

THE ROLE OF THE CLAUSE FOR TURN-TAKING IN DUTCH CONVERSATIONS

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THE ROLE OF THE CLAUSE FOR TURN-TAKING IN DUTCH CONVERSATIONS

De rol van de clause voor beurtwisseling in Nederlandse gesprekken
(met een samenvatting in het Nederlands)

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PART I

Chapter 1: Introduction

One of the tasks participants of a conversation face is the sequential organization of their interaction. That is, they have to negotiate both the allocation and the timing of turns-at-talk. A first superficial glance at an arbitrary interaction shows that participants structure this sequential organization in a very orderly manner. Turn-taking is realized without a considerable pause or overlap. Please take a look at Example 1.

Example 1.

1. A: en hij heeft dat dus uiteindelijk niet gedaan.=
2. *and he has that so eventually not done*
3. *and so in the end he did not do it=*
4. B: = ook niet nadat je het hem nog eens had gevraagd.
5. *also not after you it him again had asked*
6. = *not even after you asked him again*
7. A: nee
8. *no*
9. *no*

In Example 1, A tells a story describing an incident that occurred earlier that week at work. A's co-worker failed to carry out a request A made, resulting in a miscommunication in the project both are working on. In line 1, A reports the failure of this co-worker to carry out her request. In line 4, B takes the turn producing a request for clarification: '*not even after you asked him again*'. In line 7, A responds. All speaker changes in this example occur without overlap or a noticeable pause. New turns are seamlessly *latched* onto the prior turn. Example 1 is by no means an exception: the vast majority of speaker changes occur in this orderly manner. This has led a number of students of language to propose that recipients are in some way or other able to predict turn endings in a very precise way. But how is this possible? Predicting a turn ending presupposes a clear idea of what constitutes a turn in a given sequential context. This raises some interesting questions. What are the features that participants orient to in deciding what it takes for the turn under way to be completed?

Do participants orient to the linguistic structures that constitute a turn-at-talk or is the evaluation of interactional units based on the meanings expressed by that unit? And if linguistic structure does play a role in this process can we describe a turn-at-talk as a fixed linguistic unit (that is, as some sort of schema comprising a variety of obligatory and optional elements), or is the phenomenon under investigation best described in terms of local, boundary signals at the edges of amorphous stretches of talk?

In this study, we will try to answer these questions based on a corpus study of spontaneous Dutch conversations. In particular, we will look at the role of the clause in the organization of turns-at-talk. Various studies have indicated that the clause lies at the very core of grammatical organization. So it stands to reason that this particular linguistic structure will also play an important role in the organization of turn-taking. The clause provides a clear schema that could function as a skeleton on the basis of which the other elements of a turn-at-talk could be organized. However, clearly a turn-at-talk cannot be equated with a syntactic structure. Please take a look at Examples 2 and 3.

Example 2.

1. A: ik stond daar beneden
2. *I stood there down stairs*
3. *I was standing down stairs*
4. (0.5)
5. A: ik houd mijn pasje ervoor
6. *I hold my pass in front of it*
7. *I put my pass in front of it*
8. (1.0)
9. B: [mooi niet
10. [*beautiful not (idiomatic)*
11. [*no way*
12. C: [maar nee
13. [*but no*
14. [*but no*
15. A: [maar er gebeurde niets
16. [*but there happened nothing*
17. [*but nothing happened*

Example 3.

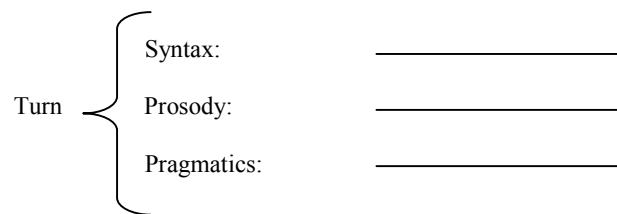
1. A: omdat hij ook nog naar poelier moest in de stad
2. *because he also still to poulterer had to in the city*
3. *because he also had to go to the poulterer in the city*
4. B: oh ja tuurlijk
5. *oh yes of course*
6. *oh yeah of course*

In Example 2, A tells another work related story to two of her co-workers. The electronic locks on the doors in their office building have been changed recently. As a result, the old card-keys do not work anymore. In this part of the conversation, the participants exchange anecdotes centering on the confusion that resulted from this change of locks. A's story is delivered in three distinct clauses. However, none of these utterances are treated as a complete turn on its own. It is only after the situation has been set up (in lines 1 and 5) that B and C react to the story as a whole.

And they do so in a very interesting way: they not only react to the story underway, they also produce the punch line of the anecdote. This suggests that in assessing the status of a turn underway, recipients not only orient to the syntactic status of the turn, but also to its content (its pragmatic function). Only after the gist of the story is clear, they take the turn. Notice, however, that turn-taking is still realized at the completion point of a clause. This suggests that a turn is best understood as comprised of structures on at least two distinct levels: grammar and pragmatics. However, Example 3 gives some compelling evidence that this still cannot be the full picture.

In Example 3, A produces a single clause at the end of which B takes the turn. At first sight, this seems to provide additional evidence that recipients orient to the syntactic status of a turn. However, further analysis shows that Example 3 actually consists of two possible clauses: *omdat hij ook nog naar de poelier moest* (“because he also had to go to the poulterer”) and *omdat hij ook nog naar de poelier moest in de stad* (“because he also had to go to the poulterer in the city”). How can a recipient distinguish between these two possible clause-structures (and for that matter, between the whole set of possible clause-structures)? A first candidate might be pragmatics: since we have to assume that pragmatic structures play an important role for independent reasons anyway. However, it is unclear how the addition *in de stad* (“in the city”) can be predicted based on the pragmatic context: the location of the poultry shop does not play an important role in the conversation up to that point. Another likely candidate is prosody. The prosodic make-up of the clause projects that there is more to come after the first possible clause has been produced. This suggests at least a tripartite structure for the turn: a turn can be described in terms of syntax, prosody and pragmatics. In this view, a turn is possibly complete if these three structures coincide. Speaker change, or more precisely the turn-taking mechanism then becomes interactionally relevant if and only if the structures on all three levels are complete. Schematically:

Figure 1.



In this view, we can describe any part of a turn as a 3-tuple (syntax, prosody, pragmatics):

< +/- ; +/- ; +/- >

A plus sign indicating a complete structure on a particular level, a minus-sign indicating an incomplete structure at a particular level. A possibly complete turn can then be characterized as a structure that has the following description: < +; + ; + >.

As a result one would expect that turn-taking would take place only when all three structures that constitute a turn underway are possibly complete.

Furthermore, this characterization of a turn has the advantage that it provides us with a classification of turns-at-talk that distinguishes between eight different 'turn states'.¹ Of course this might be too fine grained a system in the sense that participants do not orient to these different states as distinct interactional units.² On the other hand, it does raise a number of interesting questions regarding the interactional function of some of these types of turns. One way one could envisage a functional use of these different states is by projecting longer turns by making sure that at all times in the turn underway at least one of the structures constituting the turn is incomplete. For example, how do participants project turns beyond clause boundaries? Are longer turns projected by using prosodic marking? Or are turns that comprise multiple clauses best described in terms of pragmatic schemata?

Other questions that are raised by this classification system, concern the way that 'simplex turns' are realized in conversations. How are different lexical items, phrases, word groups, etcetera, prosodically realized in conversations? Is there a one-to-one relationship between prosodic and syntactic structure? And if not, how are different syntactic structures produced in multiple intonation contours? In the remainder of the study, we will look at turns-at-talk from the perspective of this model for turns-at-talk. Central to our investigation will be the assumption that turns of talk are best described as tripartite structures consisting of a syntactic, a prosodic and a semantic/pragmatic tier.³

Our main goal in this study is to describe the ways in which the structures on the three linguistic levels work together in the construction and interpretation of turns-at-talk. The remainder of this study consists of two parts.

In Part II, we will test our definition of turns-at-talk and TCUs in a corpus study.⁴ To do this, we will look at turn-taking in spontaneous Dutch conversations. Based on the turn-taking model of Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974), we will argue that turn-taking data show an orientation of participants to possibly complete interactional structures. Participants place their turns at the boundaries of possibly complete turns by the current speaker. The corpus study has a quantitative and a qualitative component.

First, we will test the hypothesis that speaker change implies possibly complete structures on all three linguistic levels. Second, we will analyze counter

¹ Notably 2x2x2 possible states: <+,+,+>; <-,+> <+,-> <+,-> <+,-> <-,-> <-,-> <-,-> <-,->.

² To put it even stronger: whether or not all these types actually are possible is primarily an empirical question. However, it is clear that a fine grained distinction between different interactional units facilitates these kinds of observations that may go unnoticed if one were to use a more holistic concept of turns-at-talk.

³ Although there is evidence in the literature (Selting 1996, Bavelas, Coates, and Johnson 2002) for an additional level of non-verbal elements of turns-at-talk (gesture, gaze, etcetera.) we will not go into that aspect of turns-at-talk in this particular study.

⁴ A detailed description of the corpus can be found in paragraph 6.3 in Part I.

examples to this hypothesis using a deviant case analysis. In this qualitative analysis of our data we will try to show that in these counter examples participants orient to the status of the ongoing turn as incomplete. We will also argue that both approaches are necessary to give a complete picture of the data, since the nature of pragmatic models allows for strategic interactional use of these models.

In Part III, of this study we will take a closer look at how the units that make up turns-at-talk work together in the construction of interactional units in conversation. We will do this by focusing on the different ways participants can expand their turns beyond possible completion points. Here we will give a detailed description of the various ways interactants can add materials to possibly complete turns using linguistic resources. We will also look at the interactional status of these different continuations. Again, we will look at this phenomenon both from a quantitative and a qualitative viewpoint.

In the remainder of Part I, we will formulate our research questions based on a discussion of the literature. We will also give a first, preliminary description of our corpus.

Chapter 2: The turn-taking literature: towards a hypothesis

2.1. Introduction

In Chapter 1, we saw that participants in a conversation are able to predict the end of the turn underway without a noticeable pause or overlap. We claimed that this particular feat can be explained if we assume that turns-at-talk have some sort of projective quality that allows interactants to assess what it will take for the current turn to be possibly complete. We also claimed that at least three distinct levels of structure are needed to account for this particular property of turns-at-talk: syntax, prosody and pragmatics. In this chapter, we will discuss three seminal papers that form the basis of the current study. The goal of this chapter is twofold. First, we want to give an overview of the literature on turn-taking that forms the basis of our claim that turns are best described as tripartite structures consisting of the interplay on syntactic, prosodic and syntactic units. Second, in our discussion of these papers we will work towards our own hypothesis and methodology for this study.

In paragraph 2.2, we will discuss the turn-taking model of Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974). In paragraph 2.3 and 2.4 we will discuss two studies in the framework of interactional linguistics that formed the inspiration for this study. In paragraph 2.3, we discuss Selting (1996) and in paragraph 2.4, we will take a look at Ford and Thompson (1996).

2.2. The turn-taking model

In this paragraph, we will take a closer look at the turn-taking model as it was proposed by Sacks et al. (1974). This seminal paper gives a first description of the turn-taking phenomena and tries to explain these phenomena based on a model that describes the practices of turn-taking. The turn-taking model has two components: *the turn-constructural component* and *the turn-allocation component*. The turn-constructural component defines what stretches of talk can constitute a turn-constructural unit (TCU). This part of the model defines the building blocks of conversations. It is this part of the model that allows participants to predict turn endings and that allows for the placement of next turns without a noticeable pause or overlap. After a complete TCU has been produced (resulting in a Transition Relevant Place [TRP]), the turn-allocation component takes over and guides the organization of a possible speaker change. The turn-allocation unit thus describes how turn-taking is organized at the boundaries of TCUs. Together these two components describe the organization of turn-taking in informal interactions. The turn-constructural component describes the units after which turn-taking becomes relevant, whereas the turn-allocation component describes the process by which a next speaker is selected at these turn boundaries.

In this study, our main concern is with the turn-constructural component. Our goal is to come to a description of interactional units in Dutch conversations. Stated in the terminology of the turn-taking model: we try to answer the question what constitutes turns-at-talk in Dutch informal conversations. However, it is the turn-allocation component of the turn-taking model that gives us a way to empirically determine what constitutes turns-at-talk. An empirical study of the turn-

taking should take the orientation of the participants of a conversation as the starting point of its investigation. Since the process of turn-taking as described by the turn-allocation component is licensed by the turn-constructive component, we can take actual speaker changes as an indication of the presence of complete interactional units. The turn-allocation component is only active on the boundaries of TCUs. This means that from the perspective of the turn-taking model, every speaker change is an indication that the new speaker interprets the foregoing unit as a complete TCU.

So, what constitutes a TCU according to the original turn-taking model? Sacks et al. (1974) distinguish a wide variety of possible TCUs:

“There are various unit-types with which a speaker may set out to construct a turn (...) unit-types for English include sentential, clausal, phrasal, and lexical constructions.” (SSJ, p.702)

According to SSJ, these morpho-syntactic structures allow hearers to determine what it will take for the turn underway to be possibly complete. Based on their linguistic knowledge participants can predict turn endings. They place the start of their turns at the boundaries of these syntactic structures. These structures all share the characteristic that they project their own structure in a predictable way:

“unit-types so usable allow a projection of the unit-type underway, and what, roughly, it will take for an instance of that unit-type to be completed.” (SSJ, p.703)

That is, all structures that function as a TCU project their own possible completion based on the linguistic knowledge of the listener. This gives us a first possible definition of TCUs. TCUs could be equated with a specific set of syntactic structures that have a clear projective quality. These structures predict their own endings, and as such they can explain the placement of new turns without a pause or overlap.

Although their primary focus is on the syntactic make-up of turns, SSJ also point out the relevance of ‘sound production’ for the constitution of a TCU and thus the projection of upcoming TRPs:

“Clearly, some understanding of ‘sound production’ (...) is also very important to turn-taking organization (...) When it is (...) realized that any word can be made into a ‘one-word’ unit type (...) via intonation, then we can appreciate the partial character of the unit-types’ description in syntactic terms.”(SSJ, p.705)

Clearly syntax cannot be the only factor determining the construction and interpretation of TCUs. The presence of this type of TCUs shows that we need additional information to determine what is projected in these specific cases. Syntax under specifies turns-at-talk. Since elliptical constructions can also be used as TCUs, what constitutes a TCU can only be determined by looking at (at least) both the prosodic and the syntactic structures that make up that particular TCU:

“turns are at least partially organized via language specific constructional formats (...) of which sentential construction is a most important and familiar, but not sole instance”.⁵ (SSJ, p.705)

SSJ (1974) argues that turns are made up of specific linguistic structures that project their own completion. Based on these linguistic structures participants can predict turn endings and place their own turns without overlap or a pause. However, SSJ (1974) does not give a full fledged definition of a TCU per se. In this particular version of the model, it remains unclear what linguistic features precisely constitute a TCU. This study aims at answering this question for Dutch. In the following chapters, we conduct an empirical investigation of TCUs in Dutch conversations. It is the underlying logic of the turn-taking model that allows us to study TCUs empirically. More precisely, the regularities formulated in the turn-allocation component allow us to draw inferences from speaker changes in actual conversations.

According to the turn-taking model, TRPs occur at possible completion points. At these places speaker change becomes interactionally relevant. At these boundaries two things might happen: the current speaker can select the next speaker or another participant can claim the floor and produce the next turn. This process is negotiated by the following set of rules:

1. Supposing that C has initiated a current turn, the following rules apply at the initial turn-constructional unit's first TRP, consecutively in the order listed:
 - a. If C selects N in the current turn, then N has sole rights and obligations to speak next, transfer occurring at the first TRP after N has been selected.
 - b. If (a) has not been applied, i.e. C has not selected N in the current turn, then any other party may or may not self-select, with the first starter gaining rights to a turn, transfer occurring at that place.
 - c. If neither (a) C selects N nor (b) another party has self-selected, then C may, but need not, continue, thereby claiming rights to another turn-constructional unit.
2. At the initial turn-constructional unit's first TRP, if rules (1a) and (1b) have not operated, and (1c) has been applied, then at the next TRP, rules (1a-c) reapply, and recursively at each subsequent TRP, until speaker change occurs. (cited in: Levinson, 1983, p. 298)

⁵ According to Sacks et al. the relationship between syntactic structures and turns-at-talk can even be stated stronger as a relation of dependency: “it seems productive to assume that, given conversation as a major, if not THE major, locus of a language's use, other aspects of language structure will be designed for conversational use and ... turn-taking contingencies.” (SSJ, p.703)

In this view of turn-taking, interactants negotiate turn-taking at each TRP in a cyclic process. As such the model is both local (it specifies what may happen at any particular TRP) and global (it specifies the recurrent application of a set of rules).

The turn-taking model has some interesting implications. First, if the turn-taking model is right, turn-taking behavior can teach us a lot about TCUs. Only at the boundaries of TCUs is turn-taking licensed by this model. This means that without an indication of the opposite in the interaction, we can interpret speaker changes as orientations of participants to complete TCUs. Second, the formulation of the turn-allocation component also makes clear that turn-taking is not a deterministic process. With the exception of option (1a) the model only states the options that participants have at a particular TRP. No participant is obliged to take the turn. Turn-taking is negotiated in a sequential manner by all of the participants of a conversation. As a result one cannot predict speaker change at a particular place based on this model. The turn-taking model is not deterministic and as such asymmetrical. Whereas turn-taking can be analyzed as an orientation towards a complete TCU, the opposite does not hold. The absence of turn-taking does not mean that the participants interpret the foregoing clause as incomplete. The turn-taking model clearly allows for the same speaker to continue. This means that it is not possible to draw any inferences based on the absence of turn-taking. It only means that we cannot predict speaker change. One can only explain why a speaker change occurred at a particular place in the conversation: speaker change is licensed by the occurrence of a TRP at the boundary of a possibly complete TCU. That is, speaker change is a clear indication that a possible complete TCU has been produced.

Of course, as is the case with all pragmatic theories, these rules are only guidelines (or game-rules if one wishes). They *can be*, and *are* broken in actual conversations. This means that we expect to find instances of turn-taking in conversations that do not adhere to the turn-taking model. However, it is to be expected that these instances are marked in at least two ways. First it is to be expected that turn-taking will take place according to the model more often than not. As such, counterexamples for the model are expected to be *statistically marked*. Second, it is to be expected that counterexamples for the turn-taking model will be *interactionally marked*. That is, in lieu of the fact that a particular turn goes against the guidelines stipulated in the turn-taking model, it will be interpreted and treated by participants as a marked speaker change. As with all pragmatic theories, turns that break pragmatic principles are interpreted as just that: turns that break principles. This means that they get additional meaning as marked structures.

