   |  |
| =   | A turn following immediately after a previous turn, without pause  |
| <b>Pauses</b>                                 |  |
| (.)   | Micropause   |
| (-), (---), (---)                             | Short, medium-length, long pause (0.25 to 1.0 seconds)   |
| (2.0)   | Estimated pause, for pauses longer than 1.0 seconds  |
| <b>Other segmental conventions</b>            |  |
| Und_äh  | Slurs within units (as if two words were shortened to become one word)   |
| Auf_er Treppe (statt auf der Treppe)          |  |
| ...;  | Stretching of sounds, lengthening, according to duration   |
| äh, oh, etc.                                  | Delay signals, so-called "filled pauses"   |
| Ich habe gEDA/                                | Aborted statement  |
| <b>Laughter</b>                               |  |
| haha hehe hihi                                | Production of specific sounds of laughter  |
| ((laughs, ca 2 sec.))                         | Description of laughter, specification of duration   |
| <b>Reception signals</b>                      |  |
| hm, ja, nein, nee                             | One-syllabic signals   |
| Hm hm, ja_a, nei_ein, nee_e                   | Two-syllabic signals   |
| O?ow  | With glottalization  |
| <b>Pitch movement at the end of a segment</b> |  |
| ?   | High rising  |
| /   | rising   |
| -   | Constant/ unchanging   |
| :   | Falling  |
| .   | Low falling  |
| <b>Emphasis</b>                               |  |
| akZENT  | Primary/ Main emphasis   |
| akzEnt  | Secondary emphasis   |
| ak!zENT!                                      | Particularly strong emphasis   |
| <b>Noticeable changes in pitch</b>            |  |
| ↑   | upwards  |
| ↓   | downwards  |
| <b>Changes in pitch register</b>              |  |
| <<t>  | Low pitch sound  |
| <<h>  | High pitch sound   |
| <b>Changes in volume and speaking speed</b>   |  |
| <<f>  | Forte, loud  |
| <<ff>   | Fortissimo, very loud  |
| <<p>  | Piano, quiet   |
| <<pp>   | Piano, very quiet  |
| <<all>  | Allegro, fast  |
| <<len>  | Lento, slow  |
| <<cresc>                                      | Crescendo, getting louder  |
| <<dim>  | Diminuendo, getting quieter  |
| <<acc>  | Accelerando, getting fast  |
| <<rall>                                       | Rallentando, getting slower  |
| <b>In- and exhaling</b>                       |  |
| .h, .hh, .hhh                                 | Inhaling, according to duration  |
| h, hh, hhh                                    | Exhaling, according to duration  |
| <b>Other conventions</b>                      |  |
| geht_s<br>don_t<br>let_s                      | cliticization  |
| I ce eh                                       | Instances of abbreviation and spelling out loud are written out in full/ broken down<br>speech syllables dissolved       |
| ((hustet))<br>((laughs))                      | Comments: Paralinguistic, nonverbal actions, events and body language (gesture,<br>facial expressions)                   |
| <<hustend>                                    | Paralinguistic and nonverbal actions and events accompanying speech  |
| <<coughing>                                   |  |
| <<erstaunt>                                   | Interpretive commentary  |
| <<astonished>                                 |  |
| (such)  | Presumed wording   |
| al(s)o  | Presumed sound or syllable   |
| (unverständlich, ca. 2 Sek.)                  | Incomprehensible passages in the transcript, specification of duration   |
| *   | Description of relevant nonverbal actions of interactant A   |
| #   | Description of relevant nonverbal actions of interactant B   |
| →   | An arrow on the left-hand side of a segment indicates a specific phenomenon<br>transcript that is of immediate interest. |

Fig. 1: Transcription conventions

The conversation analysis method of sequential analysis is used to examine parents' conversation management including their linguistic choices and other contextualizing meaning, such as nonverbal cues, pauses in speech, overlaps, prosody, and language (see Eberle 2007, 151; Wei 2002, 163, 176). After all, the construction of TL is based on reciprocal, interrelated action and is thus an interactional achievement on a continuous process of analysis by those involved (see Deppermann 2008). In other words, the meaning of TL is co-constructed and as such "emerges as a consequential participants' contextualization work" (Wei 2002, 167).