It is this characteristic of the turn-taking model that allows us to draw inferences about the nature of TCUs based on speaker change in actual conversations. Since the turn-allocation component is only activated at a point where the current TCU reaches a point of possible completion (a TRP), speaker change is a good indicator that according to the participants a TRP has been reached in the TCU underway.⁶ It is important to note that this inference only works in one direction: although we can infer the presence of a TRP on the basis of speaker change, we

⁶ In the absence of any indication that we are dealing with a marked case.

cannot infer that a TRP has not been reached on the basis of the absence of speaker change.⁷ Since the turn-taking model for the greater part only describes turn-taking *potential*, one cannot conclude that no TRP has been reached because speaker change did not occur (see rule (1c) and 2 of the turn-taking model).

The turn-taking model and its implications will be the basis of the rest of this study. Our primary goal will be a definition of Dutch TCUs. To achieve these goals, we will take the turn-allocation model as our guideline. Looking at actual speaker changes in a corpus of Dutch conversations we will try to answer the question what units constitute Dutch TCUs. The definition of the turn-component as formulated in Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974) will be the starting point of our investigation. We expect that turn-taking will take place at the boundaries of syntactic and prosodic units. That is, we predict that turn-taking only takes place if the boundaries of the units on all three linguistic levels coincide. In the remainder of this chapter, we will look at two studies that describe TCUs for two distinct languages, English and German.

2.3. *The case of German (Selting 1996)*

Selting (1996) discusses the way prosody and syntax work together in the construction of turn-constructive units based on a corpus study of informal German interactions. The main goal of the study is a qualitative analysis of turns-at-talk. The paper can be seen as an elaboration on the first proposals for a definition of the turn-constructive component by Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974). Selting (1996) wants to show:

1. “that and how syntactic structures like the ‘possible sentence’, as a flexible syntactic schema, can be used for comparatively far-reaching projections,
2. that and how intonation, too, is a flexible schema with ‘possible contours’ that is used to configure, delimit and more locally contextualize the production of turn-constructive units,
3. how both syntax and intonation play their own individual roles and interact as resources in the organization and projection of turn-constructive units and turns-at-talk.” (Selting 1996, p.358)

Selting uses the term *schema*, or *construction schema* and *gestalt* to describe structures on the various linguistic levels. These terms are chosen to stress the “flexible, dynamic, and situationally adaptable” (idem, p. 359) nature of these structures. Construction schemata are part of the linguistic knowledge of the

⁷ Of course one could use a statistical argument in this particular matter: if certain identifiable points in stretches of speech never coincide with speaker change, it is very unlikely that those identifiable points are TRPs. However, this kind of reasoning relies heavily on the coding of the corpus in the sense that it presupposes identifiable points in a stretch of speech. We will argue later in this study that that stance is not viable for some linguistic structures that could constitute TCUs (i.e. prosody and pragmatics).

speaker/hearer and provide knowledge about the parts that make up a particular linguistic structure.

These structures are flexible in the sense that they describe the elements that in principle can be part of that particular structure. The parts are “linked in more or less tight and in more or less varied ways, their exact relation and enactment being dependent on and open to the task at hand” (idem, p. 359). Schemata state both the necessary and optional elements of a particular linguistic structure.

Selting uses the notion of gestalt to stress the holistic character of these units:

“*Gestalt* is a particular kind of construction schema that foregrounds the Holistic – and yet analytically decomposable or deconstructable – nature of a ‘unit’ ... The initiation of a particular gestalt-type configuration or activity as well as the ongoing emerging production of it, projects gestalt closure or completion.” (idem, p. 359)

The notion of gestalt combined with the notion construction schema could explain both the flexible nature of turns-at-talk and the observed projective quality of conversational units. Although units, in this view, can be flexibly produced to adjust to the sequential situation at hand, the actual units that are produced are recognizable as realizations of a particular construction. Participants can turn to this knowledge in their interpretation of the turn so far.

Selting distinguishes four kinds of projection: syntactic projection, prosodic projection, semantic projection and discourse-pragmatic or sequential projection. However, the notions gestalt and construction schema are only applied to the first two categories. In this study, both prosodic and syntactic units are analyzed as based on holistic schemata. Selting gives two examples of schemata: the ‘possible sentence’ and the ‘intonation contour’. In the remainder of the paper, Selting shows that both syntax and prosody provide useful resources for participants in the constructions of turns-at-talk.

The first question Selting addresses is which syntactic structures could function as construction schemata. It is clear that static linguistic categories do not suffice. Although many syntactic structures found in conversations could happily be coded as ‘sentences’ or ‘clauses’, elliptical structures and additional materials are not easily so characterized. Turns are flexible units: phrases can be added at the beginning, in the middle or at the end of structures under way. Quoting Schegloff (1979), Selting stresses that ‘turns are flexible entities which have to allow room for incremental production processes and interactional negotiation’, and thus ‘the linguistic structures constituting them should reflect this (Schegloff, 1979)’. This means that the construction schemata that might play a role in the organization of interactions should reflect this dynamic characteristic of turns-at-talk. Notions like *possible sentence* and/or *possible clause* seem likely candidates.

Selting approaches the problem as an empirical problem, and rightly so. In the end it is not the linguistic intuition of students of language that should be the deciding factor, but observable behavior by participants in real conversations. Selting points to two interactional phenomena that make an orientation on a ‘possible clause’ schema likely.

The first kind of evidence is the absence of turn-taking as long as current speaker has not finished his/her clause under way, even in the presence of pauses or hesitations. Participants orient towards the schema of the possible sentence: as long as the ongoing turn is not analyzable as a possibly complete sentence or clause, participants refrain from turn-taking. Although this method sounds plausible, I think this approach is not very useful in the present case. Since the turn-taking model is not deterministic (see our discussion in the previous paragraph), we cannot conclude anything on the basis of the absence of turn-taking. When a speaker reaches a TRP, another participant may take over the turn. However, he or she is certainly not obliged to do so.⁸ This means that the absence of turn-taking can have one of two possible reasons:

1. the other participant(s) did not perceive the turn as possibly complete and in accordance with this interpretation, did not take the turn,
2. the other participant(s) did perceive the turn as possibly complete. However, for some reason or other they chose not to take the turn.

Both options are covered by the turn-taking model. In the first case, the turn-taking component was not activated (there was no complete turn-constructional unit). In the second case, the turn-taking model *was* activated, but the recipient(s) of the turn chose not to take the next turn (an option that is provided by the second clause in the turn-taking model). This means that the absence of a reaction cannot, in itself, constitute evidence for the absence of a possibly complete unit. Of course the presence of turn-taking is a different story altogether. Turn-taking is observable behavior that is based on a certain interpretation of the ongoing turn. This means that it is possible to attribute some sort of rationale to speaker change.⁹

The second kind of evidence is the placement of early starts and recipient tokens by participants: these elements are produced most frequently at the end of a sentence or a clause. This might indicate an orientation towards the clause or sentence as an interactionally relevant schema. The placement of recipient tokens just *before* a clause or sentence reaches its possible completion constitutes a third kind of evidence. Selting distinguishes three cases. A first case is when the recipient token is produced not at the end of the actual sentence, but at the end of a possible sentence contained by the actual sentence. The second case comprises recipient tokens and early starts that are produced in overlap with tag questions. A third case consists of early starts and recipient tokens that overlap with the production of adverbial materials that have a canonical slot in the clause, but can also be realized in the right periphery of the sentence. Clausal continuations after a possible sentence

⁸ Contexts in which the speaker produced a first pair part are an exception. In these cases the absence of turn-taking, and consequently the absence of a second pair part is marked and hence treated as noticeably absent.

⁹ Of course it is still possible that this rationale has nothing to do with the syntactic make-up or the interpretation of the turn so far as complete. However, these things can be made more plausible when other factors are taken into account. It also shows that some sort of quantitative measure will be necessary.

make up the last case. All these cases have in common that they are produced at points at which the clause or sentence underway was possibly complete. Arguably, it is the status of the ongoing turn as possibly complete that the participants are reacting to in these particular cases.

Selting calls these point 'possible sentence completion points' (see also Auer 1996, 1992, 2005). Sentences may contain multiple possible completion points. At these points the sentence is possibly complete in its sequential context.¹⁰ As such, these points are vulnerable with respect to turn-taking. When hearers' interpretations are based on the syntactic status of the turn with respect to specific schemata, *possible* completion points that are not *actual* completion points introduce an ambiguity into the turn-taking system.

Based on this, Selting concludes that participants do orient towards syntactic schemata. The most likely candidates are the possible sentence and the possible clause:

"Once a possible sentence has been projected, recipients seem to be able, because of their knowledge of possible syntactic structures and schemata, to recognize potential end points of these constructions." (Selting 1996, p. 367)

Participants use this linguistic knowledge as a resource for the production of recipient tokens and early starts, thus acting in accordance with the turn-taking model in trying to minimize the gap between turns. However, since possible completion points need not be actual completion points, the schema of the possible sentence provides participants with a flexible template on which to structure their turns according to the particularities of the sequential context.

This raises a number of important questions with respect to the internal make-up of the clause. What part of the clause activates the clausal schema. Also, not all turns constitute clauses.¹¹ So, at what point does the clausal schema become relevant. In this study, we will argue that it is the finite verb that activates the relevant schemata.¹² Another important consequence of this view is that there exists

¹⁰ The introduction of context is, of course, vital. It is impossible to ascertain the completion of a sentence in isolation: for example otherwise obligatory arguments may be absent in specific contexts (ellipsis). In this case it is still possible to treat the rationale behind the "missing objects" as being the result of a syntactic process however the syntactic completion of a turn can also be influenced by pure sequential reasons. Repairs are a case in point (Fox, Ford and Thompson 1996): repair structures allow for a degree of syntactic freedom absent from 'normal' syntactic structures. This means that a turn that is functioning as a repair will have different completeness-criteria than a sentence that does not fulfill this particular sequential function.

¹¹ Although the vast majority of them do. See Part I Chapter 4.

¹² In Dutch there is the further distinction between a subordinate and a main clause. One could argue that, while it is the finite verb that activates the main clause schema, it is the subordinator that activates the subordinate clause schema.

a fundamental asymmetry in the clause between elements that are in some sense ‘obligatory’ and elements that are ‘optional’. This is a difficult topic because what clausal elements count as *obligatory* is not just a matter of syntax, it is in a very important sense also a contextual notion. From a purely theoretical perspective, it is clear that the notions of schema and gestalt introduce an inequality in the following sense: obligatory elements are necessary for the clause underway to be perceived as complete, whereas optional elements are not.¹³ This raises the question whether this dichotomy is also reflected in the functional domain: is there a difference in interactional function between optional and obligatory elements of the clausal schema? We will take this topic up in Part III of this study.

This notion of a flexible schema also introduces a form of indeterminacy. Recipients can only conclude that the clause underway has come to a point of *possible* completion. Whether or not a possible completion point really marks the end of the turn underway can only be established in retrospect, after a new unit has been produced. That is, after the production of elements that cannot be incorporated in the interpretation of the foregoing structure. For most syntactic structures, however, speakers can add any number of syntactic expansions after a possible completion point that can be analyzed as continuations of the structure underway.

Selting distinguishes two different categories of expansions after possible complete sentences: expansions that are shaped as part of the ongoing TCU and expansions that are constructed as a new TCU. The distinguishing characteristic is the prosodic make-up of the expansion: if and only if an expansion is produced in an independent intonation unit, it constitutes a new TCU. The rationale behind this analysis is that prosody, on a structural level, functions in the same way as syntax. Intonation contours, in this view, are best viewed as gestalts or schemata. Intonation contours are melodic gestalts that are perceived by interactants as *prosodically cohesive* based on the presence or absence of boundary signals.¹⁴ They also share the flexibility of the syntactic gestalts: speakers can continue, expand, or come back to intonation contours that were produced earlier.¹⁵ This also introduces a form of indeterminacy with respect to the status of the ongoing intonation contour: it is only possible to determine whether an intonation contour is finished in retrospect. The start of a new intonation contour implies that the foregoing intonation contour is finished.

This linguistic resource can be used by the participants to package expansions to possibly complete sentences in two radically different ways. If the expansion is prosodically integrated, it does not constitute a TCU on its own. If,

¹³ Although they need not actually be produced, it is enough that they can be inferred from the context.

¹⁴ Selting distinguishes four kinds of boundary signals. Two of these signals can be found at the beginning of new units: the presence of an upstep or a downstep and the presence of latching and/or anacrustic syllables. The other two signals occur at the end of intonation contours: final lengthening and the presence of a pause. Combined together these signals demarcate both the beginning and the end of prosodic units.

¹⁵ Intonation contours can be expanded by either continuing the pitch movement of the contour or by producing flat pitch movements.

however, the expansion is produced in a new, independent intonation unit it does count as an independent TCU.

In this view, what constitutes a TCU seems to be a purely theoretical matter: what constitutes a TCU is the result of a definition. There is no need to look at actual conversations and real interactional behavior to conclude what exactly constitutes a TCU. The remainder of the paper however suggests that what constitutes a TCU is primarily an empirical matter. TCUs are those conversational units that can occupy a turn. In this latter view, it seems more appropriate to regard the notion of the TCU as the result of an empirical investigation, rather than as a theoretical notion that can be decided on beforehand. The question then becomes which conversational data can serve as evidence to decide whether or not a stretch of talk is a separate TCU?

But even if we do decide to view TCUs as theoretical constructs, it does not follow that a prosodic break is a sufficient condition for an interactional unit to be classified as a new TCU. There are actually two sides to this issue. If we regard a TCU as the product of the interplay between two different levels of linguistic structure (e.g. prosody and syntax) that are on par with each other, it seems to be expected that only points where syntactic and prosodic breaks coincide will constitute a new TCU. In this view, a prosodic break is a necessary, but not a sufficient condition to regard a stretch of talk as a new TCU. On the other hand, the absence of a prosodic break is a sufficient condition to analyze a new stretch of talk as a part of the foregoing TCU. In this view, the interpretation of these prosodic cues is asymmetric.

If, on the other hand, we claim that the two levels of linguistic structure are not on par with each other, it becomes an empirical question which of the two is the more salient. If we consider the syntactic module to be the stronger of the two, a new TCU will coincide with a new syntactic structure. If, on the other hand, we regard the prosodic make-up of the turn as the deciding factor, we will regard every fragment that is produced as an independent intonation contour as a new TCU. But as was stated above, the question which of these alternative views is correct is a purely empirical question.

Selting (1996) convincingly argues that we need at least syntactic and prosodic units to account for the observation that participants of conversations can time the onset of their new turns without any overlap or pause. She also shows that for the study of interaction the traditional, static notion of the sentence is not suitable. Syntactic structures are flexible schemata. They provide an organizational structure that participants can use to organize their turns-at-talk in a flexible way. New materials can be added after a possibly complete structure has been reached. This means that a syntactic structure cannot mark its own completion. A syntactic construction can always be extended after it has reached a point of possible completion. As a consequence we can only state that a syntactic structure is *possibly complete*, since it might be continued by adding new materials to the right periphery. Syntactic structure thus provides participants with flexible templates that they can use to organize their turns-at-talk. Furthermore, Selting argues that the same holds for the prosodic realization of turns-at-talk.

In the last part of this study, Selting argues that the way turns are prosodically and grammatically packaged determines whether or not these units are

distinct TCUs. We argued however that this introduces a circular element into the argument. What constitutes a TCU should be the result of an empirical study, rather than an a priori claim. It might be the case that participants orient differently towards prosodic and syntactic continuations than to the production of units, but this must be shown in the orientation of participants to turns-at-talk in actual interactions. In part II and III of this study, we will look at evidence from Dutch informal interactions for the distinctive roles of prosody and syntax in the construction of TCUs. In the following paragraph, we will discuss a corpus study that analyzes the role of prosodic and syntactic structures in English using both quantitative and qualitative methods.

2.4. *The case of English (Ford and Thompson 1996)*

Recent years have seen an increased interest in the study of turn-taking in informal interactions within the framework of interactional linguistics. In this framework, two distinct approaches to language use are combined: linguistics and conversation analysis. Based on the turn-taking model of SSJ (1974) these students of language try to get a clearer understanding of turns-at-talk based on linguistic theory and conversation analysis. The linguistic theory provides the linguistic structures that SSJ hinted at and conversation analysis provides the methodological framework that makes a detailed analysis of individual interactions possible.

Ford and Thompson (1996) is a prototypical example of research in this framework. Ford and Thompson (1996) combine qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. They combine a corpus study with a qualitative description of individual fragments containing counterexamples. The goal of this qualitative study is to show that even in the case of apparent counterexamples one can show an orientation of the interactants to the proposed regularities (*deviant case analysis*). Ford and Thompson start out with a corpus study based on spontaneous conversations investigating the respective roles of syntax, prosody and pragmatics for turn-taking. The main goal is a specification of turns-at-talk in English conversations. The study answers the following two questions:

1. to what extent is syntactic completion a predictor of turn completion as validated by actual speaker change?
2. If intonation and pragmatics are considered, is the prediction stronger?

The division of a turn in a prosodic, syntactic and pragmatic component is based on the original definition found in Sacks et al. (1974). The authors claim that they do not believe that these distinctions are real to the participants.¹⁶ Furthermore they

¹⁶ It is not clear what it means for a linguistic structure to be “real for the participants”. It is clear that it cannot mean conscious knowledge (in the sense of knowledge accessible to introspection), because the structure as a whole is not real to the participants in this sense. However, if being real means that participants orient towards these individual structures one cannot deny that these structures are very real indeed. Even more so because the strategic use of the composite nature of the turn depends on an analysis of a structure independently of the status of the others.

expect syntax in itself to be a poor predictor of turn completion as indicated by actual speaker change. It is not the syntactic structure, but the interplay between syntactic, prosodic and pragmatic structure that is crucial for the interpretation of an ongoing turn as possibly complete.

Methodologically, Ford and Thompson (1996) start out with a corpus study. They coded the various linguistic structures with respect to possible completion. They point out that although it is possible to determine prosodic and syntactic structures independently from the other structures, the same does not hold for pragmatic structure. For pragmatic structure our intuitions are not as clear as for syntactic and prosodic structure. In their operationalization they define pragmatic structures as structures that are “interpretable as a complete conversational action within the specific sequential contexts (idem, p. 150)”. Furthermore, in this approach pragmatic complete structures always have a final intonation contour.

Ford and Thompson (1996) found a strong correlation between prosodic completion, on the one hand, and syntactic and pragmatic completion, on the other hand. For the pragmatic structures this is trivial because prosodic completion was a part of the definition of pragmatic completion. The relationship between syntactic and prosodic structure however, is very interesting. A possibly complete prosodic structure is almost always (98.9%, n=432) also a complete syntactic structure.¹⁷ The opposite however is not the case: only 53.65% (n=798) of the syntactic completion points are also prosodic completion points. Ford and Thompson interpret the role of prosodic structure as a sort of commentary to the ongoing flow of syntactic materials. Prosody signals which of the possible syntactic completion points are to be treated as actual completion points in the conversation (CTRPs). In this respect, the role of pragmatics is very similar to the role of intonation structure.

This relationship between prosody (and pragmatics as a derivative of prosody) and syntax can be explained by the relative frequencies of these structures. Syntactic completion points are far more frequent than prosodic completion points. This abundance of syntactic completion points is inherent in the nature of syntactic structure in English. Syntactic units are produced incrementally in conversations. Speakers can always add new materials to possibly complete units.¹⁸ As a

¹⁷ This is remarkable in view of the large linguistic literature on the prosodic realization of sentences in multiple intonation contours. It might be that, although the linguistic system does provide us with the opportunity to divide sentences in multiple intonation contours, speakers in spontaneous conversations adhere to a one-to-one relationship between clause and intonation contour.

¹⁸ Although this is a fundamental characteristic of syntactic structure that should not go unnoted, one should not restrict this view to syntax as is often done in the literature. The same also holds for prosodic and pragmatic structures. It is also possible to extend prosodic structure after a possible complete prosodic structure has been produced. The same also holds for pragmatic structure, but here the situation is even more complex. Whereas it is possible to analyze speaker change in terms of pragmatic completion, it is impossible to code a corpus for every pragmatic completion point. Furthermore, pragmatic complete structures may not be discrete units at all. The well attested phenomena of ‘recognition overlap’ and the

consequence the resulting syntactic structure may comprise more than one possible syntactic completion point.

After this description of the linguistic structures found in their corpus Ford and Thompson tested the hypothesis that speaker change only occurs at the boundaries of complete turns. That is, speaker change only occurs at Complex Completion Points (CCPs): points where the boundaries of prosodic, syntactic and pragmatic units coincide. The results of the corpus study corroborate the authors' expectations: 71 percent of the speaker changes (n= 277) in their corpus occur at complex transition relevant places. That is, places where syntactic, prosodic and pragmatic boundaries coincide. Since every CTRP is also a syntactic completion point, Ford and Thompson conclude that CTRPs are better *predictors* of speaker change than the syntactic status of the turn alone.

Ford and Thompson continue their investigation with a description of CTRPs that are not taken up for speaker change. They claim that "these apparent exceptions are in fact strategic and patterned interactional achievements (idem, p. 171)". However, in considering the predictive qualities for speaker change we are changing the perspective of the investigation. It is one thing to ask at what points speaker change occurs. Whether or not we can actually predict speaker change given the linguistic make-up of the turn is quite a different question.

When considering the predictive power of certain structures concerning speaker change we have to remember that the turn-taking model is not deterministic. The model only describes at what points speaker change *might* occur. An interactant is not obliged to take the turn every time a possible transition relevant place is reached.

CTRPs, for example, are not very good predictors of turn-taking: only 47.8% (n=417) of the CTRPs are also speaker change points. This means that the absence of speaker change cannot in itself be interpreted as an indication that the structure underway was not possibly complete. However, this is exactly what we are doing when we are considering the predictive power of particular configurations. It seems to be prudent to distinguish between negative and positive evidence in this matter. The absence of turn-taking (negative evidence) cannot be interpreted as the absence of a complete structure. Actual speaker change however *can* be interpreted as a sign that the new speaker selected that particular instance as a point of possible speaker change.¹⁹

collaborative production of turns show that pragmatic structures may not coincide with linguistic categories. However, in coding a corpus of actual interactions a student of language is assigning pragmatic completion to words and sentences instead of meanings. If the same approach that we use for the coding of syntactic structures was applied to these other two structures the number of units would certainly be more similar.

¹⁹ It is still possible that a speaker might, in light of other interactional considerations, choose to take the floor at a point at which the turn underway is not complete. In those cases however it is to be expected that a qualitative analysis of the sequence will give evidence of the marked status of the interaction.

Due to the nature of the model under investigation however, a quantitative analysis can never be the whole story of our analysis. A first problem is again the non-deterministic nature of the turn-taking model: speakers are not forced to take the floor after a possibly complete structure has been produced. A second problem is the status of the rules formulated within the model. Rather than looking at the components of the model as prescriptive rules or laws, one should interpret them as guidelines that can be broken under specific interactional circumstances. Breaking one of these components does not result in gibberish. A turn that violates one of these principles is still a viable turn. However, it will be interpreted as *marked*. That is, it will have an additional meaning in light of the model. This means that any analysis of the turn-taking behavior in spontaneous conversation must include a qualitative analysis of the data under investigation.

Ford and Thompson (1996) formulate the qualitative part of their investigation as follows:

“Where the convergence of syntactic, intonational and pragmatic completion are not associated with speaker change, are crucial, interactional factors at work? Can the residue be understood as evidence of the strategic interactional use of the norm?” (idem, p. 142)

Although this formulation suggests that they only look at one of the implications of the equivalence the rest of the study treats counterexamples for both implications. First, they take a look at speaker changes at non-CTRPs. Ford and Thompson found that when interactants take the floor at a point where the current turn has not reached a CTRP, some additional interactional factors are at work. In fact, these examples can be analyzed as “systematic and precisely timed violations of the turn-taking system” (idem, p. 164). As such, these examples actually corroborate the turn-taking model. It is the violation of this norm that gives these utterances their specific communicative function. A first function of these overlapping turns is to show more than a minimal affiliation to the ongoing turn. The overlapping talk can communicate amazement or interest in the foregoing turn. One of the locations in which this kind of talk occurs is in the context of story-telling: rather than waiting until the story has reached its end, participants can show additional involvement by placing their reactions in overlap with the crux of the story.

Another way to show affiliation or agreement with an ongoing turn, is through the completion of the turn by the listener. This occurs mostly in the context of clause-combining. The speaker produces the first clause of a complex sentence and then pauses. Due to the projective quality of the turn (by way of lexico-semantic marking for example in the form of connectives or pragmatic schemata) the listener is able to predict the rest of the turn and rather than waiting for the speaker to produce this second part the listener takes the floor and produces the continuation. The fact that these participants formulate the second part themselves also expresses additional agreement with the content expressed by this second part.

Although all examples up to this point illustrate the cooperative nature of these pre-CTRP-overlaps, not all counterexamples are used to communicate additional agreement. Taking the turn before a possible completion point has been reached can also be used to express disagreement: breaking up the ongoing turn to

express a different point of view. Ford and Thompson conclude that in all these cases the turns obtain an additional interactional meaning because they are interpreted in light of the default case, as expressed by the turn-taking model.

But what about the counterexamples for the second implication? What happens if hearers do not take the floor after a possibly complete turn has been produced? We observed before that the turn-taking model is not deterministic. As such, the absence of turn-taking is not interactionally marked in the same way as overlapping turns are. Ford and Thompson however, show that even in these cases it is possible to show that the prior stretch of talk was possibly complete. They discuss two possible continuations. In the first set of cases, these same-speaker continuations deal with the lack of uptake by the hearer. In one way or another continuations signal or re-signal completion, thus providing the hearer with a new completion point. The second set signals the completion of the prior turn in a different way. Rather than providing an additional completion point, these continuations return to prior agendas. These analyses make plausible the idea that even in the cases where participants do not seem to orient towards CTRPs these concepts still play a crucial role in establishing the interactional meaning of these units in the sequential context of the ongoing conversation.

Ford and Thompson (1996) shows convincingly that TCUs can be described empirically based on the combination of a quantitative corpus study combined with a qualitative analysis of deviant cases. Ford and Thompson also show that the two approaches can play a complementary role in the analysis of TCUs. The corpus study establishes the trend, whereas the qualitative study shows that even in the counterexamples one can show that participants orient to CCPs as interactionally meaningful categories. Ford and Thompson (1996) also shows that turn-taking can only be explained when we take prosodic, syntactic and pragmatic structures into account.

However, the definition of pragmatic structure in terms of prosodic structure introduces a clear element of circularity into the study of interactional units. In a study of the interplay of prosodic, syntactic and pragmatic structures it must be possible to define each structure independent from the other. Ford and Thompson acknowledge that their “judgments of pragmatic structure remain intuitive and provisional (idem, p. 150)”. They also state, however, that “such a system is clearly involved for the participants” (idem, p. 150). This means that in order to study TCUs in conversations in a meaningful way a clear independent definition of pragmatic completion must be given.

Another problem with the approach of Ford and Thompson (1996) is the interpretation of the turn-taking model. As we argued before, the turn-taking model is not deterministic and a-symmetric. This means that we can only conclude that a turn is complete based on the positive evidence of actual turn-taking. The absence of turn-taking, on the other hand, cannot be interpreted in the same way. This means that although in some cases qualitative analysis may show an orientation to CCPs in conversations that are not taken up by participants, the primary goal of a corpus study of interactional units should be the description of turns-at-talk using actual turn-taking as an indication of an orientation of the participants to the foregoing turn as possibly complete.

2.5. Conclusion

In this chapter, we discussed three papers that studied the construction of TCUs in informal interactions. All three papers try to explain the turn-taking phenomena described in chapter I: participants in conversations can place the onset of their turn after the foregoing turn without any gap or overlap. This observation suggests that interactants orient to specific interactional units in the organization of their turn-taking. Furthermore, these interactional units must have a specific property: projection of completion. They must project what it will take for the turn underway to be possibly complete.

The first explanation for these observations was the turn-taking model (SSJ 1974). Turn-taking was hypothesized to be governed by two distinct components. The turn allocation component and the turn constructional component. The turn constructional component describes the actual interactional units, whereas the turn-allocation component describes what can occur at the boundaries of these units. We argued that the turn allocation component allows us to study turns-at-talk as an empirical phenomenon. Turn-taking can be used as an orientation of participants to their interpretation of the foregoing clauses as possibly complete. We also pointed out that the turn-taking model is not deterministic and as such a-symmetrical with respect to turn-taking. Whereas turn-taking can be seen as positive evidence for the fact that a participant interprets the foregoing units as complete, the absence of turn-taking does not allow any inference about the completion of the foregoing unit.

We also stressed that it is important to define TCUs empirically. What constitutes TCUs is an empirical matter. This means that claims concerning the status of stretches of talk should always be corroborated by actual orientations of the participants in the interaction to these stretches of talk. For example, we cannot a priori claim that new syntactic and/or prosodic units constitute new TCUs, whereas prosodic and syntactic continuations do not. For each of the structures that might constitute turns-at-talk it should be shown empirically whether and how they play a role in the constructions of turns-at-talk in real time. In each case, the orientation of the participants is key. This also means that we need at least two kinds of evidence. First, we have to show that specific formal features of turns correlate with specific interactional functions. Second, we have to show that participants actually orient towards these structures in conversations and that they use these structures to organize the ongoing discourse.

Both Selting (1996) and Ford and Thompson (1996) can be seen as new contributions to the analysis of turn-constructional units. However, the papers use very different methodologies. Selting (1996) gives a qualitative analysis of turns-at-talk, whereas Ford and Thompson (1996) give a quantitative analysis of their corpus, supplemented by a qualitative deviant case analysis. We argued that both methodologies have their usage, but on different subjects and on different grounds. A quantitative approach can give insight in the description of TCUs by looking at actual speaker changes. Given the fact that speaker changes show a real orientation to completion one can predict that speaker change predominantly occurs at points of possible completion. Predominantly, because as with all pragmatic theories principles of the turn-taking model (although these same principles are guiding the interpretation and construction of turns-at-talk) can be broken. In these cases, a

qualitative analysis of the data can learn us more about the specific ways these formal characteristics of a turn are used to organize turns-at-talk. If it is the case that these pragmatic principles can (and maybe even should) be broken in specific interactional contexts, one would expect a clear orientation of the participants to these turns as marked. Here a qualitative deviant case analysis can give additional support for the original claim by showing that in the ongoing interaction these turns receive extra meaning with respect to the fact that they are violations of these pragmatic principles.

With respect to the turn-construction component all authors claim that both syntax and prosody play an important role in the construction of turns-at-talk. Both Selting (1996) and Ford and Thompson (1996) show that the static, conventional unit of the sentence is not well fitted for the description of turns-at-talk. Conversational syntax consists of flexible schemata that provide participants with flexible templates to organize their turns-at-talk. This means that participants can add materials to a possibly complete sentence in a number of ways. They can start a new syntactic structure or they can add new materials in such a way that these additions can be analyzed as a continuation of the foregoing clause. It is tempting to conclude that in the first case two distinct TCUs are produced whereas in the second case only a single TCU was realized. However, we argued that whether or not a continuation of the foregoing syntactic and prosodic unit is treated as a part of the same interactional unit, remains an empirical issue. Although syntax and prosody may be used in this way, we cannot presuppose a definition of what constitutes a new unit in an investigation of TCUs without lapsing into circularity. One has to show that participants use these structures in a particular way in conversations. This means that one should establish criteria that allow an analysis of turns in terms of component structures. On the basis of what interactional characteristics can one conclude that a particular stretch of talk is treated as a new interactional unit? Of course, the formulation of these criteria cannot refer to the formal characteristics of the turns under investigation without lapsing into circularity. We will take this issue up in part III of this study.

Although it is clear that pragmatic units plays an important role in the construction of turns-at-talk, the definition of pragmatic structure is problematic. In some studies, pragmatic completion is defined in terms of the other formal characteristics of a turn. In these cases, pragmatic completion is defined in terms of prosodic and/or syntactic completion. We argued that this introduces a theoretical prejudice. It also results in a circular argument. The various structures that are assigned to turns-at-talk should be defined independently from each other, if one wants to investigate the relationship and relevance of these structures to participants in actual conversations. However, for pragmatic structure this introduces some problems. For one, it is not clear for what points pragmatic completion should be coded. What is the internal structure of a pragmatic unit? Or in other words, for which points in our corpus should we code pragmatic completion? Although we can show whether or not a particular stretch of talk is pragmatically complete based on a sequential analysis of the interaction, it is not clear for which points we should actually code pragmatic completion in our corpus without introducing some sort of theoretical bias. For example, if we code pragmatic completion for complete syntactic structures, we make our definition of pragmatic completion dependant on

our definition of syntactic completion a priori. An undesired result, because it is shown in the literature that syntactic completion is not a necessary condition for pragmatic completion. The same holds for prosodic completion. As a result, pragmatic units must be defined without any reference to the other structures (words, sentences, intonation contours, et cetera.).

In the next chapters of part I, we will take a closer look at the three levels of linguistic units that are claimed to play a part in the construction of complex turns-at-talk. In chapter 3, we will look at pragmatic units and in chapter 4 and 5, we will look at syntactic and prosodic structure respectively.

Chapter 3: Pragmatic Units

3.1. Introduction

In this chapter, we will look at pragmatic units. As our discussion of Ford and Thompson (1996) showed, the coding of pragmatic units in conversations is problematic. In this chapter, we will argue for a specific approach to coding pragmatic structure. In paragraph 2, we will look at Houtkoop and Mazeland (1985). In this paper, the authors try to extend the definition of turn-constructional units within the framework of SSJ (1974). In paragraph 3, we will take another look at the operationalization of pragmatic completion in Ford and Thompson (1996), and we will formulate our own treatment of these units for the remainder of this study.

3.2. Pragmatic units

The turn-taking model stresses the importance of prosodic and syntactic structure in the organization of turn-taking. Although SSJ hint at a role for pragmatic units they do not give a clear description of how these pragmatic units can function as TCUs. For example, it remains unclear how these structures can have clear projective qualities that allow participants to predict turn endings.

However, a look at turn-taking data clearly shows that pragmatic units do play a role in the organization of turn-taking. Although all scholars of turn-taking agree that pragmatic structure must play an important role, we also observe that there is a discrepancy between this level of linguistic units and the other two levels. Prosodic and syntactic structures are rigorously defined in most studies. The pragmatic tier, on the other hand, is less readily described. It is clear that one cannot categorize pragmatic units in the same way as one can classify syntactic and prosodic structure. Nevertheless it is clear that participants orient to larger structures than sentences in their organization of turn-taking. Example 1 gives a case in point.

Example 1.

1. A: want hier benede
2. *because here down stairs*
3. *because down stairs*
4. (0.2)
5. A: ik [had gistere dus geen pasje bij me
6. *I had yesterday so no pass with me*
7. *I did not have my pass on me*
8. B: [ja
9. [yes
10. [yes
11. B: mm[hh
12. A: [en: ik wilde daar naar binne
13. [and: *I wanted there inside*
14. [and *I wanted to go in*
15. (.)
16. B: en[dat ging niet

17. *and* [*that went not*
18. *and* [*that didn't work*
19. A: [*en dat ging niet*
20. [*and that went not*
21. [*and that did not work*

In Example 1, two people are discussing the newly installed electric doors in their office building. All three have had some problems with these doors in the last couple of days and they are, in turn, sharing these less than satisfying experiences. In this particular sequence, they are discussing whether or not the doors in a particular part of the building are operational at that time. In the previous talk, B has told about her experiences with the doors. In this excerpt, A is telling her own story about these doors.

In line 1, A sets the scene by giving a location for the story that is unfolding with *hier benede* (“downstairs”). After a short pause she abandons the syntactic structure that she started with the coordinator *want* (“because”) and starts a new clause, describing that she tried to enter the building without the required pass that operates the newly installed doors.¹ In line 8, B responds with a minimal response. A continues her story in line 12 with the utterance *en ik wilde daar naar binne* (“and I wanted to go in”). This stretch of talk is clearly projecting ‘more to come’, but it is interesting to see that it is not doing so by means of syntactic or prosodic structure. The syntax of this utterance is possibly complete (a clause connected to the foregoing clause with the coordinator *en* “and”) and also the intonation of the utterance is complete. The projective nature of this particular utterance is clearly semantic/pragmatic. Our knowledge of interactional structures and stories allows us to conclude that there is more to come. The utterance sets up some sort of punch line for this particular story by stressing the frustrated attempt to enter the building by means of these newly installed doors (an ongoing theme in the conversation up to this point). Not only the interactional setting of the telling of anecdotes makes a punch line interactionally relevant. The semantic content of this particular stretch of talk (*wilde*, “wanted”) and the foregoing talk (which gives some sort of scene or setting for a staged event) also makes that kind of a finale expectable.

In line 16, B clearly orients to this projected punch line by providing it at the next possible opportunity in overlap with A in line 19. So, despite the turn-taking in line 6 it is clear that B is not orienting to the possible completion of the foregoing turn. On the contrary, one could argue that A and B are sharing the story (Lerner 1996): each producing stretches of talk to a common interactional project.

As we stated earlier this projection of more to come was neither syntactic nor prosodic. Yet, it is evident that both speakers orient to the pragmatic/semantic

¹ That this is indeed a new clause is clearly marked by the absence of inversion in this particular fragment. In Dutch only one phrase can occupy the structural position before the finite verb. In this case *hier benede* (“down stairs”) occupies this slot for some verb that has not been produced. By starting her utterance in line 2 with *ik* (“I”) A clearly produces a new initial field, thus abandoning the prior projected clause.

structure that not only projects more to come, but more specifically projects what it will take for this particular interactional project to be complete. That is, one could argue that both A and B are orienting to a pragmatic/semantic schema. This raises a number of interesting questions. What semantic/pragmatic schemata do participants orient to? What is the status of the stretches of talk that constitute these larger structures?² How can we define these larger structures?

Houtkoop and Mazeland (1985) distinguish between turn units (minimal structures that can be described in terms of sentence types) and larger units of talk that they coin *Discourse Units* (DUs) following Wald (1976). In these larger units, the ‘normal’ turn-taking mechanism is suspended for the duration of this project. Participants use their pragmatic knowledge of these structures to assess the status of the project underway.