### 2.3 The child's languaging environment

CH is raised plurilingually with German, English and Dutch in Germany in a multilingual household comprising her parents NI (BFLA German, English) and KL (BFLA Dutch, English) as well as her grandparents LI (MFLA German) and AL (MFLA English). Other family members include her grandparents WI and PE (both MFLA Dutch) residing in the Netherlands, and her aunts MI and JU (both BFLA German, English), with MI living in Germany from CH, and JU living in the United States. CH's parents do not follow a strict strategy (parent one language) or BPBL (both parents both languages) strategy but rather match linguistic resources when addressing CH as the communicative situation requires, deploying English, German and Dutch features at times. That being said, CH receives predominantly Dutch input from KL and German from NI. KL and NI communicate with each other mostly in English with the occasional use of German and Dutch resources. NI addresses CH, his daughters NI, MI and JU and KL exclusively in English, while KL uses German resources to communicate with LI. Conversely, LI interacts with CH exclusively in Dutch, whereas WI remains exclusively in Dutch. PE mostly speaks Dutch with the occasional use of English. MI and JU interact with CH using both English and German. Above all, it should be noted that CH experiences her family members language use consistently and flexibly across language boundaries, drawing on the appropriate resources from their respective repertoire depending on the conditions within a sociocultural family environment embraces translingual interaction and with it all linguistic resources are desirable, valued and legitimate.

### 2.4 Data

Two data samples (A & B) are selected from a data set of 300 videotaped naturalistic routine interactions within two related<sup>10</sup> plurilingual families (fam. 1, child CH; fam. 2, three children<sup>11</sup>: German, English). A and B were selected from routine interactions within family 1.

Recording A: „I want to kümmern mich um die snails“ ((0:00:00.0 – 0:06:17.6))

<sup>9</sup> Part of a long-term study

<sup>10</sup> The mothers NI and JU are sisters. JU and her children live in the USA.

<sup>11</sup> CH's cousins





|         |   |                               |
|---------|---|-------------------------------|
| 055 AL: | [well that_s oK:A:Y,                    |                               |
| 056     | it will be ;HA:Ppy thEre;               |                               |
| 057 MI: | *jA:;                                   | Yes                           |
|         | *CH bückt sich nochmals zu der Schnecke | *CH bends over to look at the |
| 058     | (---                                    |                               |
| 059     | dA passiert NIX;                        | Nothing will happen           |
| 060     | (1.9)                                   |                               |
| 061     | <<bestätigend>hM?>                      | <<affirmative>                |
| 062     | (0.9)                                   |                               |
| 063 CH: | *ich kann schon ein SCHNEckenhaus       | *I can already draw a snail h |
|         | [mA:l:en;                               |                               |
|         | *CH geht wieder zur Wippe               | *CH goes back to the see-saw  |

Fig. 2: Extract 1A: 0:00:24.9 – 0:01:09.4

AL moves CH upward on the see-saw in gradual increments, which is reflected in the partial verbalization of these jerky movements (025). CH then responds to AL's discovery of water on the empty see-saw seat with the reasonable question "why there is water in here" (027)<sup>12</sup>, AL's verb omission in his statement "water in here" (027)<sup>12</sup>, CH expresses her question with the conjugated verb "is"<sup>13</sup>. However, their utterances do not necessarily contain grammatical errors but can simply be regarded as a prevalent phenomenon of child language and medial orality. Informal communicative exchanges as in the present example typically exhibit unevenness in syntax and fragmentary utterances characteristic of the language of proximity (see Koch & Oesterreicher 2022, 652, 655). According to Koch & Oesterreicher, parameters such as spontaneity, emotionality, situational involvement, and intensive cooperation affect the syntactic construction of speech contributions in child language (see *ibid*, 655): Inquiring about the cause of the water accumulation (027) and remaining engaged in meaningful conversation with AL, while verbally accompanying her movements (025), laughing extendedly (029) and expressing her question (030) can be construed as an indication of high spirits.

After providing the complementary second part of the adjacency pair (question-answer) (031), AL observes that there is a snail attached to the underside of the see-saw, which immediately attracts CH's attention (Deppermann 2008, 68). Upon AL's discovery "look" (036), CH expresses her need for further information concerning the snail (037). Shortly thereafter, AL detaches the snail from the see-saw and shows it to CH, who then turns to MI with the intention of showing her AL's discovery. CH initially refers to the snail as a turtle, which is understandable given the similarity of the animal body to protective apparatus. However, she utters the word in a not-so-serious tone and ceases mid-verbalization producing merely "Schildkrö". CH's indirect question in 062 – proudly declaring her ability to draw a "Schneckenhaus" (snail shell) – marks her reevaluation of her previously aborted statement.

CH's linguistic choice to address AL (025, 030, 037) and subsequently MI (030) has particular significance as it constitutes ITE TL. Sequences 025-041 demonstrate how CH initially adapts her languaging to meet AL's needs in terms of preferred language. However, to approach MI, CH selects German resources. While one can argue

<sup>12</sup> Without verb omission: Water IS in here/There IS water in here.

<sup>13</sup> Why IS that?/Why'S that?

sudden modification in language choice in 043 results from a gap in or even linguistic knowledge in English, the following interaction sequences (043-060) and CH suggest an alternative explanation. CH addresses MI directly, realizing the imperative mood with German resources exclusively (043). Her ITA TL is strategic and intentional for it allows her to target her aunt specifically with her attention. Thereupon, MI communicates with CH by phrasing her question as a suggestion (047-049) in German, while transitioning into ITA TL once she is aware (052). Nevertheless, CH continues to deploy solely German resources to express her concern about finding a suitable home for the snail. She seeks approval from her aunt in her body language, which may also account for her linguistic choice.

|     | ORIGINAL   | ENGLISH TRANSLATION  |
|-----|--|--|
| 073 | AL: *dOn t fA:ll O:FF;<br>*AL Beginnt die Wippe zu bewegen   | *AL starts to move the see-saw   |
| 074 | (--)   |  |
| 075 | MI: hM::;  |  |
| 076 | CH: YE_AH:;  |  |
| 077 | (--)   |  |
| 078 | BUT opA::?   | But grandpa  |
| 079 | AL: whA:t?   |  |
| 080 | CH: *I want to (-- ) kÜmmer mich um die<br>SNAI:ls;<br>*CH steigt von der Wippe ab und läuft<br>zu den Schnecken | *I want to take care of the snails<br>*CH climbs off the see-saw<br>over to the snails |
| 081 | AL: you want to fInd a SNAI:L,   |  |
| 082 | (--)   |  |
| 083 | CH: yEah;  |  |
| 084 | *(0.8)<br>*CH läuft an eine andere Stelle  | *CH walks to a different spot  |
| 085 | MI: <<all>you knOw [where you !PUT! it->=  |  |
| 086 | CH: [ja-   | Yes  |
| 087 | MI: =<<all>you can always go visIt it<br>aGAIN> (-) [swEetie;  |  |
| 088 | AL: [there_s mOre SNAILs over there;   |  |
| 089 | (--)   |  |
| 090 | CH: yEs (.) ich hab eine entDE::CRT;   | Yes. I discovered one  |
| 091 | *(0.9)<br>*CH geht vor einem Busch in die Hocke  | *CH squats down in front of the bush   |
| 092 | <<p>hMm>   |  |
| 093 | (1.3)  |  |
| 094 | ;whEre is there more [SNAILs?  |  |
| 095 | AL: [<<all>i don_t<br>knOw you have to LOOK;>  |  |

Fig. 3: Extract 2A: 0:01:21.6 – 0:01:43.9

In 2A, CH is back on the see-saw with AL in charge of up- and downward movements. After acknowledging (076) AL's precautionary comment (073), CH informs AL of her intention to take care of the snails (078 & 080)<sup>14</sup>. The stretching of sounds (076 & 078) and the pause in between may be an indication of a brief inner conflict. Having considered her options, CH adopts a change of plan, which may come as a surprise to AL. After just begun resuming their see-saw game. To this end, CH announces her intention to take care of the snails with the accentuated conjunction "but" thereby not only signaling a concession but also initiating ITA TL. The short pause after