One of the projects Houtkoop and Mazeland discuss is the story telling format as discussed by Labov (1972). Labov distinguishes six distinct story sections (as cited in Houtkoop and Mazeland (p. 598)):

1. the abstract which comprises the reason for the story
2. the orientation section that provides the time and the place
3. the complicating action that describes the events
4. the evaluation that comments on the story
5. the result or resolution
6. the coda that ties back to the here and now

Both Labov and Houtkoop and Mazeland stress that not all stories have all these sections and furthermore that the order of these sections is not fixed. That is, one could claim that these pragmatic units are schemata that are used by the participants to evaluate the ongoing DU.

Houtkoop and Mazeland hypothesize that after such a DU is projected “the completion points of further turn-constructive units are blocked from being treated by the recipients as normal transition relevance places (idem, p. 600)”. They claim that the other participants of the conversation can still contribute to the ongoing DU. However, they stress that these reactions have a special character “they are contributions by which the recipient signals that s/he still retains the role of recipient (p. 600)”. Thus the projection of a DU in this view restricts the normal turn-taking model in a number of ways. Houtkoop and Mazeland suggest a number of restrictions. With respect to the primary speaker, they claim that the PS is expected to continue and complete a DU until a DU completion has been produced and marked by a particular TCU.³ Furthermore they state that DUs are sequentially

² A related issue is the definition of speaker change. Is a speaker change every change of speaker, or do we exempt some interactional moves that do not claim the floor for an extended period of time from this definition (for example minimal responses, collaborative units, repairs, etcetera.). And if one takes the latter option how do we account for the placement of these particular structures? We will take this matter up later in this study.

³ Primary speaker: the participant that started the DU.

implicative. This means that although recipients of DUs can contribute stretches of talk during the production of a DU, these contributions are restricted to “DU-accompanying actions” that are preferably of limited length. Also, these accompanying actions are placed in accordance to the rules stipulated by the turn-taking model (that is at the boundaries of TCUs). At the end of these actions there is a preference for the PS to become the next speaker.

Although DUs are described in terms of schemata (pragmatic knowledge that participants use in conversations), it is evident that these schemata are of a different order than syntactic and prosodic schemata. Houtkoop and Mazeland do not provide a list of DUs in their corpus. Also it is not clear whether DUs constitute some sort of closed set. Furthermore, it is not clear how these DUs are evoked in actual conversations. Houtkoop and Mazeland point out that DUs may project more DUs of the same type but it remains unclear how specific DU schemata are activated in discourse. This raises some obvious problems for the coding of a corpus with respect to the pragmatic status of a turn at any given time.

Houtkoop and Mazeland further distinguish between two kinds of DUs: *closed* and *open*. In the case of a closed DU, the DU is projected by the speaker whereas in the case of an open DU the larger project is an interactionally managed construction and as such is as much (over even more so) instigated by the recipient of the turn. Whereas closed DUs have a clear projective power (they can signal their own completion and incompletion), open DUs lack this particular property. In light of this particular study, it is clear that open DUs are quite different from closed DUs with respect to what constitutes a turn-at-talk at any given time. For our particular hypothesis only closed DUs could be relevant. Whether or not any given stretch of talk is made into an open DU is interactionally negotiated and as such not a property of one particular unit.⁴

Houtkoop and Mazeland give a clear account of how pragmatic units can be viewed to play a role in the organization of turn-taking. Pragmatic units are shown to organize conversations beyond the boundaries of single utterances. The projection of pragmatic structure is argued to have specific consequences for the turn-taking model. However, although Houtkoop and Mazeland convincingly show that pragmatic structure has a projective quality that interactants use to organize their interactions, they do not specify the building blocks of these larger structures in such a way as to allow for the coding of basic pragmatic structures in a corpus of actual conversations. Rather, their goal is to show that pragmatic structure plays a role in the global organization of conversations. In the following paragraph, we will take another look at the operationalization of pragmatic structure in Ford and Thompson (1996) and formulate our own treatment of pragmatic units for the remainder of this study.

⁴ Of course whether some syntactic unit is possibly complete is also dependent on its immediate context, however the dependency is only contextual and not negotiated by the participants.

3.3. Pragmatic completion

Ford and Thompson (1996) started their discussion of pragmatic completion with the observation that “while our judgments for syntactic and intonational completion points are easily operationalized and replicated, our judgments of pragmatic completion remain intuitive and provisional (idem, p. 150)”. They distinguish two distinct characteristics of pragmatic completion: a pragmatically complete unit must have a final intonation contour and furthermore it must be interpretable as a complete conversational action within its specific sequential context. Ford and Thompson further distinguish between local and global pragmatic completion. “Local pragmatic completion points are points at which the speaker is projecting more talk, but at which another speaker might reasonably take a minimal turn. (...) This type of pragmatic completion is thus a location at which another speaker could offer a small, non-floor-taking turn (idem, p. 150)”. Ford and Thompson judge an utterance as globally pragmatically complete “if it [has] the property of not projecting anything beyond itself in the way of a longer story, account or other agenda (idem, p. 150)”.

One could say that global pragmatic completion in this approach is on par with the absence of a closed DU in the approach of Houtkoop and Mazeland. Both stress the global aspects of pragmatic structures in terms of schematic knowledge (or ‘agendas’) that speakers can use to recognize and evaluate these particular structures in actual occurring data. What sets this type of completion apart from syntactic completion in the framework of Ford and Thompson is that syntactic completion is primarily concerned with the information recovery aspects of discourse whereas pragmatic completion is “a combination of intonation and conversational action sequencing (idem, p. 151)”. As was the case with Houtkoop and Mazeland, Ford and Thompson do not provide a list of what may or may not constitute a pragmatic agenda.

The local pragmatic completion of Ford and Thompson does not have a counterpart in the model of Houtkoop and Mazeland. Houtkoop and Mazeland stipulate that within closed DUs recipients still can, and in fact, should display reciprocity by showing their involvement in the unfolding project. However, they claim that these contributions are placed with respect to the ‘normal’ turn-taking model: that is in the proximity of turn endings. Ford and Thompson call these ‘normal’ completion points local pragmatic completion points when they occur while a larger project is underway. Both proposals are solutions to the empirical fact that, although larger projects might be active in a particular sequential context, turn-taking still takes place. It is not the turn-taking (defined as speaker change), so it seems, that is restricted. The restriction lies in the kinds of actions that are viable in that particular sequential context. Both approaches orient to this restriction. These contributions should be *non-floor-taking* or *minimal*. However, what classifies a turn as non-floor-taking or minimal is not defined. It is clear however, that any theory of turn-taking should address this issue. Here again, what constitutes non-floor-taking turns should be an empirical question.

From the perspective of this study, with a clear focus on describing the roles of various structures in the constitution of linguistic turns, it seems undesirable to exempt certain structures from our investigation from the start by classifying them as minimal or non-floor-taking. Furthermore, it seems undesirable to start out with a

definition of speaker change that refers to notions like completion and what constitutes a proper turn, when the goal of the investigation is to empirically establish a definition of turns-at-talk. It seems that, if there is a class of minimal turns that behave differently with respect to 'normal' turn-taking, this class will show up in the corpus as a particular set of counterexamples. In these cases our prediction that speaker change only occurs at points at which all three structures are possibly complete (including pragmatic structure) will be disproved. In this study, we will not distinguish a priori between different types of speaker change from the start, but we will define a speaker change as any change of speaker without taking the *kind of action* produced into account. If there exists a subset of speaker changes that are treated differently within the interaction with respect to turn-taking, this subset of speaker changes will be marked as a particular subset of counterexamples for the hypothesis. Furthermore, if such a class is interactionally relevant it still stands to reason that the placement of these particular stretches of talk is systematically placed within the ongoing talk and should be covered by the turn-taking model.

Another drawback of the operationalization of Ford and Thompson (1996) from the viewpoint of the current study is that it is undesirable to define pragmatic completion in terms of either syntactic or prosodic structure since it is the relationship between these three structures that is at the heart of this investigation. It might very well turn out to be the case that pragmatic completion always coincides with prosodic completion, but that remains an empirical question. The same goes for the relationship between syntactic and pragmatic completion. Furthermore, it is unclear why intonation structure should have a closer bond with pragmatic completion than syntactic structure. In fact, defining syntactic completion in terms of information retrieval puts it in a strong relation to the pragmatic, action status of the turn. This feeling is born out by the examples that Ford and Thompson give of pragmatic completion points: all pragmatic completion points coincide with both prosodic and syntactic completion points. This is also born out by the results of their corpus study: 98.9 percent of all intonational completion points are also syntactical completion points.⁵ Thus, by defining pragmatic completion in terms of intonational completion points one indirectly also defines pragmatic completion in terms of syntactic completion. Once again, it may very well turn out to be the case that pragmatic completion always coincides with completion on the other two structures, but this remains an empirical issue. At the very least we do not have any evidence to stipulate a priori that the relationship between prosody and pragmatic completion is stronger than the relationship between syntax and pragmatic completion.

Another problem with defining pragmatic completion in terms of the other structures is that it does not clarify the notion of pragmatic completion in a principled way. By reducing pragmatic completion to a structural characteristic it becomes impossible to allow for a definition that treats pragmatic schemata as a phenomenon in its own right. Intuitively one tends to define pragmatic schemata hierarchically: actions are realized by (combinations of) smaller turns. But the

⁵ The reverse relation of course does not hold. Only 53.6% of all syntactic completion points are also intonational completion points.

relation between actions and lexico-syntactic structures might be less straightforward. Example 1 already showed that participants are able to predict certain larger projects at a very early stage. Please take a look at Example 2.

Example 2.

1. A: Het lijkt me wel leuk om te gaan
2. *it seems me PART nice to go*
3. *I think it will be sort of fun to go*
4. A: maar als het regent[*dan*
5. *but if it rains [then*
6. *but if it rains, [then*
7. B: [*nee dan gaan we niet*
8. [*no than go we not*
9. [*no in that case we will stay at home*

A and B are discussing their plans for the upcoming holiday. In the conversation up to this point, B has suggested that they go to a theme park. After a short discussion in which they decide which theme park they prefer, A responds to the, still pending, proposal by stating that she thinks it's a good idea. However, she projects some sort of caveat with the lexical item *wel* ("sort of"). In line 4, she starts a compound sentence that provides a condition: *als het regent* ("if it rains"). This stretch of talk is clearly projecting more to come both syntactically (the subordinator *als* ("if") projects a matrix clause) and prosodically (there is no prosodic break between *regent* ["rains"] and *dan* ["than"]). However, in line 7 B takes the turn and produces the second part of the compound sentence (*nee, dan gaan we niet*, "no in that case we will stay at home"). This suggests that B was able to predict the upcoming completion of this larger project based on the first part of the compound sentence. That is, B was able to predict the *sequential action* based on the first clause. Does this mean that A's utterance was pragmatically complete in line 4? In this case one could argue that this is not the case, because the rest of the action is still interactionally relevant. That is, B still provides the second part of the compound sentence. The result is the collaborative production of a compound sentence. B does not respond to A's syntactically and prosodically incomplete turn with an acknowledgement, which would suggest that the rest of the action was implied and thus interactionally realized and pragmatically complete.

In Example 2 there are clear indications that although the action of the syntactically and prosodically incomplete utterance is predictable, it is not interactionally realized at that particular point: B still produces the second part of the compound sentence, thus completing the action. However, how should one analyze instances of *recognition overlap* (Jefferson 1982) in example 3?

Example 3.

1. A: maar ik vind die films toch altijd w[el
2. *but I find those movies still always ki[nd of*
3. *but still I always find those movies ki[nd of*
4. B: [ja die blijven le[uk
5. [yes those stay fu[nny
6. [yes the are still f[unny
7. A: [ja precies
8. [yes exactly
9. [yes exactly

In Example 3, two friends discuss movies. After some discussion of the movies of the French actor Louis de Funes, in which both participants criticized these movies for being too predictable, A starts a new clause that is clearly marked for contrast with the coordinator *maar* (“but”). The clause also provides other clues that A is producing some sort of concession with respect to the foregoing discussion (*toch*, “still”). In line 4, B takes the turn at a point that is syntactically and prosodically incomplete. However, sequentially B’s turn is heard as a reaction to a complete action: a positive assessment of the films of Louis de Funes. B starts his turn with an acknowledgement token (*ja*, “yes”) and confirms the positive assessment of these movies. Interestingly, B’s turn is a reaction to an assessment that was not explicitly formulated by A. Furthermore, B is not completing the incomplete syntactic structure produced by A, nor is he completing A’s utterance pragmatically/semantically. B is reacting to A’s prior utterance by *acknowledging* the view that was projected by A’s syntactically and prosodically incomplete utterance. Whether this inferred assessment is on par with the intended continuation of his utterance by A, we cannot say. What we can say however is that A treats it as a proper reformulation of his projected view. In line 7, he acknowledges B’s interpretation of his prior utterance.

How should we analyze A’s utterance in line 1? Is this utterance pragmatically complete? It is treated as pragmatically complete by the participants in the light of turn-taking behavior. If we take pragmatic structure seriously, we cannot say that the utterance is not pragmatically complete because the syntactic and prosodic make-up is incomplete without introducing some theoretical bias. But this introduces new problems: for which points in our corpus should we code pragmatic completion: word boundaries, clause boundaries, sentence boundaries?

It seems that when we leave the secure realm of linguistic structure and venture into aspects of the meaning of utterances things become less clear. We could cite Ford and Thompson and state that in analyzing pragmatic schemata our analyses become more “intuitive and provisional” (idem, p.150). It seems that pragmatic schemata are less prone to definitions than the structures on the other two tiers. We already concluded that the structures on those tiers are best described in terms of flexible, extendable schemata leaving us with a notion of possibly complete structures. On the pragmatic tier things might even be less clear.

This means that the coding of pragmatic completion as an independent structure poses some serious problems in corpus studies. It seems impossible to determine all pragmatic completion points, given a certain corpus, because it is impossible to determine for what stretches of talk one should code pragmatic completion. As a result it is impossible to analyze the relationship between prosodic and syntactic structure, on the one hand, and pragmatic structure, on the other hand, in a quantitative way without defining these structures with respect to some anchoring point. However, if we use speaker change as an anchor, it is still possible to analyze the role of pragmatic structure for turn-taking in conversations. Although it is problematic to determine for which points in an utterance one should code pragmatic completion, it is possible to determine for any given point whether or not it is treated as pragmatically complete based on a sequential analysis of the context and the utterance itself.⁶

As we argued in Chapter 2, the turn-taking model is not deterministic. This means that we cannot expect that every possible completion point will lead to turn-taking.⁷ However, we can hypothesize that turn-taking will only occur at points at which the turn underway is possibly complete at all three tiers. By restricting our investigation to positive evidence (that is actions by participants) and not looking for negative evidence (the absence of certain actions by participants), for which we already argued on independent grounds, it is possible to analyze the role of pragmatic structure in conversations. As a result, we will only code the points of actual speaker change in our corpus for pragmatic completion, based on a sequential analysis of the utterance in its particular context. Of course, this does not mean that we define pragmatic completion in terms of speaker change. That would introduce a new (and even more serious) kind of circularity in our argument. It means that we restrict our analysis of pragmatic structure (complete versus incomplete) to these specific sequential points. We will only code pragmatic completion for actual speaker changes for two reasons. First, only actual speaker changes are relevant to our initial hypothesis. Second, actual speaker changes give us positive evidence for the interpretation of the interaction underway with respect to the orientation of the participants to the particular sequential context. This will allow us to both test our hypothesis that pragmatic units play a role in the organization of turns-at-talk and to observe the actual treatment of stretches of talk by participants.

3.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, we discussed the coding and identification of pragmatic units in corpora of spoken language. We saw that pragmatic completion can only be established locally. Only a detailed analysis of the sequential context can give the required results. We also concluded that it is very hard to study pragmatic

⁶ For one thing it is very hard to see what these points should be (words, sentences) without incorporating a bias towards the other structures.

⁷ Of course one could expect that possible completion points will lead to turn-taking more often than points where one of the structures is incomplete. However, as in the case with pragmatic completion, it is very hard to define what these incomplete points should be.

completion without an anchoring point. A phenomenon like recognition overlap, for example, shows that pragmatic boundaries cannot be equated with the boundaries of words or sentences. So for what units should we code pragmatic completion? It is impossible to determine units in a transcription for which it makes sense to code pragmatic completion. This restricts the options to study pragmatic completion in a corpus study.

On the other hand, we also argued that this reference point for which we will code pragmatic completion cannot be some linguistic structure under investigation. If we define pragmatic completion in terms of prosody or syntax, it is impossible to study pragmatics as an independent level of the turn. As a result, we will study TCUs with respect to an interactional phenomenon: turn-taking. We argued that the turn-taking model states that turn-taking only takes place on the boundaries of TCUs. This means that actual speaker change is expected to occur at the boundaries of complete structures. In this study, we predict that speaker change occurs at the boundary of possibly complete pragmatic units. Since it is possible to code pragmatic completion for specific points in the interaction based on a sequential analysis, we can test whether this expectation is born out by the data. As a result we code all speaker changes in our corpus for pragmatic completion. The turn configurations at which a speaker change occurred received a + on the pragmatic dimension if the turn underway was pragmatically complete and a - when the turn underway was pragmatically incomplete. This method allows us to determine whether or not pragmatic completion is a necessary condition for the occurrence of turn-taking in Dutch conversations.

Chapter 4: Interactional syntax

4.1. Introduction

In this chapter, we will look at the syntax of Dutch conversations. All students of language seem to agree that syntactic units are a necessary prerequisite if one wants to explain the turn-taking phenomena. However, analyzing syntax in conversation is not unproblematic, as has been pointed out by a number of authors (Selting 1996, Fox 1996, Ono and Thompson 1995). Traditional notions do not seem to fit the structures found in naturally occurring language:

“Seit der Entstehung der sogenannten ‘Gesprochene Sprache Forschung’ in den sechziger Jahren haben mit natürlichen Daten arbeitende Linguisten darauf hingewiesen, dass die Einheit des ‘Satzes’ für die Analyse gesprochener Sprache in natürlichen Gesprächen äußerst problematisch sei. Der empirische Satz könne kaum befriedigend definiert und abgegrenzt werden.” (Selting 1994, p. 298)

From the beginning of the Gesprochene Sprache Forschung (study of spoken language) in the sixties, linguists working with natural occurring data have stressed that the analytical category ‘Sentence’ is very problematic in the study of spoken language. They claim that it is impossible to give an empirical definition of the sentence that limits the sentence to a clearly identifiable unit.

Standard units from both traditional grammar and modern syntax, like the sentence or S, do not seem to fit nicely as a description of the linguistic status of conversational units. For example, it can be easily observed that units in discourse do not always constitute clear sentences: turns can constitute both more or less than a single sentence. Within the domain of the sentence, conversational units can comprise words, phrases, clauses or clause combinations:

“There are various unit-types with which a speaker may set out to construct a turn (...) Unit-types for English include sentential, clausal, phrasal, and lexical constructions.” (Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson 1974, p. 702).