<sup>14</sup> The designation "Opa" (078) is of no particular importance as CH has formed the habit of using "Opa" to address her aunt to AL.

in 080 could testify either to the difficulty in retrieving the desired target word, indecision and careful deliberation of lexical selection, since the following gap has been appropriately filled by CH with a variety of linguistic resources<sup>15</sup>. However, in view of the possible motives, her actual word choice – “but Opa I want to kümmern mich um snails” – can be regarded as a token of strategic consideration and functional resource use. CH succeeds not only in fulfilling the intended semantic function by integrating the German reflexive, prepositional verb “sich kümmern um” into her English construction in a (mostly) syntactically correct manner, along with producing the first person singular of the reflexive pronoun (“mich”) and properly implementing the preposition “um” followed by the object (“snails”). There are various possible explanations for why CH chooses to supply the first-person singular (“kümmern”) of the German verb instead of the required infinitive form (“kümmern”). Having to choose from numerous competing plurilinguistic resources, CH may have jumbled several options, such as “kümmere mich lieber” (= I’d rather take care) and “Ich will mich kümmern” (= I want to care) rendering it a transfer-related occurrence. Alternatively, the inflectional ending “-n” signifying the infinitive form of “kümmern” may be omitted on purpose to avoid disrupting the phonetic flow pattern of the sentence<sup>16</sup>.

AL complies with CH’s decision to concentrate on the snail hunt (081) and the potential location for a successful search (088). With the English affirmative response “yes” (090) CH ratifies AL’s suggested course of action, and proceeds with the German ITE TL forming a new sentence with solely German resources followed by a clarification in English (094). In doing so, CH is able to lend particular emphasis to her discovery, not only with stressed and stretched pronunciation of the word “snails” (090), but also by means of linguistic choice. While the subsequent syntactic structure of her inquiry in English in 094 is faulty<sup>17</sup>, it is important to note that it mirrors the statement pattern in 088, and hence is indicative of CH’s strategy of appropriate word choice and sentence structure to phrase her own question. Besides, the fact borne in mind that such informal talk-in-interaction is naturally peppered with pho-syntactic constructions characteristic of conceptual and medial orality.

|   |         |   |   |
|---|---------|---|---|
|   | 229 AL: | *i knOw where there_s ;mO:re snAils;<br>*AL kippt den Topf wieder nach unten    | *AL tips the plant pot back                               |
|   | 230 CH: | whA:t?  |   |
|   | 231     | (--)  |   |
|   | 232 AL: | I KNOW where there_s mOre ;snAils;  |   |
|   | 233 CH: | *whE::re?<br>*AL läuft in eine andere Richtung                                  | *AL moves into a different c                              |
|   | 234     | (0,8)   |   |
| → | 235     | *aber <<f>!DON_T! trE:t da drAuf-><br>*CH zeigt auf die Schnecken auf dem Boden | But don't step on that<br>*CH points at the snails on     |
| → | 236     | sonst LE:Ben die nicht mehr sonst<br>sind die tO:t;                             | Otherwise they won't live an<br>otherwise they'll be dead |

Fig. 4: Extract 3A: 0:04:00.5 – 0:04:08.0

<sup>15</sup> Engl.: Take care of, tend to, look after. Ger.: Pflegen, versorgen, aufpassen auf.

<sup>16</sup> “I want to kümmern mich” is easier to pronounce and more pleasant in sound compared to “kümmern mich”.

<sup>17</sup> „There are/where are there more snails“ would be grammatically correct.

Another instance of CH using plurilinguistic resources strategically as “attentional” (de Houwer 2009, 269) is shown above in 3A (235-236), and takes place at the beginning of the interaction. In this example of ITA TL, CH voices her command notice with a particular emphasis on the word “don’t” conspicuously sandwiched between the two languages to express her concern for fatal consequences (236). By duplicating the word “sonst” to continue her sentence, CH is able to specify her previous suggestion semantically thereby adding further emphasis. Also, she correctly integrates the German grabbing resource “don’t” into the German syntax of the command construction by placing it in between the coordinating conjunction “aber” and the conjugated verb.

|     | ORIGINAL                                | ENGLISH TRANSLATION         |
|-----|---|-----------------------------|
| 180 | AL: nO SNAILs?                          |                             |
| 181 | CH: NO:;                                |                             |
| 182 | AL: *hM oKAY;                           |                             |
|     | *AL kippt den Topf wieder nach unten    | *AL tips the plant pot back |
| 183 | then we shall kEep on LOOKing;          |                             |
| 184 | (---)                                   |                             |
| 185 | CH: *Under DE:N;                        | Under this one              |
|     | *AL kippt den nächsten Topf             | *AL lifts up the next plant |
| 186 | AL: Under *HE::RE,                      |                             |
|     | *CH bückt sich und schaut unter         | *CH bends over and looks un |
|     | den Topf                                |                             |
| 187 | CH: !NO:!!                              |                             |
| 188 | Also no snAi:ls HE::RE;                 |                             |
| 189 | AL: <<überrascht>Also nO?>              | <<surprised>                |
| 190 | CH: nO;                                 |                             |
| 191 | (--)                                    |                             |
| 192 | AL: *hM;                                |                             |
|     | *AL kippt den Topf wieder nach unten    | *AL tips the plant pot back |
| 193 | CH: [NO:PE;                             |                             |
| 194 | MI: [((lacht, ca. 0.6 Sek.))            | Laughs about 0.6 seconds    |
| 195 | *(0.8)                                  |                             |
|     | *CH geht zu dem nächsten Topf           | *CH walks over to the next  |
| 196 | CH: *let_s lOok under HE::RE;           |                             |
|     | *CH versucht den Topf anzuheben         | *CH tries to lift the pot   |
| 197 | AL: lOok under thE:re [*oKA:Y;          |                             |
|     | *CH geht zur Seite                      | *CH moves to the side       |
| 198 | CH: [YUP;                               |                             |
| 199 | OPA:??                                  | Grandpa                     |
| 200 | AL: whAt?                               |                             |
| 201 | CH: yOu knO:w what *;I_M gonna do?      |                             |
|     | *CH gräbt mit der                       | *CH uses the garden rake to |
|     | Gartenrake in der Erde im Topf          | in the pot                  |
| 202 | AL: <<all>WHAT are you gOnna dO?>       |                             |
| 203 | (1.2)                                   |                             |
| 204 | weIl THAT_s ni/-                        |                             |
| 205 | *there_s a SNAI:L;                      |                             |
|     | *AL zeigt in den Topf                   | *AL points to a spot in the |
| 206 | (---)                                   |                             |
| 207 | CH: *WHE::RE?                           |                             |
|     | *CH hebt die Gartenrake aus dem Topf    | *CH lifts the garden rake o |
| 208 | *(1.6)                                  |                             |
|     | *AL beugt sich über den Topf und greift | *AL bends over the pot and  |
|     | hinein                                  | it                          |
| 209 | AL: or is THAT,                         |                             |
| 210 | nah THAT_s dIrt;                        |                             |
| 211 | NOT a snAil.                            |                             |
| 212 | (1.1)                                   |                             |
| 213 | CH: *wEiter [GRA::ben;                  | Keep digging                |
|     | *CH gräbt weiter in der Erde im Topf    | *CH continues to dig in the |

Fig. 5: Extract 4A: 0:03:16.4 - 0:03:46.2

In 4A, AL and CH provide each other with suggestions as to where to search for the snail. AL suggests to look “under den” (under this one) (1)

her idea in a slightly altered fashion producing the monolingual utterance (186) thereby signaling acknowledgment of her instruction. Once again, CH intertwining English and German morphosyntax and lexico-semantics by proposing the English preposition “under” with the German demonstrative pronoun in the accusative case to refer to a plant pot nearby. CH’s awareness of the fact that the German preposition “unter” requires a (pro)noun in the accusative case whenever movement is involved (when suggesting to look “under this one”) seems to be a linguistic choice.

After unsuccessful search attempts reflected in the monolingual English mode between CH and AL (187-198), CH wishes to demonstrate to AL her new strategy: Digging in the plant pot using a garden rake. She accompanies her action with a comment vocalized intonationally as a question with strong emphasis on herself as the protagonist. AL reacts at once by inquiring about her idea (202). However, this interactional sequence is temporarily suspended as the potential discovery of worms in the plant pot is deemed more important (204-211). Afterwards, CH resumes her thought and initiates ITE TL by uttering “weiter graben” (213). Her comment appears to be addressed to anyone in particular, but rather represents a form of politeness which she chooses to realize in German.