It is clear that this observation has implications for the way we treat syntactic structure in our study. If conversational units can be realized in such a variety of ways, and if we assume that the unproblematic character of turn-taking can be explained by the projective characteristics of these structures; we must assume that each and every one of these structures project their schemata in their own specific way. This enables participants to analyze the structure underway and assess what it will take to complete the ongoing structure.

This means that a first step towards a description of the role of grammar in the construction of turns in conversation should consist of an inventory of the syntactic structures found in spoken discourse. This is also important with respect to the role syntax plays in the organization of turn-taking. If the vast majority of turns should

turn out to consist of lexical or collocational materials, it is impossible to maintain that grammar plays a pivotal role in turn-taking.

However, things might also turn out to be more complex. A number of studies have shown that the role of context is far greater in spoken communication than it is in written communication. This might have far reaching consequences for the way in which conversational units are construed. For example, it might be the case that the interpretation of conversational units is more dependent on the linguistic structures in the immediate linguistic context than the interpretation of their written counterparts. As a consequence the interpretation of these structures could be largely dependent on a pragmatic analysis of the ongoing turn.

This particular category of structures ranges from fairly straightforward examples of ellipsis to the interpretation of fragments. In these cases, the assessment of the ongoing turn as complete will have both grammatical and contextual aspects. However, although there is a clear division of labor in these instances, it is also evident that syntax plays an important role even here. This role is the most clear in the case of ellipsis, which is clearly a syntactical phenomenon. Also, in the interpretation of fragments that cannot be 'glued' to sentences in their immediate context, syntax plays a role.

The first way in which syntax plays a role is in the projection of phrasal constituents (Jackendoff, 1978). Phrasal constituents consist of a syntactic head that projects the rest of the phrase. As such, the syntactic make-up of these phrases gives important clues about the status of the phrase in their incremental production.¹ Although one still needs to determine whether or not it is possible for this unit to function on its own, it is clear that on a local level syntax could play an important role.

The second way in which syntax could play a role is more problematic. Basically, the issue addresses the status of the clause. We already mentioned elliptic structures. In these structures, it is clear that the overall structure is still a clause.² But how should we analyze fragments that are not readily extendable to a clause? With respect to these fragments we would like to argue that they are just that: fragments. An analysis of these materials as elliptical sentences does not seem prudent. With respect to our hypothesis, this means that in these cases we will only presume the projective qualities of the phrase. The projective characteristics of these elements in terms of turn-taking, is taken to be best analyzed as either semantic or pragmatic. Whether or not these units can occur on their own is dependent on the semantic and/or pragmatic contributions of these elements to their immediate context. It remains an important empirical question how often these elements occur and what form they take in conversations.

¹ In Dutch the surface structure of phrases is left-headed. This makes it clear from the start what kind of structure is being produced and what it will take for this particular structure to be complete.

² Of course, one could still argue whether or not these 'deleted' elements are still present in the syntactic structure of these sentences. We will remain agnostic on this issue.

However, it is not only the abundance of fragments or phrases which sets conversational units aside from the units studied in traditional linguistics. Another clear difference is the incremental realization of these units. Sentences and other units are produced in real time, and their resulting grammatical make-up is the consequence of local choices. A static approach to the use of syntax in conversation would miss out on this aspect. Schegloff (1996, 1997b) stresses this important point:

“When the grammar we attempt to understand inhabits actually articulated talk in interaction (rather than constructed prototype sentences), as it does in the habitat of a turn-at-talk (...) its realization in structured real time for both speaker and recipient(s) is inescapable. If ‘sentences’, ‘clauses’, and ‘phrases’ should turn out to be implicated, they will be different in emphasis and perhaps in kind, from the static syntactic objects of much linguistic theorizing.” (Schegloff 1996, p. 56)

In this view, grammar in conversation is best understood as the result of the dynamic construction of turns-at-talk in real time. As such the grammatical units found in conversation may or may not coincide with the linguistic units normally dealt with in linguistic theory. The syntax of conversation is shaped by the contingent nature of incrementally produced units. The resulting structures can be seen as the result of decisions based on the ongoing status of the discourse. This has at least two consequences.

The first major consequence is that we need a more dynamic view of grammar, in which grammatical structures are no longer seen as static objects that are conceived in the speakers’ mind and then realized in speech, but as dynamic structures containing contingent elements that are realized based on local choices. The second consequence is that it might be helpful to view conversational grammar as a grammatical subsystem in its own right, resulting from interactional choices within the conversation (i.e. turn-taking, storytelling, et cetera). One could argue that this conversational syntax should also comprise elements that are not traditionally thought of as part of linguistics structure: hesitations, restarts, pauses and even breathing (Schegloff 1996). Although this is an interesting suggestion we will not pursue that line of reasoning here. We will focus on conversational structures based on lexical materials in this study.

Schegloff (1996) describes the relation between grammar and the organization of a spate of talk such as a turn as “reflexive”. On the one hand, “the organizational contingencies of talking in a turn” shape grammar. On the other hand, grammar contributes to the organization of turns-at-talk. Studying the syntax of conversation thus comprises at least two possible foci of investigation:

1. the organization of the turn, i.e. the habitat in which turn-constructural units are housed and
2. the characteristics of the grammar -or grammars- which organizationally constitute the TCUs for this habitat.

In the remainder of this chapter we will explore both these points.

In paragraph 4.2 we will present a topological model of the Dutch clause, that (although originally not dynamic in nature) can be interpreted in a dynamic way

and allows us to describe the various syntactic constructions found in our corpus and to explain how various linguistic structures can be used as interactionally relevant units.

In paragraph 4.3 we will describe a dynamic view on syntax based on the work of Selting (1995, 1996a, 1996b, 1998a and 1998b). In that paragraph, we will give a dynamic interpretation of the topological model of the clause we presented in paragraph 4.2. We will try to show how syntax can be used as an interactional resource in two distinct ways. First we will show that the projective characteristics of syntactic structures at least in some cases allow for the projection of what it will take for the turn to be possibly complete. Second, we will show how dynamic syntactic schemata can be used by participants to organize their turns-at-talk.

In paragraph 4.4 we will give a first characterization of the syntactic materials found in our corpus based on a prototypical subset of our larger corpus.

4.2. A topological model of the Dutch clause

In this section, we will give a short overview of the Dutch clause within a topological framework. In this discussion, we will follow the classification of the *Algemene Nederlandse Spraakkunst* (ANS, Haeseryn et. al., 1997). Central in the description of the ANS is the observation that it is possible to describe clauses in terms of a fixed number of structural positions based on the observation that some parts-of-speech always occupy the same structural position in the clause. These positions are called *polen* (“poles”). A clause is taken to be structured around two poles. The function of these poles differs for specific clause types. In subordinate clauses the first pole contains the subordinator, while the second pole contains verbal material. In main clauses the first pole contains the finite verb, whereas the second pole contains the other verbal material.

In the following examples, the poles are printed in italics. Example 1 shows the word order for main clauses. Example 2 shows the word order for subordinate clauses.

Example 1.

Z'n oom heeft de bal over de heg geschopt
His uncle *has* the ball over the bushes *kicked*
'His uncle kicked the ball over the bushes'

Example 2.

Dat hij dat punt al meerdere keren gemaakt heeft
That he that point more than once *made has*
'That he has made that point repeatedly'

In Example 1, the auxiliary *heeft* (“has”) is the first pole and the verbal complement *geschopt* (“kicked”) is the second pole of the sentence. In Example 2, the subordinator *dat* (“that”) occupies the first pole and the verbal cluster *gemaakt heeft* (“made has”) constitutes the second pole.

In main clauses the finite verb (the first pole) occupies the first or second position of the sentence. In Example 1, the finite verb is the second part of the sentence. *Heeft* (“has”) is preceded by *z’n oom* (“his uncle”), the subject of the sentence. In Example 3, the finite verb is the first part of the sentence:

Example 3.

Ben jij naar dat feest *geweest*?

Are you to that party *been*?

‘Have you been to that party?’

These sentence structures are typically associated with requests or commands. The positions prior to the first pole remain empty in these cases. The first pole of both sentence types is always realized. The second pole, however, can remain empty. Main clauses without an auxiliary do not have a second pole:

Example 4.

Ging jij naar Groningen?

Went you to Groningen

‘Did you go to Groningen?’

Example 5.

Z’n oom schopt de bal.

His uncle *kicks* the ball

‘His uncle kicks the ball’

In these sentences the lexical verb is the first pole. A defining characteristic of Dutch subordinate clauses is that all the verbal elements occur at the end of the sentence.³ In subordinate clauses the first pole position may be realized by a number of lexical categories: subordinate conjunctions, relative pronouns or interrogative pronouns. The verbal elements of subordinate clauses comprise the second pole (see Example 2, repeated here as Example 6).

Example 6.

Dat hij dat punt al meerdere keren *gemaakt heeft*

That he that point more than once *made has*

‘That he has made that point repeatedly’

Dat (“that”), a demonstrative pronoun functioning as a subordinator, occupies the first pole whereas all other verbal elements (*gemaakt heeft*) together comprise the

³ Although there are exceptions in both directions: we find both subordinate clauses with main clause word order and vice versa.

second pole. The poles can thus be thought of as two abstract structural positions that organize the structure of the sentence. Figure 1 (based on Haeseryn et. al., 1997) gives a summary:

Figure 1.

	<i>1st pole</i>		<i>2nd pole</i>
Z'n oom His uncle	schopt kicks	de bal. the ball	
Z'n oom His uncle	heeft has	de bal over de heg the ball over the bushes	geschopt. kicked
	Ging Went	jij naar Groningen? you to Groningen?	
(..)	Dat That	hij dat punt meerdere keren he that point more than once	gemaakt heeft. made has

The remainder of the sentence can now be characterized with respect to these two fixed positions. Clausal elements can occur both before the first pole, after the second pole or between the two poles. In Example 5, the subject (*z'n oom*, “his uncle”) precedes the first pole. The subject is by no means the only part of the sentence that can precede the first pole. Every part of the sentence can in principle be realized before the first pole. However, only one clausal element can occur in this position in a concrete sentence. In fact, this observation often is used as a well known constituency test in Dutch: materials that can occur in this position by definition constitute a single constituent. Following the ANS we call this position the *initial field*. By analogy we will call the part that follows the second pole the *final field*.

Example 7.

Heeft hij jou die fiets gegeven met het mandje?
Has he you that bike given with the basket
'Did he give you the bike with the basket?'

Example 8.

Ik heb die nieuwe cd gekocht van 'm
I have that new cd bought from him
'I bought his new cd.'

In Example 7 the attributive adjunct *met het mandje* (“with the basket”) is separated from its head *die fiets* (“that bike”) and placed in the final field. Example 8 shows a prepositional object (*van 'm*, “from him”) in the final field.

On the one hand, the final field of a sentence is more discriminative than the initial field. Every phrasal category can be placed in the initial field, for the final field this is not the case. Only subordinate clauses, a subset of the adverbials and

prepositions can occur in this particular position. On the other hand, the final field is more flexible: whereas the initial field can only house a single constituent, the final field offers space for an indefinite amount of material. It is because of this characteristic of the final field that the Dutch sentence can, in principle, be extended indefinitely.

Clausal materials can also occur between the two poles. This part, between the two poles, is called the *middle field*. In example 7, the middle field comprises *hij jouw die fiets* (“he you that bike”). As was the case with the final field, the middle field can contain multiple constituents. Figure 2 illustrates these new terms in a schema:

Figure 2.

<i>Initial field</i>	<i>1st pole</i>	<i>middle field</i>	<i>2nd pole</i>	<i>final field</i>
Ik <i>I</i>	heb <i>have</i>	die nieuwe cd <i>that new cd</i>	gekocht <i>bought</i>	van ‘m <i>from him</i>
	Heeft <i>Has</i>	hij jou de fiets <i>he you the bike</i>	gegeven <i>given</i>	met dat mandje? <i>with the basket?</i>

There are two additional structural positions in the Dutch sentence to accommodate dislocated elements: the *aanloop* (“left dislocation”, LD-field) and the *uitloop* (“right dislocation”, RD-field). These two positions are reserved for additional materials that are not part of the matrix clause. The LD-field is located before the initial field whereas the RD-field is located after the final field. The materials in the LD-field and the RD-field are either analyzed as repetitions of parts of speech in the body of the clause or as parenthetical elements (e.g. interjections and the like). Please take a look at Example 9.

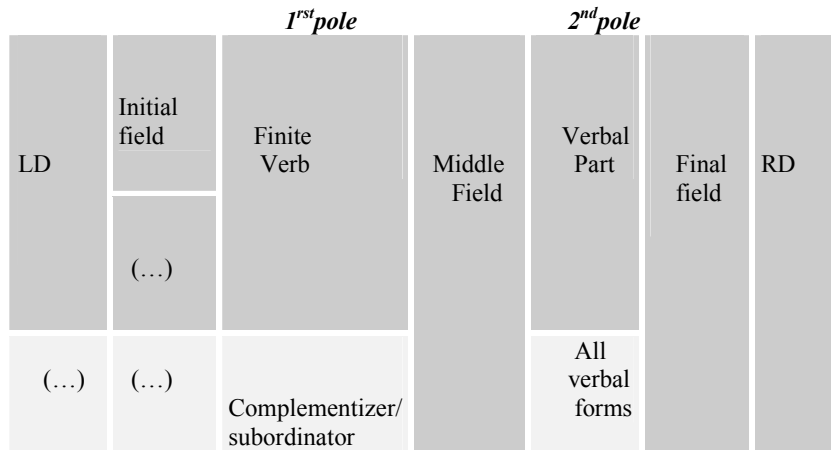
Example 9.

Zijn oom, die *heeft* de bal over de heg *geschopt*.
His uncle, that *has* the ball over the bushes *kicked*
‘His uncle, he has kicked the bal over the bushes’

In Example 9, the subject of the sentence is the resumptive pronoun (*die*, “that”). Its referent is the noun phrase *zijn oom* (“his uncle”), introduced in the LD-field. Of course these elements might also have been realized in RD-field.

Based on this classification, the ANS distinguishes three different sentence types. Two types of main clause and one type of subordinate clause. Figure 3 shows this classification in abstract schematic form:

Figure 3. Model of the Dutch clause (Haeseryn et. al., 1997)



The figure depicts the three distinct sentence types. The first two are main clauses. The difference between these two sentence types is the presence/absence of lexical material in the initial field. Note that an empty initial field does not imply that LD is also empty. The last sentence type is the topological model for the subordinate clause. The LD-position and the initial field of subordinate clauses are always empty.

4.3. A dynamic view on syntax

Selting (1995, 1996, and 1997) gives a dynamic view of syntax that is still based on the description of syntactic units in conversations. Unlike Schegloff (1996), Selting engages the intuitive notion that syntactic structures provide interactants with an interactional resource to organize their turns-at-talk. In a discussion of Rath (1979) she formulates this viewpoint as follows:

“Problematisch an den Ansätzen Raths und auch anderer, die eine Kommunikative Definition von Kategorien vorziehen, ist, dass damit die Möglichkeit verloren geht, die uns allen intuitiv bekannten formbezogenen Organisationsprinzipien, z.B. die syntaktische Organisation ‘möglicher Satze’ als eigenständiges, Kommunikativ relevantes Signalierungssystem und als Ressource der Organisation der Konversation zu untersuchen.” (p. 300)

The approach followed in Rath (1979) and in other studies that use language use as the basis of the definition of linguistic categories is

problematic because it does not allow us to investigate syntactic form (e.g. most notably the intuitively clear notion of the possible sentence) as an independent interactional resource that participants use to structure their interactions.

In this view syntax provides participants with flexible templates that can be used in the organization of turns-at-talk. One way in which this might happen is in the projection of TCUs. Another way is in the packaging of turns-at-talk. Different syntactic packaging of a conversational unit may result in a different interactional function.

Selting claims that rather than static, syntactic structures in conversations are flexible units. Selting coins these flexible structures schemata or gestalts. She defines these schemata as “flexible, dynamic, and situationally adaptable” linguistic structures. These structures are cognitively and interactionally real, and they have a beginning, a trajectory and an end: “the initiation of a gestalt configuration or activity will (...) project gestalt closure or completion”. As gestalts are flexible schemata, this projected completion can be flexibly organized and can be adapted to the task at hand.

One of these gestalts is the *possible sentence*. Based on our discussion of the Dutch clause it is clear how possible sentences could function as interactional resources for the organization of turns-at-talk. First, this notion allows us to explain the projective power of syntactic structures. When we look at clause type 3 (the syntactic type of subordinate clauses) it is clear that we can think of this structure as activated by the complementizer/subordinator in the first pole. After the production of this subordinator we know what it takes for the unit underway to be possibly complete: the clause cannot be complete before a verbal element is produced in the second pole. That is, the production of the subordinator activates the subordinate clause schema and this schema provides an interactional resource both for the production and the interpretation of the stretch of talk underway. This example shows that although syntax cannot project far, it can project turn incompleteness at least until all obligatory schema elements are produced.

For clause types 1 and 2 the same holds, but in a less binding manner. After the production of the finite verb in the first pole one of these schemata is activated (depending on the realization of the initial field). Here however, the projection is less forceful: all other structural positions may be empty. However, based on the verb and the context one could still argue that these structures project what it will take for the unit underway to be complete. For example transitive verbs may activate schema 1, whereas intransitive verbs may activate schema 2.

Schema 1.

<subject> <finite verb> <object> (<object>)

Schema 2.

<subject> <finite verb>

Whether these units are actually realized in the interaction is of course a contextual matter. But in principle these structures allow participants to organize their turns using these schemata.

This does not only hold true for clausal units. Phrases can also project what it will take for them to be possibly complete. The projection is not so far reaching as in the case of clausal units and the projection might not be so forceful, but these fragments clearly provide resources that can be exploited in the realization of turns-at-talk. For example, the determiner of a noun phrase makes the *noun-phrase schema* interactionally relevant (Schema 3). The production of a preposition might activate the *PP schema* (Schema 4).

Schema 3.

<DET> (<ADV>) (<ADJ>) NP (<PP>)

Schema 4.

<PP> <NP>

So even in the case of phrasal elements, syntactic schemata provide a projection that allows participants to know what it will take for the current unit to be possibly complete. In this sense, syntax has a restrictive effect on turn-taking. Only after all obligatory arguments have been produced is the unit possibly complete.

However, schema 3 and 4 also show how these various schemata can be used to extend turns-at-talk. At the end of schema 3, schema 4 may be activated, after which Schema 3 may be activated, and so forth. That is, these schemata not only allow for the projection of things to come, but they also allow participants to organize their turns-at-talk. This is why we can only speak of possible syntactic completion with respect to a turn underway. Units can always be extended in the right periphery. This is a fundamental property of syntactic structures. Although they can signal turn incompleteness, they cannot signal turn completion.