## 2.5.2 Recording B

|         | ORIGINAL   | ENGLISH TRANSLATION  |
|---------|--|--|
| 001 DE: | zal ik mOrgen OOK komen charlie?   | Shall I come tomorrow too  |
| 002     | <<p>ZAL ik mOrgen ook lAngs komen,>                                      | Shall I also drop by tomorrow  |
| 003     | wat ZEG jE,  | What do you say  |
| 004 CH: | will/ ;JIJ mag Ook een nAchtje hier<br>blijven;                          | Will (you)/ you may also stay<br>night                                 |
| 005     | of *TWEE nAchtjes hier ;bLIjven?<br>*CH zeigt zwei Finger                | Or stay *two nights<br>*shows two fingers                              |
| 006 NI: | ((lacht, ca. 2.0 Sek.))  | ((laughs, ca. 2.0 seconds))  |
| 007 DE: | ik SLAAP in bObenheim,=<br>=dAn ga ik morgen weer met de Auto;           | I sleep in Bobenheim<br>Then I'll go by car again tomorrow             |
| 009 CH: | [okAY;   | Okay   |
| 010 WA: | ((lacht, ca. 2.0 Sek.))  | ((laughs, ca. 2.0 seconds))  |
| 011 CH: | jE komt mOrgen weer met/==   | You will come again tomorrow   |
| 012 DE: | =is dat GOED?  | Is that good   |
| 013 CH: | JA (.) dAt is goed;  | Yes that`s good  |
| 014 DE: | Zal ik LAUra mEenemen?   | Shall I bring Laura  |
| 015 CH: | äh <<verschmitzt>NEE::;>   | Äh <<mischievously>no  |
| 016     | ((die Anwesenden reagieren teils<br>lachend teils empört, ca. 3.5 Sek.)) | ((those present react partly<br>laughter and partly with indignation)) |
| 017 DE: | NEE?   | No   |
| 018 KL: | <<t>ja!WE::L!>;  | Yes of course (German equivalent)                                      |
| 019     | laura mag OOK kOMen;   | Laura may also come  |
| 020 PE: | dat is nIet LIEF van jOU;  | That is not nice of you  |

Fig. 6: Extract 1B: 0:00:00.0 – 0:00:34.8

In 1B, DE asks CH in Dutch whether he is welcome to attend her birthday party, revealing his eagerness to be invited by repeating his question slightly altered in tone (006) and by hastily adding “what do you say?” (007). This is followed by a sequence of interactional moves between CH and DE in Dutch monolingual mode: Although DE’s turns (005-006) are replies, CH begins her response with a verb characteristic of a counter-question, initiating a self-repair within the segment to provide an explicit answer reflecting a falling intonation. She further expands her statement to include the offer of a

nights at her home. Upon DE specifying his plan involving prearranged accommodation elsewhere and him traveling by car, CH reacts with approval (001) and frequently begins to repeat DE's idea addressing DE directly (015), but pauses as DE assumes his turn early to request her ratification of his proposal (016). CH complies by echoing his utterance (017). However, to DE's surprise (021), CH repeats his next request with a mischievous smile and tone (018). CH's reaction (018) is playful, cheeky nature as she revels in the attention such a response attracts.

| ORIGINAL   | ENGLISH TRANSLATION   |
|--|---|
| 021 AL: wait a minute WAIT a minute,   |   |
| 022 whAt hAppened to your ENGLISH anyway?  |   |
| 023 CH: ;I DON_t know;   |   |
| 024 i DID lEArn ENGLISH indeed,  |   |
| 025 AL: yEah you DID;  |   |
| 026 thAt_s true.   |   |
| 027 MI: [charLOTte wArum/,   | Charlotte why/  |
| 028 DE: [waarom ben je dan nederlands aan het praten,=   | Then why are you talking D  |
| 029 MI: =jA:.  | yes   |
| 030 CH: Ik WEET hEt.   | Because (implied) I know i  |
| 031 MI: charlOtte warum kriegt der Opa kein/ (-)   | Charlotte why doesn't you   |
| NIX von deinem trInken?  | get to have a taste of you  |
| 032 (2.0)  |   |
| 033 CH: Opa (.) *TRY it;   |   |
| *CH schiebt ihr Getränk zu AL  | *CH pushes her beverage to  |
| 034 AL: shall I/ shAll i TRY it?   |   |
| 035 CH: yeah (.) yOu should TRY it.  |   |
| 036 AL: Okay.  |   |
| 037 MI: *dAs ist aber LIEB;  | Well that is nice   |
| *AL probiert das Getränk von CH und schlürft aus dem Röhrchen  | *AL tries CH's beverage by the straw  |
| 038 AL: HmHM::,  |   |
| 039 CH: isn_t it YUMmy?  |   |
| 040 AL: thAt was GOOD yUp that was good;   |   |
| 041 (2.0 Sek.)   |   |
| 042 AL: *THANK you mIss,   |   |
| 043 ((alle am Tisch unterhalten sich querbeet, ca. 7.0 Sek.) *CH schlürft ihr Getränk weiter und zuckelt die Limettenscheibe aus | ((Everyone at the table is once, ca. 7 seconds)) *CH continues to sip her h drinks the juice from the |
| 044 CH: dArf ich *d/?  | May I *d/   |
| *CH schluckt kurz  | *CH swallows quickly  |
| 045 dArf ich *dAs proBIERen?   | May I try *that   |
| *CH zeigt auf etwas am Essenstisch   | *CH points to so the table  |
| 046 NI: ja?A::;  | Yes/ yeah   |
| 047 PE: natUurlijk MUIS;   | Of course mouse (= term of  |

Fig. 7: Extract 2B: 0:00:34.8 – 0:01:15.4

2B illustrates the interaction sequence immediately following 1B. Having just Dutch exchange between CH and DE with no understanding of what has been said, CH requires CH's English language use (025-026), triggering a series of IT. CH's English response (027-028) attests to her language competence, it also reveals CH's reliance on Dutch resources to communicate effectively providing little to no reason to CH's English language knowledge. Her strong emphasis of the auxiliary verb "did" and intonation as well as her choice of the adverb "indeed" to affirm AL's remark demonstrate that CH is well aware of having acquired skills in English. However, CH's hinges on thorough assessment of the pragmatic conditions of a given situation.

DE interjects to ask CH why she had previously communicated in Dutch (032) replies swiftly simply stating in Dutch “Ik weet het” (= I know it) (034). Although not using a causal conjunction her explicit emphasis of the word “weet” and her intonation may signify causality synonymous with the notion of “doing” implying “knowing”.

MI then proceeds to transition to an unrelated topic indirectly requesting CH refreshment with AL by disguising her request as a question (035). After a short pause MI invites AL to taste her beverage using the imperative mood (037) thereby indicating acknowledgement of MI’s implied request. While MI chooses exclusively German resources to phrase her question, CH does not mirror MI’s language mode but switches to English resources instead to address AL specifically. MI’s German comment on CH’s behavior (041) does not dissuade CH from remaining in the English monolingual mode to continue her conversation with AL. By means of a negative question addressed to MI, CH intends to ask for confirmation of her own opinion. Afterwards, CH turns her attention to the crowd sharing food at the opposite side of the table consisting of her partner as LI, WA, BE and RO, the latter four being German monolinguals. Accordingly, CH uses her next question drawing on German resources (048-049) while simultaneously selecting the appropriate means to phrase her inquiry in a polite manner including the modal verb “dürfen”.