When we look at the topological model of the clause it also becomes clear how these schemata may be exploited in the packaging of turns-at-talk. The model allows for two types of continuations:

1. continuations in the final field
2. continuations in RD-field

Syntactically these continuations are very different. Elements in the final field are part of the clause, whereas elements in the RD-field are not part of the clause per se. Functionally, they are also very different. Elements in the final field may have a number of different meaning relations with the foregoing clause. Elements in the RD-field only have a very restricted set of meanings (clarification, predication, et cetera). This raises the question whether these loci also have a different interactional status. That is, do elements in the RD-field constitute different sequential actions than elements in the final position? Selting (1996) and Ford and Thompson (1996, 2004) claim that they do. Elements in the RD-field are analyzed as new TCUs,

whereas elements in the final field are not. However, both papers treat this as an a priori distinction. In this study, we will treat this issue as an empirical question. In Part III, we will give an analysis of the interactional function of elements in these fields.

In the remainder of this study we will take the dynamic interpretation of the topological model of the clause as the starting point of our analysis. The different structural positions of this model allow us to analyze turns with respect to the part/whole relations they have with their surrounding elements. Elements in the final field are analyzed as continuations of the foregoing clause, whereas elements in the RD-field are not part of the clause per se. This part/whole relation will play an important role in the analysis of fragments and subordinate clauses in Part III.

In the next paragraph we will give a first characterization of the syntactic units in our corpus. Although this is by no means an exhaustive description it will show that clausal structures are the pervasive structures in our corpus. This observation will play an important role in our take on the role of syntax in Dutch conversations in the remainder of this study.

4.4. Analysis of the syntactic structures in our corpus

In this section, we will give an overview of the syntactic structures found in our corpus. We will use the topological model as the basis of our description. For this part of our study we only used a small preliminary, but representative part of our corpus. In this paragraph, we will take a closer look at the various syntactic structures found in our corpus. We will distinguish between phrasal and clausal constructions.⁴ Back-channels and recipient tokens were omitted from our analysis. Figure 4 gives an overview of the distribution of these two kinds of structures.

Figure 4. The distribution of utterance types

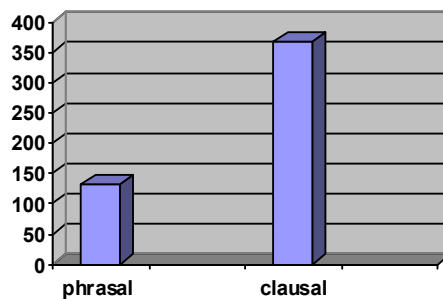


Figure 4 shows that the clause is the pervasive structure in our corpus. Of the 500 units we selected, 368 are clausal. Figure 5 gives a subdivision of the clauses based on their syntactic status.

⁴ Lexical elements (like substantives and adjectives) were analyzed as phrases.

Figure 5. Clause type

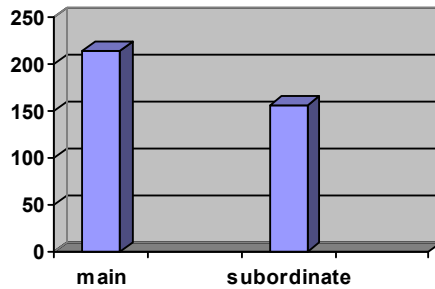


Figure 5 shows that the majority of the clauses found in our corpus have a main clause structure (58 percent, n=213). To test whether or not these structures were produced as single structures or as part of coordination-structures we also coded for the occurrence of coordinators in these main clauses.

Figure 6. Main clause type

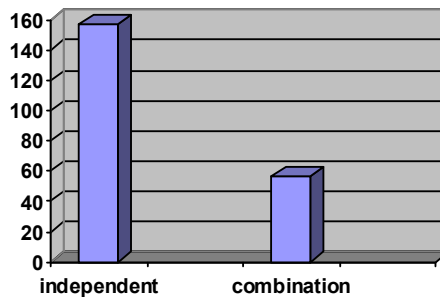
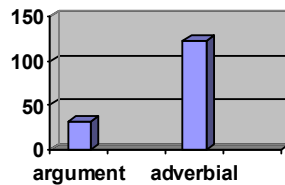


Figure 6 shows that the majority (74 percent, n=157) of the main clauses in our corpus are realized without overt marking. That is, they are presented as independent units. So not only is the clause the most pervasive structure in our corpus, it also seems to be the case that the simplex clause is the most frequent structure found in spoken discourse.

Looking at subordinate clauses we can, traditionally, make a further distinction between clauses that function as an argument and adverbial clauses. Figure 7 gives the relevant numbers. The distinction between these two clause types will be taken up in Chapter 2 of Part III.

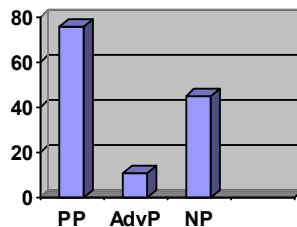
Figure 7. Subordinate clause type



Although the majority (79 percent, n=123) of the clause types are used adverbially, the number of subordinate clauses that is used as an argument is by no means small (21 percent, n= 32). These are almost without exception paired with epistemic verbs (hoping, wishing, thinking, et cetera.). We will discuss the discourse status of these grammatical structures in Part III, chapter 2.

Since we do not treat phrasal elements as elliptical structures we cannot classify them in terms of the argument structure of the clause.⁵ Figure 8 gives a description of the phrasal elements in terms of their form.

Figure 8. Phrasal elements



Prepositional phrases are the pervasive phrasal structures in our data (58 percent, n=76), but noun phrases are also relatively frequent (34 percent, n=45). Adverbial phrases were less frequent in our corpus (8 percent, n=11). In Part III, we will give a detailed description of the prosodic realization and the function of these elements.

Although by no means an exhaustive description of our corpus, we can see that there are a number of clear trends. Clauses are most likely to be simplex main clauses. When we do see clause combining, coordinate constructions are more likely to occur than subordinate clauses. Argument clauses are rare and only occur with a number of specific verbs. We also found that PPs are the most frequent phrasal unit type.

⁵ We will come back to this theme in depth in Part III of this study.

We will take the special status of the main clause as the starting point in our analysis. Furthermore, in Part III of this study we will show that the clause schema is used by the participants to constitute turns-at-talk in an interactionally meaningful way.

Chapter 5: Prosody

5.1. Introduction

In the last chapter we looked at the syntactic tier. We concluded that syntax alone could not explain the turn-taking phenomenon. Syntactic structure is recursive and in Dutch it is always possible to add syntactically integrated materials in the right periphery. This means that syntax can only signal turn completion in a negative way: only the production of a new unit signals that the foregoing unit is complete. Furthermore, if syntax were the only relevant unit, optional elements in the right periphery would be very vulnerable for overlap. Although this seems to be the case in some particular environments, participants can also predict the endings of turns that end in such optional elements. This means that participants also orient towards other units than the clause alone. In this chapter, we will look at a likely candidate: prosodic units.

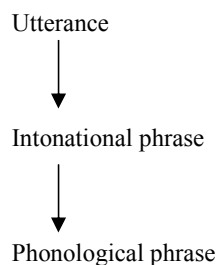
In this chapter, we have two goals. The first goal is a description of various coding systems of intonation. In paragraph 5.2, we discuss the TODI-system. In paragraph 5.3, we take a look at the interactional approach to prosodic structure. The second goal of this chapter is to give an overview of the various theories that describe the relationship between syntax and prosody. This is an important question because at various points we will argue that interactants use the distribution of these two structures as interactional resources. However, if it can be shown that one of these structures can be defined as a function of the other, such an interpretation is not possible. In paragraph 5.3, we will discuss various theories that describe the relation between prosody and syntax.

5.2. The TODI-system

In this study, we used the TODI-system to analyze the prosodic structures in our data. The TODI-system¹ is based on the phonological/autosegmental theory of Gussenhoven (1984), which in turn is based on the model of Pierrehumbert (1980, 1988). The TODI-system is also loosely based on the more phonetic, perceptive IPO-system ('t Hart, Collier & Cohen 1990). This system is especially developed for the transcription of standard Dutch intonation and contains three levels (Gussenhoven & Jacobs 1998, Gussenhoven 1984). The first level is the *utterance level*. Utterances comprise *intonational phrases* which in turn consist of *phonological phrases*.

¹ A detailed online description of the system illustrated with numerous examples and transcription exercises can be found at <http://todi.let.kun.nl/ToDI/home.htm>.

Figure 1. Three levels of Dutch intonation



For our study the intonational phrases are the relevant units. Utterances consist of intonational phrases, which in turn are built up from phonological phrases.

In this system the intonational phrase (IP) is the equivalent of the *Tone Group* in the British English tradition and this unit is delimited by the two boundary tones. The system also distinguishes structure below the phonological phrase (PP). However, these structures will not play a role in this study.² The intonational phrases can be described based on the following elements (tones):

Figure 2. Elements of the intonational phrase

- Initial boundary tones (%T)
- Pitch accents T*(T)
- Final boundary tones (T%)

This means that an intonational phrase consists of a number of pitch accents (T). These units can be delimited by boundary tones signaling the beginning (%T) and ending of a phrase (T%). The TODI-system distinguishes between the following tonal elements:

² Dutch prosodic hierarchy consists of the syllable, the foot, the prosodic word, the phonological phrase, the intonation phrase and the utterance (Booij 1995). The only other relevant unit for intonational structure, apart from the units mentioned in the text, is the foot. At the level of the foot pitch assignment and alignment are regulated (Zonneveld et al. 1999).

Figure 3. The different tones in the TODI-system

Initial boundary tones:	%L (Low) %H (High) %HL (High-Low)
Final boundary tones:	L% (Low) H% (High)
Pitch accents:	H* (sustained High pitch) L* (sustained Low pitch) H*L (falling pitch) L*H (rising pitch) H*!H (vocative chant)
Modified pitch accents	!H* (downstepped H*) !H*L (downstepped H*L) L*!HL (downstepped delayed fall) H*+L (prefinal steep fall)

Using this set of tones and accents, the TODI-system can describe the nuclear contours of Dutch intonation. With this set of pitch accents and boundary tones TODI generates 24 nuclear contours.³ The result is a grammar of intonation describing the possible intonation contours of Dutch:

Figure 4. A grammar of Dutch intonation

$$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \%L \\ \%H \end{array} \right\} \left\{ \begin{array}{l} H^* \\ (!)H^*L \\ L^*(H) \\ L^*(!)HL \\ H^*!H \end{array} \right\} \left\{ \begin{array}{l} L\% \\ H\% \\ \% \end{array} \right\}$$

Figure 4 shows the possible intonational phrases of Dutch. The schema gives all possible configurations of the pitch accents and the boundary accents.

Looking at this grammar from a turn-taking perspective it is clear that, unlike syntactic structures, prosodic structure does not seem to have a clear projective quality that allows participants to predict what it will take for the turn underway to be complete. The matter is further complicated by the empirical fact that Dutch intonation contours are not restricted with respect to the number of accents that can occur in a single IP. Although there does seem to be a sort of

³ Parentheses mark optional elements.

restriction in the sense that if an IP contains more than three accents, all but the last must be of the same type.

From a turn-taking perspective the most likely candidates to signal completion of the turn at hand are the boundary tones, at most a very local device that could signal the completion *then and there* of the turn underway. However, boundary signals are not an obligatory part of Dutch IPs. Thus there can only be a one-sided relationship between the occurrence of a boundary tone and the prosodic completion of a unit. It is possible that one could establish that specific boundary tones are used as a turn-yielding device (Caspers 2000), but it is clear that one cannot define prosodic completion in terms of boundary tones. Other prosodic factors (apart from melody) must be taken into account. From the perspective of IPs it must be concluded that, with the possible exception of particular local boundary tones, prosodic completion can only be established in retrospect: the start of a new IP (signaled by an obligatory initial boundary tone) shows that the prior IP is complete.

Although this characteristic of the melodic facets of a turn do not seem to do much for the prediction of turn endings, it *can* be used to signal that an IP underway is not yet complete despite of phonetic *disturbances* in the production. In these cases, the absence of boundary tones can signal the continuation of the prior turn and thus signals a sort of cohesion between these two, phonetically separated, stretches of speech. Note however, that this also only works in retrospect.

5.3. *Intonation: a conversational approach*

Couper-Kuhlen and Selting (1996) propose a different approach to prosody that they coin *interactive*. At the core of this approach lies the assumption that it is meaningful to look at the way prosody is used to do interactive work in real conversations. Whereas prior research has concerned itself primarily with what Couper-Kuhlen and Selting call *spoken prose*, this new approach to prosody aims to describe the interactive function of prosodic structure. This means that prosodic categories are treated as meaningful to the interactants, signaling specific interactional functions of the unit underway. This approach signals a shift from a focus on the language system to a more functional approach to language structure.

This change in perspective has consequences for the way prosodic categories are viewed. Both a phonetic and a phonological model of prosody run into difficulties when identifying prosodic units. A phonological approach assumes prosodic structure that is not phonetically realized. The phonetic description of intonation, on the other hand, runs in to problems when clear phonetic cues like a pause do not seem to co-occur with prosodic boundaries. Couper-Kuhlen and Selting argue that the interactional stance does away with these difficulties. In analogy with the lexico-syntactic analysis of spoken data (where terms like sentence and clause are abandoned in favor of interactional terminology like turns and utterances) they argue that the relevant prosodic unit for conversation will not be the prosodic counterpart of a sentence or a clause, but rather an interactive category: a phonetic stretch of speech that speakers use to construct turns. And just as the interactional constraints shape utterances in real conversation, these same constraints are likely to shape the prosodic make-up of interactional units and thus, the authors conclude,

these *interactionally grounded* prosodic categories may differ substantially from *traditional* linguistic units like IPs or tone groups.

It is clear that the interactive approach to prosody distinguishes itself from the more linguistic approaches discussed in the previous paragraph in the sense that it takes the analysis of spontaneous conversations to be central to the study of prosody. Furthermore, the interactive approach takes the interactional function of prosodic cues to be the focus of their studies. But how can we establish what these units are? Although these facets of language use have long been neglected within mainstream linguistics, they have been studied by social scientists. Most notably within the frameworks of *conversation analysis* and *contextualization-theory*. And it is to these frameworks that the interactive view on prosody turns in the actual analysis of interactional data.

Conversation analysis describes language as a social practice. The focus of this approach is a detailed description of the methods interactants use in the collaborative production of spontaneous conversations. The starting point of conversation analytic research is a detailed transcription of a corpus of conversations. One of the assumptions is that no level of detail is a priori to be excluded in the analysis. As a result, prosodic characteristics as rate of speech, sound stretches, in breaths, pauses and intonation feature in the transcriptions. But although the importance of prosodic characteristics of turns-at-talk has been stressed by a number of authors working within the conversation analytical framework, Couper-Kuhlen and Selting point out that these characteristics do not play a pivotal role in most analyses up to this point. Prosodic categories feature in the detailed descriptions of naturally occurring data that are the basis of the analysis, but (with the exception of the interactional function of pauses) they are not treated systematically in the study of interaction. Nevertheless, the basic attitude towards prosody in conversation analysis does seem to do more justice to the role of prosody in actual language use than the more prose oriented analyses found in other methodological frameworks.

Couper-Kuhlen and Selting argue that conversation analysis is very much suited for the analyses of prosody since it stresses the importance of studying spontaneous conversation based on a detailed transcription of the conversation at hand. Furthermore, conversation analysis takes a perspective on conversation that emphasizes the collaborative nature of interaction and in this process justifies its analysis by demonstrating that the participants themselves orient towards the categories proposed in the analysis.

Prosody *did* get a great deal of attention in analyses within the framework of contextualization-theory (Gumperz 1982). Central to this theory is the notion of *contextualization*. Gumperz argues that not only the actual turns-at-talk, but also the relevant context and frames that are used to interpret these units are the product of a joint, collaborative process. This context is not independently present, given a certain conversation. Interactants use specific linguistic *cues* to evoke the relevant interpretative schemata or frames. Prosody is one way that participants can evoke these schemata (but it is certainly not the only cue. Other cues are code-switching and non-verbal aspects of conversation). Gumperz claims that these contextualization cues work at three distinct levels of organization:

1. conversational management (turn-taking and signaling degrees of informational relevance);
2. sequencing, e.g. in cueing implicatures and disambiguating speaker intent in utterances;
3. framing, i.e. in generating expectations about the nature of the interaction and in keying its mood and atmosphere (Gumperz 1992, cited in Couper-Kuhlen and Selting 1996, p.23)

It is clear that the interactional stance to prosody introduces some new topics in the study of prosodic features of turns-at-talk. Couper-Kuhlen and Selting set out to argue that a combination of the conversation analytical methodology and the notion of contextualization can be fruitfully adapted to analyze prosodic features in conversations:

“Prosody can be seen as one of the orderly ‘details’ of interaction, a resource which interlocutors rely on to accomplish social actions and as a means of steering inferential processes. Prosodic features, we suggest, can be reconstructed as member’s devices, designed for the organization and management of talk in social interaction. They can be shown to function as part of a signaling system which (...) is used to construct and interpret turn-constructional units and turns-at-talk.” (Couper-Kuhlen and Selting 1996, p. 25)

In the remainder of their paper they discuss five *maxims* that should guide the analysis of prosody in this new interactive perspective:

1. Give priority to the analysis of naturally occurring talk
2. Treat the data as an integral part of the context in which it occurs
3. Treat the data as emergent in the real time of ongoing interaction
4. Ground analytical categories in the data itself
5. Validate analytical categories by demonstrating participants’ orientation to them.

Of course this new perspective on prosody has consequences for the way prosody is treated in the analysis of actual language use. More specifically, it has consequences for the categories that are used in this analysis. If one acknowledges that every detail in a conversation can be made meaningful by the participants and if, more specifically, one expects that every prosodic feature can in principle be used to do interactional work (in the form of a contextualization cue), then it is clear that the analysis of the intonational structure of utterances should reflect this expectation and it is also clear that any system of analysis (and every transcription method) should be able to code these details in a uniform way. However, the transcription-system that is traditionally used in conversation analysis (Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson 1974) is not very suited for this particular job. Couper-Kuhlen and Selting argue that this system falls short on two counts. First, a transcription-system for conversation should provide enough cues for readers to reconstruct the important features of the

discourse without the original data. And second, the transcription system should code the features of the discourse that are relevant for the conversationalist.

The traditional transcription-system clearly does not provide enough prosodic details to reconstruct the original data. The melodic features of a stretch of talk are coded using symbols of the conventional writing system (period, comma, and question mark) to code the global pitch characteristics of a stretch of speech (most notably the last pitch movement of the unit under consideration) combined with arrows (↑,↓) to characterize more local pitch movements. These conventions do not provide enough details to describe the intricate system of Dutch intonation (for example, compare this crude classification with the fine grained description tools presented in paragraph 1.2): a more detailed transcription system is called for.

The second point that Couper-Kuhlen and Selting stress is that the transcription-conventions should reflect categories that participants orient to. They argue that the system should be elaborated since some features that are lacking in the traditional system do seem to play an important role in conversation.⁴ An adequate description of the prosodic features of turns-at-talk should take these observations into account. It seems prudent that every study takes the results of prior studies into account and codes prosodic distinctions that are proven to be oriented to by participants. However, what counts as a ‘participant category’ is clearly the *result* of a corpus study and as such it is impossible to know beforehand what will turn out to be a relevant prosodic feature. As such, from the perspective of a corpus study it is not possible to code the relevant categories a priori, because the corpus study is carried out to *identify* these relevant categories. This means that in such a methodological framework one can only code *candidate features*. This has implications for the transcription-system: if the goal of study is to discover or identify relevant prosodic features it stands to reason to code as much detail as possible.

5.4. *The transcription of intonation in our corpus*

In the foregoing paragraphs we discussed two different views on (the transcription of) intonation: the TODI approach and the interactional approach to intonation. The TODI-approach provides us with a phonological view on intonation, giving detailed information about the intonation structure of an utterance, whereas the interactional approach focuses on a wider range of phonetic features (including speech rate, lengthening, quality of voice etc).

In this study, we will code every transcript both in the TODI-convention and in the convention of interactional linguistics. Although our method will always reflect the method of interactional linguistics, we believe that transcribing the corpus in the TODI conventions allows us to describe the intonation structure of the corpus in a more detailed and systematic way. This allows us to observe as much detail with regard to prosodic structure as we need. This will be of interest in two distinct places in our study.

⁴ They provide two examples: the function of a fall-rising contour to signal ‘more to come’ and the function of a high onset to signal *topicality*.

In the quantitative parts of our study we will focus on the issue of completion. Our main focus will be the question whether or not a stretch of talk is prosodically complete. In this respect, the two approaches do not differ in the analytic results, since both use an auditory mode of analysis. Of course they will differ in the description of the stretch of speech with respect to terminology. However, in the qualitative analysis of the counterexamples both will help in their own way. The rich transcription of the TODI-system allows us to observe generalization with respect to *contour-type*. The interactional approach, on the other hand, allows us to use a wider range of phonetic features and provides the basic methodology in which we are looking for the interactional relevance of linguistic structure. This is particularly relevant for the qualitative analysis presented in Part III.

To avoid examples that are hard to read we will not provide all this prosodic detail in this text. We will only transcribe prosodic detail when it is necessary for the analysis at hand.

5.5 The relationship between intonation and syntax

In this paragraph, we will look at the relationship between syntax and prosody. If participants use prosodic and syntactic structure in interactionally meaningful ways, the relationship between these two structures must be more or less unrestricted. If one of the two structures can be defined as a function of the other, an interactional perspective on intonational structure does not seem possible. In order to use linguistic structure in an interactionally relevant way, interactants need to have a choice.

The relationship between intonation and syntax has been widely studied in linguistics. The main question is whether or not the prosodic make-up of a sentence can be predicted or derived from the syntactic structure of the sentence. It is evident from empirical observations that the relationship between the sentence as a syntactic category and intonation units is not one-to-one. So if one wants to maintain that prosodic structure is determined by syntactic structure, additional machinery and/or explanations are called for.

The first approach to explaining this discrepancy has been to claim that the observed relationships between prosodic and syntactic structure are not part of the competence of a language user at all. Rather, these structures were taken to be the result of performance factors (Chomsky and Hall 1968). As such these observed structures are not part of the language system per se.

If, on the other hand, one acknowledges the discrepancy between syntactic and prosodic structure as part of the language system, one has (at least) two options. The first approach is to propose a distinct level of prosodic structure that accounts for the observed mismatch between syntactic and prosodic structures (Selkirk 1984, Nespor and Vogel 1986). In this view prosody is still restricted, but not determined, by the syntactic make-up of the sentence. A second approach is to maintain that there exists a clear relation between syntactic and prosodic structure and to redefine syntactic constituency itself. This is the approach heralded in Categorical Grammar (Steedman 1991, 1996, 2000a, 2000b). This approach takes a much more flexible stance towards constituent structure and assigns multiple constituent structures to a single sentence. The function of prosody in this approach is to make clear what

grouping was intended by the speaker. This grouping is dependent on the discourse function and meaning of the utterance.

Of course one could also drop the assumption that prosodic and syntactic structures are mapped onto each other in such a deterministic way. In such an approach, the phonological structure is taken to be an independent part of linguistic grouping. A grouping that may or may not coincide with the syntactic grouping of the stretch of talk. This is the approach suggested in Langacker (1990). In the remainder of this chapter, we will take a closer look at these proposals.

Selkirk (1984) starts with the observation that syntactic structure does not determine the number of pitch accents assigned to a sentence or the distribution of those pitch accents across the sentence. The same, she argues, goes for intonational phrases. A sentence can be phonetically realized in a number of distinct ways. This rules out the possibility that the phonological representation (which determines the phonetic realization of the utterance) can be computed directly from the syntactic representation of this sentence. Hence additional phonological structure is needed. It is also clear that the rules that operate on this level cannot be deterministic if one is to explain the observed variety in phonetic realization. Selkirk proposes two conditions.

The first condition simply states that every matrix sentence must be exhaustively parsed into a sequence of (one or more) intonational phrases. The second condition is semantic in nature and states that the immediate constituents of an intonational phrase must form a *sense unit*. The notion immediate constituent is defined as follows:

“An immediate constituent of an intonational phrase IP_i is a syntactic constituent contained entirely within (...) IP_i and not dominated by any other syntactic constituent contained entirely within IP_i .” (Selkirk 1984, p.290)

In other words, immediate constituents are the largest units constituting the IP in question. This of course does not imply that these constituents are not comprised in larger constituents with other materials realized in IPs of their own. Please take a look at Example 1

Example 1.

[Mary prefers] [Corduroy]

In Example 1, the sentence *Mary prefers Corduroy* is realized in two distinct IPs. In the first IP both *Mary* and *prefers* are immediate constituents because neither one is dominated by the other. Selkirk defines the notion Sense Unit as follows:

“Two constituents C_i and C_j form a sense unit if (a) or (b) is true of the semantic interpretation of the sentence:
a. C_i modifies C_j (a head)
b. C_i is an argument of C_j (a head) (Selkirk 1984, p. 288)”

Here again the restriction only operates within the IP under consideration. Whether or not constituents in an IP are part of a larger constituent realized partly in another IP is inconsequential. As a result the prosodic realization of a sentence is only restricted, but not determined, by this approach. However, the two constraints do predict that elements that cannot be analyzed as either a modifier or an argument of a neighboring element in the sentence will be realized in an IP of their own. Thus, the prosodic realization of vocatives, tag questions and some parentheticals can be accounted for. Selkirk argues that it is the semantic relationship with the other elements of the clause that accounts for the distinctive prosodic realization of these structures.

Since this approach only restricts the elements that can occur in a single intonation contour, it has nothing to say about the factors that influence the actual breaking up of sentences in multiple intonation contours. Selkirk argues that these choices are probably based on the discourse function or meaning of intonational phrasing.

In the theory of Nespor and Vogel (1986) the *intonational phrase* (IP) occupies the level of prosodic structure between the phonological utterance and the phonological phrase.⁵ The grouping of phonological phrases into IPs is determined by three factors: syntax, semantics and performance factors like rate of speech. On the IP-level there are two rules: the basic IP-formation rule and a restructuring rule. The basic rule for the formation of IPs is not variable and uniquely partitions a string of phonological phrases into IPs. The observed variability in IP-structure is accounted for by the restructuring rule. The basic rule for IP formation is formulated as follows (Nespor and Vogel 1986, p. 189):

I. I domain

An I domain may consist of

- All the phonological phrases in a string that is not structurally attached to the sentence tree at the level of S-structure, or
- Any remaining sequence of adjacent phonological phrases in a root sentence

II. I construction

Join into an n-ary branching I all phonological phrases included in a string delimited by the definition of the domain of I.

Basically, this rule states that root sentences are realized in a single intonation contour.

⁵ Nespor and Vogel distinguish between seven distinct levels of prosodic constituents: syllable, foot, phonological word, clitic group, phonological phrase, intonational phrase and phonological utterance. In addition to these different levels of structure and following Selkirk (1984) they also propose three distinct rule-types: domain span, domain juncture and domain limit.

Nespor and Vogel discuss four factors that play a role in the restructuring of IPs: length, rate of speech, style and contrastive prominence. The restructuring of the IP however, is not free. The restructuring has to follow the *Strict Layer Hypothesis* which requires that junctures in IP structures must coincide with junctures on the lower levels of prosodic structure (in this case the phonological phrase).⁶ Furthermore, there are some syntactic constraints that restrict the restructuring of an IP into smaller IPs.

The first syntactic constraint states that IP restructuring tends to occur at the end of a noun phrase. IP restructuring is more likely at the boundary of a noun phrase than after other syntactic materials within a clause. This introduces a new discrepancy between syntactic and prosodic structure since the resulting structure may not be a constituent of the clause.

The second syntactic constraint on IP restructuring states that there is a general tendency not to separate obligatory arguments from their main verb. This constraint outranks the first constraint in the sense that IP boundaries tend not to separate obligatory arguments from their verb even if the resulting structures respect the NP constraint. The prosodic realization of optional arguments is not restricted in the same way.

The third syntactic constraint concerns the realization of a new S. The restructuring of an IP can occur in contexts where a new S is introduced in the syntactic structure. However, this restructuring can only take place if the process does not violate the NP constraint. It can, however, separate an obligatory argument from its verb. The resulting picture shows three syntactic constraints that are ranked with respect to each other. It is also worth noting that the restructuring of IP structure seems to be restricted mainly in reference to NPs and Ss.

Nespor and Vogel argue that the majority of the instances of IP restructuring can be described using the patterns discussed above. However, they need some additional rules to deal with some special cases that contradict these trends. The first set of counterexamples consists of lists of constituents of the same type. Nespor and Vogel distinguish between two types of lists. The first type of list consists of repeated constituents that are clearly integrated in the matrix sentence. Adjectival modification is a case in point.⁷ In these cases an intonation break can be added before each repetition of the constituent at hand. Lists that are more loosely connected to the matrix sentences can have an additional intonation break before the first occurrence of the repeated constituent type.⁸ The second set of counterexamples

⁶ The domain of Phonological phrases being defined as follows:

The domain of a phonological phrase consists of a C which contains a lexical head (X) and all Cs on its non-recursive side up to the C that contains another head outside of the maximal projection of X.

⁷ For example the IP [The big fat ugly nasty beast scared away the children] can be realized in the following way: [The big] [fat] [ugly] [nasty beast] [scared away the children]

⁸ The following sentences are two cases in point:

1. [Let's invite] [Arnold] [Arthur] [Archibald] [and Zachery]
2. [We were told to buy the following] [milk] [eggs] [bread] [and cheese]

involves embedded structures. Although some of these embedded structures are very similar to the lists discussed earlier, not all these structures can be analyzed as periodic repetitions of the same constituents.

Steedman (1991) takes the observed discrepancy between prosodic structure and syntactic constituency as his starting point. But rather than looking for new levels of structure in the domain of prosody, Steedman proposes a new take on syntactic structure. He argues that if we take the *Constituent Condition* on rules as the starting point of grammatical analysis and pursue it to its extremes we end up with a very different concept of constituency. For example phrases like *Mary prefers* and *a policeman a flower* will be treated as constituents in their own right.⁹ This means that a simple sentence like *Mary prefers corduroy* must have more than one surface structure.¹⁰ Combinatory Categorical Grammar produces this flexibility in syntactic structure while still producing a single interpretation. In CCG elements like verbs are identified by functions, specifying both the directionality of their arguments as the resulting type. As such these categories are both syntactic and semantic objects (they both give the combinatory possibilities of the category and the resulting meaning). Using functional application rules these categories can combine into larger structures.

These different groupings do not have a distinct semantic interpretation. However, they *are* functionally distinct, in the sense that they convey different discourse meanings. In spoken language these different readings can be distinguished using the prosodic realization of the sentence as a clue to what grouping has the intended reading.

In the resulting view, the strong link between prosody and syntax can be maintained. Constituency is defined in terms of syntactic rules: syntactic rules can only operate on constituents. As a result a simple sentence can have more than one constituent grouping. The resulting view on constituency shows a stronger match between syntactic structure and prosodic structure. Steedman concludes that we do not need a different prosodic domain based on semantic characteristics (like Selkirk's Sense Unit), since these boil down to the Constituent Condition on rules of Grammar.

Croft (1995) presents a corpus study based on oral narratives in order to explore the relation between intonation units (IUs) and grammatical units (GUs). Rather than taking the grammatical units as starting point of his investigation, he looks at the syntactic structures that are realized in a single intonation contour. The most important reason for this choice is the awkwardness of the notion of sentence for the analysis of spoken language. In fact, it has been suggested frequently that speakers organize their talk in terms of intonation units rather than grammatical units (Altenberg 1987a, 1987b; Chafe 1980).

⁹ Since both phrases can occur in a conjunction:

1. Mary prefers but Bill detests the new record
2. John gives the major a kiss and a policeman a flower

¹⁰ Two possible surface structures are: (Mary) (prefers corduroy) and (Mary prefers) (corduroy).

Crofts data show a strong relationship between IUs and GUs: 97% (n=1989) of the IUs are GUs. Moreover, the vast majority of the IUs consist of complete grammatical structures: 91 percent of the IUs consist of GUs possessing their full set of complements (full NPs, PPs and clauses of various sorts). Croft coins this correspondence the *Full GU condition*. Croft's data also suggest a sort of upper limit to the GUs comprised by an IU: 97 percent of the IUs are single clauses with their complements or smaller. Only 3 percent of the IUs consist of combined clauses. Clause combining almost always occurs across IUs. Sometimes the connectives are realized in an IU of their own.

The majority of the IUs furthermore consist of grammatically independent structures. That is, most IUs are sentential structures that can be found in conventional grammatical descriptions of English. Croft discusses two exceptions: finite VPs without a subject and *lone NPs*. Of these two, the latter is of special interest. Lone NPs have been observed in a number of languages as independent conversational structures (Tao 1992, Helasvuo 2001 and Ford, Fox and Thompson 2002). In spoken language the lone NP seems to be a cross-linguistically widespread phenomenon. The lone NP seems to be suited to perform specific discourse functions that are used frequently in spontaneous conversations. Croft distinguishes four functions: topic NPs, presentative NPs, Elaborative NPs, and Summarizing NPs. We will take a closer look at these NPs in Part III.

Although most IUs are also GUs, the opposite does not hold. This makes sense since a great number of GUs function as complements or adjuncts, and are part of the IU of this greater GU. However, quite a substantial number of GUs are made up of more than one IU. In these cases, the resulting structures still adhere to the full GU principle. Croft identifies three guiding principles for the production of a GU in multiple IUs: parallelism, complexity and distance.

It has been suggested that speakers formulate their thoughts one clause at a time (Chafe 1994, Halliday & Matthiessen 2004). This idea is not supported by Croft's data-set: 19 percent of the IUs contain two or more clauses. Even if only finite clauses are taken into account, still about 14 percent of the IUs do not adhere to this "one-clause-at-a-time" principle. However, the principle does hold if only finite main clauses are taken into account: 97% of the IUs contain no more than one finite main clause. As was stated before, this means that coordinate sentences are not produced in a single IU. This suggests that it is not so much the clausal status of elements that influences the choice for multiple intonation contours, but the relation between the structures that are produced in a single IU. Parallel structures are produced in distinctive IUs.

Nespor and Vogel (1986) also propose restructuring rules that allow for IU breaks within constituents. These rules, however, also apply to embedded structures because they look at the linear structure rather than the hierarchical structure of the grammatical unit. Although Croft found that these structures could also be broken into multiple IUs, the resulting pattern was not categorical in nature. Some of these structures were produced in a single IU, whereas others were realized in multiple IUs.

The second characteristic of a GU that Croft discusses is the complexity of the unit. The complexity feature covers instances that in other approaches are dealt with under the heading of *heaviness*. Croft opts for complexity because he thinks the

term heaviness is misleading in the sense that it can operate at different levels of linguistic structure. As such it is not the overall measure of the grammatical size of the IU that matters, but the make-up of stretches of talk at different levels of linguistic structure.

Croft shows that complexity is especially relevant for the separation of subjects from their predicates: complex subject NPs are frequently produced in an intonation contour of their own. Croft also observes that complex subject NPs are much more frequent than complex NPs in other grammatical positions.¹¹

Complexity also plays an important role in the prosodic realization of non-subject arguments and adjuncts. Although here, it is not so much the complexity of the arguments and adjuncts in itself, but the number of full NPs in a clause. Full NPs seem to favor the breaking of clauses into multiple IUs in a post verbal position, although length is generally taken to be a performance factor. Croft argues that, when redefined in terms of grammatical complexity, it is possible to define this category in syntactic terms.

The last factor that influences the prosodic make-up of a stretch of talk is the *distance* between two constituents. Although some grammatical units are easily ranked based on their relative (syntactic) distance, there are also quite a few unclear cases. An unproblematic example is the difference between adverbials and complements. It is clear that adjuncts (not being subcategorized by the verb) are more distant to the rest of the clause than a complement is. This distinction is clearly marked in the prosodic make-up of these grammatical units. Complements are in the majority of cases (91%, n=149) prosodically integrated in their matrix clause, whereas adverbial clauses are more often realized in an intonation contour of their own (81%, n=80).

This tendency for complements to share an IU with their matrix verb, while adjuncts are realized in an IU of their own can also be observed with phrasal complements (NPs) and adjuncts (PPs). If the last argument in a clause is an NP, the IU is almost never broken (3%, n=226). If the last argument of a clause is a PP, on the other hand, it is realized in an intonation contour of its own more often (70%, n=266). Croft also distinguishes between circumstantial PPs, on the one hand, and PPs that introduce a secondary participant (e.g. instruments) or a location, on the other hand. Circumstantial PPs are more distant to the main clause than participants and this is mirrored in their prosodic make-up. Circumstantial PPs are more distant to the main clause and thus more often realized in an IU of their own.

Chafe (1994) looks at the relationship between consciousness and language. In his view, intonation units function as a kind of window to the consciousness of a speaker. He argues that intonation contours contain the information that is active in the speaker's mind at the moment of its production. Observed disfluencies in the production of intonation units are not the result of the selection of information, but they are the consequence of the wording of this information. In the production of language in spurts of words, realized in single intonation units, communication is

¹¹ It is worth noticing that the opposite is the case for conjoined NPs. Conjoined NPs have a strong preference for non-subject positions. This complementary distribution could very well be the result of discourse-functional principles.

made possible: “it is through this dynamic process of successive activations, first for the speaker and then, through the utterance of an intonation contour, for the listener, that language is able to provide an imperfect bridge between one mind and another. (Chafe 1994, p. 63)”

The first quantitative notion Chafe uses to describe intonation units is the number of words contained in a single intonation contour. This is of course relevant if one is interested in intonation contours as a window of consciousness. If there is a relation between active information and intonation contours we could use intonation contours as a measure of the amount of information that is active at a given time. The information contained in an intonation contour can then in turn be defined looking at the number of words that an intonation contour comprises. However, as Chafe acknowledges, just counting the number of words in an intonation contour is problematic.