### 3 Discussion

Data analysis reveals that CH constructs and conveys meaning through “language” by identifying the linguistic resources best suited to achieve her communicative goals. As a function of the pragmatic needs of the situation, her linguistic knowledge and her linguistic awareness. She uses language not only creatively, but also with critical awareness of both the perceived pragmatic conditions of the interaction (addressing her communicative tasks, common ground, etc.) and the morpho-syntactic principles pertaining to German, English and Dutch, which suggests a high level of plurilingual awareness (Gawlitzek-Maiwald & Panagiotopoulou 2019, 22). No matter how chaotic the interaction due to the presence of individuals contributing partly overlapping input in one or more languages, CH is able to gauge her interlocutors’ language needs and preference, match their language mode accordingly, and effortlessly implement her knowledge of the system of rules and conventions in each language. The latter strategy qualifies as what Gawlitzek-Maiwald and Panagiotopoulou term bilingual “bootstrapping”, for CH activates, bundles, and exploits her linguistic resources (lexical and structural knowledge in all languages) to produce constructive output (see 903, 920). Furthermore, CH’s (re)actions indicate quite sophisticated pragmatic skills as she deploys the proper resources to encode and decode speech acts (see 2A 088-095) and deliberately selects either German, English, Dutch or a combination of features from her repertoire to meet the linguistic demands of her social environment (see Timpe Laughlin, Wain & Schmidgall 2015, 6). Navigating communicative interactions successfully thus requires her to draw on all her linguistic knowledge and experience and her perception of the interlocutors’ linguistic capabilities thereby demonstrating



emerging sociolinguistic awareness (see Council of Europe 2020, 123; Baracero & Sanchez 2014, 708). For instance, CH's awareness of AL's capability to understand English and German manifests in 2A (090-094) as she makes a semantic emphasis. Her ability to accommodate her language use to each interlocutor enables CH to customize her languaging with the intention to address interlocutors individually.

Furthermore, CH's agentic language behavior in recording A and B signals that she identifies as and wishes to be respected as a competent language user within the German- and the Dutch-speaking community. Hence, CH's navigation of plurilingual action is also driven by her desire to be recognized as an individual belonging to a linguistic community, and thus "to deploy one's semiotic resources to positions one would wish in a multilingual world" (see Larsen-Freeman 2019, 62), i.e. CH is capable of exploiting her linguistic resources to match the language use of her interlocutors. Her ability and eagerness to continuously adjust her language mode to her interlocutors' linguistic capacity as well as her awareness of the plurilingual environment she deploys can be interpreted as an indication of said desire (e.g. 2B, 027-028). CH's heightened awareness of her immediate environment makes her receptive to the possibilities it affords and facilitates her capacity to harness multiple semiotic resources (see Piccardo 2017, 10; Wei & Garcia 2014, 16; Larsen-Freeman, Driver, Gao & Tracy 2016, 16). Her grasp of the social space in which she interacts – a space that values multiple linguistic practices as natural and legitimate forms of expression – empowers her to interact effectively, creatively and efficiently through situated deployment of appropriate semiotic resources of her meaning-making repertoire (see García & Wei 2018, 1-2; Piccardo 2017, 10). Above all though, the TS is created by CH and her interlocutors' agentic language behavior as they move comfortably and fluidly between and beyond languages (Wei & Garcia 2014, 16).

This article features only two data samples from a larger data set of recordings of CH on the linguistic agency including the choice of semiotic resources of one child in a particular situation. While the present analysis of recordings A and B is exemplary of the agentic behavior of the four children in the long-term study, it does not aim to make general (i.e. descriptive) statements regarding CH's linguistic development. Also, it does not consider other factors such as interactions between CH and her three BFLA cousins raised in a plurilingual environment, changes in the linguistic environment, such as attending a monolingual school, and language status (majority or minority) affect CH's linguistic performance.

Regardless of whether meticulous attention is paid to an OPOL or BPBL situation, a mixture of both without a clear separation of languages, it is beneficial for BFLA children to interact and learn from their caregivers languaging adaptively in sensitivity to the particular conditions of communicative situations (see Tracy 2014, 23; Scharff & Rethfeldt 2016). Ultimately, the goal is to develop plurilingual competence, i.e. the flexible, hyphenated use of appropriate linguistic resources depending on the addressee, context and communicative situation. As the analysis of CH's languaging behavior shows, the key to achieving plurilingual competence lies in the rigorous application of one method, but rather in taking care to offer rich, complex and authentic input in one or more languages and to act as a

model capable of flexible language mode alternation in a wide variety of intexts with diverse mono- and plurilingual interlocutors (see Tracy 2014, 23, 2thfeldt 2020, 28).

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