The first problem arises if we look at the different kinds of intonation contours found in conversations. In line with his interest in the role of intonation contours in the structuring of information Chafe proposes three categories of intonation units that are defined in terms of their meaning and contribution to the conversation at hand: fragmentary, substantive and regulatory intonation units. Fragmentary units are truncated and discarded as unsuccessful communication. The successful intonation units can either convey substantive ideas concerning states, events or referents or they can have a regulatory function in the interaction at hand. The regulatory units can function on different levels of discourse: textual, interactional, cognitive and validational. It is clear that these different kinds of intonation contours will show a wide variety in the number of words contained in them. Regulatory intonation units, for example, will contain fewer words than substantive intonation contours. So, it makes sense to distinguish between these functions and calculate the number of words contained in them for each category.

Another problem is that not all words have the same informational content. Some words are more informative than others. As such they will yield a different value in terms of activation of information. The same of course holds for ideas that are expressed by a phrase. In these cases, the notion of word does not give a good operationalization of the information contained in a single intonation contour. It is also clear, as Chafe notes, that languages differ with respect to the information contained in a single word (morphemes, incorporation, etcetera). It is important to note that we cannot generalize over languages. Despite all these problems with the quantitative measure of the word, Chafe argues that it is striking that the number of words realized in a single intonation contour in a single language “remains within a narrow range (...) reflecting in a gross way the hypothesized constraint on the capacity of active consciousness.” For English Chafe found that substantive intonation units have a mean length of 4.84 words.

Looking at the syntactic make-up of the intonation contours in his corpus Chafe found that sixty percent of the substantive intonation units contain a single clause. These clauses usually express the idea of a state or an event. Each state or event being activated only once within a particular discourse. The resulting view sees the clause as “verbalizing the idea of an event or state (...) each such idea is active or occupies a focus of consciousness, for only a brief time, each being replaced by another idea at roughly one- to two-second intervals”. This transient

nature of states and events sets them apart from referents, the third kind of idea in discourse. Referents are more stable than the ideas of events or states: referents can remain active for a long period of time.

Chafe goes on to describe the make-up of the clauses that are contained in a single intonation contour in terms of information and activation cost. He argues that language production and interpretation are restricted by the fact that any chunk of language can only activate one new idea at a time. Chafe argues that the relevant structure is the intonation unit: every intonation unit can only activate one new idea (referent, state or event). This new constraint predicts when a clause must be broken into more than one intonation unit: if more than one of its constituents introduces a new idea every subsequent new idea must be realized in an intonation unit of its own. Since subjects tend to be given it stands to reason that this occurs most frequently when a verb is combined with either an argument or another phrase or in the case of conjunction.

All the approaches discussed in this paragraph share one particular perspective: they claim that it is meaningful to discuss the relative distribution of syntactic and prosodic structure and they propose a more or less direct relationship between the syntactic make-up of a stretch of speech and the prosodic realization thereof. These approaches only differ in the specific *nature* of this relationship. The fact that syntactic structure in one way or another determines or restricts the prosodic make-up of an utterance is the starting point of their research.¹² The nature of the relationship varies from more or less determinative (if syntactic structure X occurs, it will lead to prosodic feature Y) to a more constraint based approach (prosodic feature Y is licensed by syntactic feature X, but it need not occur every time syntactic feature X occurs).

5.6. Conclusion

In this chapter, we looked at different ways to code intonation structure. We looked at both phonological and phonetic approaches to prosodic structure. We also described the interplay of syntax and prosody in the realization of linguistic units. In the remainder of this study, we will take the interactional approach to intonation as our starting point. The maxims that lie at the heart of this approach are best suited for the qualitative analyses we will conduct in Part III of our study. This stands to reason because the main goal of the rest of this study will be a description of prosodic units as a membership category.

However, the coding system of the interactional approach is less rich than the coding systems of linguistic theory. To sidestep this issue we decided to make two prosodic analyses of the corpus. The first is based on the rich intonation features of the TODI-system and the second uses the transcription system developed in interactional linguistics. This last system, although less detailed with respect to intonation structure, also allows us to code features like speech rate, loudness etc.

¹² Although this relationship may be very indirect in the perspective of Chafe (1994) where both intonation and grammar are treated as symptoms of a third, decisive tier: the structure of consciousness.

By using both transcription methods it is possible to code as much structure as possible into our relational database.

With respect to the relationship between syntax and prosody the literature did not show a clear picture. However, it is clear that participants have choices in the packaging of their turns. This means that interactionally these different structures can have alternative interactional functions. In the remainder of this study, we will take this variation as the starting point of our investigation.

Chapter 6: Research questions

6.1. Introduction

In the foregoing chapters we have discussed TCUs from different angles. In the first chapter of this study, we gave an overview of the turn-taking phenomena that lie at the heart of the study of interactional units. Participants can place their new turns at the boundaries of the foregoing turn without any noticeable overlap or pause. This suggests that participants orient towards discrete interactional units. Furthermore, these units seem to have a specific propriety: they project what it will take for the ongoing turn to be possibly complete. Based on a study of the turn-taking literature in Chapter 2 we hypothesized that turns-at-talk were best analyzed as consisting of three distinct levels of linguistic units: grammar, prosody and pragmatics. We proposed a model of the turn that defined turns as a 3-tuples: $\langle +/-, +/-, +/- \rangle$. Here each +/- indicates the presence or absence of a complete structure on each of these tiers. The first position represents syntax, the second prosody, and the third pragmatics. This gave us a total number of eight different *turn-states*. In light of the turn-allocation component of the turn-taking model, we predicted that turn-taking will only occur at the boundaries of units where complete structures on all three levels coincide. In the remainder of this chapter, we will elaborate on this hypothesis and formulate our research goals for the rest of this study.

In paragraph 6.2 we will give an overview of our main hypothesis and of the research questions that will guide the rest of this investigation. In this paragraph, we will also address the methodology used to study each of these questions. In paragraph 6.3, we will give a description of our corpus.

6.2. Research questions

In this study, we define turns-at-talk as tripartite structures. A complete TCU is defined as a complex interactional unit consisting of complete units on three distinct linguistic levels: syntax, prosody and pragmatics. In this view, a turn can be described as a 3-tuple: $\langle +/-, +/-, +/- \rangle$. A complete TCU can thus be defined as a stretch of talk that ends in the following configuration: $\langle +, +, + \rangle$. This model of turns-at-talk gives us eight distinct turn-states. Our main goal in this study is to describe the ways in which the structures on these three linguistic levels work together in the construction and interpretation of turns-at-talk. The remainder of this study consists of two parts. In Part II, we will test our definition of turns-at-talk and TCUs in a corpus study. This corpus study has both a quantitative and a qualitative component. In Part III, of this study we will take a closer look at how the units that make up turns-at-talk work together in the construction of interactional units in conversation. We will do this by focusing on the different ways participants can expand their turns beyond possible completion points. We will look at these same speaker continuations both from a quantitative and a qualitative viewpoint. In the remainder of this paragraph, we will describe the research questions in the respective parts.

6.2.1 Part II: turn-taking

In part II we take a closer look at turn-taking. The starting point of our study will be our assumption that turns-at-talk are best defined as tripartite structures. That is, turns are taken to be complex units consisting of structure on at least three distinct levels: prosody, syntax and pragmatics. We claim that all these structures play a part in the constructions of turns-at-talk in real time and that participants orient towards these respective linguistic units. TCUs are possibly complete when the structures on all these three levels are possibly complete. This view of a turn allows us to describe every point in an ongoing turn as a 3-tuple: <syntax, prosody, pragmatics>. Given that every structure can be either complete or incomplete this yields eight different *turn states*. In this view, the boundaries of a TCU coincide with one particular state in which the structures on all three levels are possibly complete: <+,+,+>.

We will investigate our claim by looking at turn-taking. The turn-taking model states that turn-taking will occur at the boundaries of TCUs. This allows us to test our definition of a TCU in an empirical way. If turn-taking only occurs at the boundaries of TCUs, we predict that speaker change will coincide with stretches of talk that are syntactically, prosodically and pragmatically complete. That is, we predict that speaker change will occur when a unit underway will reach the following configuration: <+,+,+>. In other words, we expect to find the following implication/correlation:

Speaker Change \longrightarrow <+,+,+>.

We will test this assumption in the second chapter of Part II. That part of our investigation will take the form of a quantitative corpus study.

However, pragmatic rules are not cast in stone. Pragmatic rules can, and in fact, are broken in actual conversations. This does not mean that the resulting interaction is incomprehensible or that communication failed. Pragmatic rules are best viewed as principles that guide the interpretation process of turns-at-talk. These principles can be broken, but when they are broken they give additional meaning to the utterance in question. That is, utterances are interpreted in relation to these principles and not defined by them. In the case of the turn-taking model, it is easy to see that not all speaker changes follow the rules of the turn-taking model. Conversations contain overlap, interruptions, et cetera. This does not mean that the model is wrong. However, in those cases we do expect that the turns that violate the principles of the turn-taking model are interpreted in light of and in relation to the turn-taking model. That is, they have additional meaning, through the fact that they breach the principles of the turn-taking model. In chapter 3 of Part II, we will look at these counterexamples. Our description of TCUs gives us seven distinct counterexamples. We will take a closer look at different classes of counterexamples. Our approach will be both quantitative and qualitative. First, we will look at the frequency of the different sets of counterexamples. Second, we will give a qualitative description of these sets.

By studying these counterexamples we can learn more about the role of the different structures in the construction of turns-at-talk. However, our scope will still only be on speaker change as an indication that an ongoing turn has reached a point of possible completion. We already argued that although one expects speaker

changes to occur at points of possible completion (<+,+,+>), the opposite does not hold. One cannot conclude that complete structures coincide with speaker change: the turn-taking model is not deterministic. Yet, we expect that interactants also orient to possibly complete turns *as* complete turns when speaker change does not occur. That is, one expects that interactants will interpret the interaction in relation to the fact that the foregoing turn was possibly complete. Can we say anything about the way interactants use these possibly complete units that are not taken up for speaker change to organize their interaction? That is, can we show that these possibly complete structures are participant categories? This is the question that we take up in Part III of this study.

6.2.2 Part III: Same speaker continuations (SSCs)

In Part II of our study we test our definition of turns-at-talk and TCUs in terms of three levels of linguistic structure. In part III of our investigation, we will look at the ways these three distinct levels are used in the construction of turns-at-talk. We will do this by looking at one particular sequential context: same speaker continuations.

A: _____ <+,+,+>
 <pause>
A: _____ <+,+,+>

In these contexts, a speaker comes to a point of possible completion, none of the other participants claim the floor and the same speaker continues. These contexts are interesting for a number of reasons. First, it is to be expected that it is interactionally relevant that a possible position for speaker change has not been taken up by the participants. Especially, in sequential contexts where a recipient response is expected. Second, the fact that the same speaker continues after a possibly complete unit of the same speaker allows the speaker to construe the turn in a number of different ways. Both grammatically and prosodically speakers have different ways to package continuations after a possible completion point. They might do so by adding a stretch of talk that can be heard as a continuation of the foregoing clause both syntactically and prosodically, but they can also package their continuations as a prosodic and/or syntactically independent unit. This raises the question whether these continuations have a different interactional status. In our discussion of Selting (1996) and Ford and Thompson (1996), we argued that one cannot a priori assume that units that are analyzable as continuations of the foregoing structure are also on the pragmatic level integrated in the foregoing action. This is an empirical question and we can only argue on the basis of the orientations of participants to these structures in conversations. In part III of our study we will look at the ways these kinds of part/whole relations between utterances are used as an interactional practice. We will look at two distinct sequential contexts: chapter 2 will look at clausal same speaker continuations (SSCs) and in chapter 3 we will study phrasal SSCs. In both chapters we will look at the different ways these SSCs can be realized prosodically and syntactically.

In Chapter 2 we will look at clausal SSCs. Syntactically, a speaker has three possibilities for the packaging of his clausal SSC. He can produce another main clause, he can produce a new main clause that is explicitly linked to the foregoing

turn with a coordinator or he can produce a subordinate clause. In this chapter, we only look at the last two examples. Furthermore after a descriptive study of our corpus we will focus our investigation on one particular SSC: SSCs that are introduced by *omdat* (“because”). This connective is of special interest because although in standard Dutch *omdat* (“because”) is used as a subordinator, this connective is also used as a coordinator in colloquial Dutch. Note that in Dutch these structures not only differ in clause combining possibilities. They are also structurally distinct (see the preceding discussion of Dutch clause structure in Chapter 4). This means that colloquial *omdat*-clauses produced as SSCs have four distinct formal possibilities:

- i Subordinate clause/prosodically integrated
- ii Subordinate clause/prosodically independent
- iii Main clause/ prosodically integrated
- iv Main clause/prosodically independent

We expect that these distinct ways to package these clauses is reflected in their interactional meaning. Based on the classification of Sweetser (1984) we expect that some of these ways to package a clause will be used more often to express direct causal relations, whereas other options are more apt at expressing indirect epistemic relations or even speech act relations. More precisely we expect that both prosodic and syntactic independency will be more often associated with indirect relations as their respective counterparts.

In chapter 3 of part III, we will look at phrasal continuations. Here also the speaker has different options in the packaging of phrasal elements in the right periphery of the clause. Phrasal elements can be placed in the RD-field, but they can also be placed in the final field. In the first case, these elements are not analyzable as continuations of the foregoing clause per se. If a phrasal SSC is placed in the final field, however, it is analyzable as a continuation of the foregoing clause. Prosodically, the realization of phrasal elements is a bit more restricted than the realization of clausal SSCs. Phrasal SSCs in the final field can be realized prosodically integrated and prosodically independent. Phrasal SSCs in the RD-field are always realized in a new intonation contour.

We will analyze the interactional functions of these phrasal SSCs in their specific sequential slots. Based on Selting (1996) and Ford and Thompson (1996) we expect that elements in the RD-field will be treated as independent units, whereas elements in the final field will be treated as continuations of the foregoing actions. We also expect that this difference is mirrored in the prosodic realization of these fragments. However, in our discussion of the analysis of Selting (1996) and Ford and Thompson of these phrasal SSCs, we already argued that one cannot just stipulate the discourse status of these elements. On the contrary, the discourse status of the fragments should be the result of our investigation and not the starting point. We will describe the discourse status of these different types of phrasal SSCs with respect to the ways these phrases are taken up as topical materials in the ongoing conversation. We expect that phrasal SSCs in the RD-field are more likely to become the topic of further talk than phrasal SSCs in the final field. The rationale is

that phrasal SSCs in the RD-field are not part of the foregoing clause and thus constitute more independent discourse units than phrasal SSCs in the final field.

6.3 *The corpus*

For this study we transcribed and coded roughly six and a half hours of Dutch conversations. Most of these conversations are informal, face-to-face conversations between friends and/or families. People were asked to record dinner parties, family meals, gatherings with friends et cetera. We also recorded some telephone conversations. This was relevant because it has been shown in the literature (Goodwin 1981, 2000) that in the organization of turn-taking non-verbal cues also play a role. Since we only look at verbal levels of turns-at-talk, it is relevant to look at a medium where non-verbal communication does not play a role. If turn-taking is governed by linguistic units in all kinds of conversations we expect that the telephone corpus shows the same sort of results as the face-to-face conversations. Of course, it is very likely that non-verbal cues also play a role in the organization of turn-taking in face-to-face conversations. Our data, however, suggest that the non-verbal cues give additional information. Otherwise turn-taking in the telephone conversations in our corpus should behave differently from turn-taking in face-to-face conversations. We saw no such trend in our corpus.

We recorded both dyadic and multi-party conversations. This is important because it is very likely that turn-taking is organized differently in multi-party conversations. The presence of multiple participants in an interaction makes self-selection harder, since there are more potential candidates to self-select. This means that the timing and placement of turns is even more important than in dyadic conversations. We expect that this competition for the floor makes the second option of the turn-allocation component (next speaker self-selects) stand out in these conversations. As such this type of conversation is relevant for our study. Multi-party conversations also are interesting from another point of view. Since more people can self-select at any given time in these conversations, we frequently find that more than one participant self-selects in a particular sequential slot. This gives additional evidence that participants orient to specific places where turn-taking becomes relevant. It shows that these places are recognizable as possible completion points where turn-taking becomes relevant. Table 1 gives the structure of our corpus.

Table 1. Make-up of corpus (hours:minutes)

Telephone conversations	Face-to-face conversations		Total
	Dyadic	Multi-party	
0:58	2:54	2:34	6:26

As for the demographic make-up of the corpus we tried to make the corpus as diverse as possible. The distribution of male and female speakers is even and we made sure that all possible combinations of participants were present in our data. We also strived for an even distribution of participants from different age groups. In

practice, this turned out to be problematic. We have no data of speakers younger than 18 years old or older than 53 years old.

The recordings were made with a digital mini-disk recorder and the participants were aware that the conversations were recorded. Although it has been shown that the presence of a recording device influences behavior, we think that for the present study this need not be a problem. First, the processes under investigation are not conscious. The monitoring of the turn underway and the placement of turns are not conscious acts. This means that one factor (people will only act in ways that they think are socially desirable) does not play a role here. Of course this does not mean that there is no influence at all. It is likely that the nature of the conversation is different due to the fact that the conversation is being recorded. Topics may be different and it is also possible that the conversations are less lively because of the fact that the participants know that they are being observed. We tried to make the conversations as natural as possible by recording them in the home of one of the participants during informal gatherings between families and friends. Also, no third party was physically present. The participants used the minidisk for an extended period of time in their own homes and were told that they could delete any conversation they thought unfit for the use in this study.

After the recording, the conversations were transcribed and coded in a number of ways. First we made an orthographic transcript of the materials. This transcript was used to code the prosodic and syntactic completion points found in our corpus. These structures were then coded and stored in a relational database. This database allowed us to query the relationship between these various structures. We coded all syntactic and prosodic units in our corpus. For pragmatic structure, we used a different approach. Here we only coded the points where turn-taking actually took place for pragmatic completion. This means that for every point where a speaker change occurred we determined whether or not the stretch of talk was pragmatically complete based on the sequential context. The reason we only coded the points where speaker change actually occurred is that pragmatic structures have unclear boundaries. This introduced a complication: it is hard to determine what the unit of analysis should be (morphemes, words, clauses, sentences)? However, it is possible to determine for a given speaker change, whether or not the unit is pragmatically complete based on a sequential analysis.

On the syntactic level, we coded all possibly complete structures. Syntactic completion was determined in context. In the coding process, we used the perspective of the incremental production of the sentence in real time. This means that a structure that in retrospect can be analyzed as a simplex structure can, in fact, contain multiple possible completion points. On the prosodic level, we also coded all possibly complete prosodic structures.

For pragmatic structure, we took a different approach. For the pragmatic analysis of the data, we made global transcriptions using the conventions of conversation analysis. To determine whether or not a stretch of talk is pragmatically complete it is necessary to make a fine grained analysis of the sequential context based on a detailed transcription of the data. There was also another complicating factor. To make sure that we did not define pragmatic completion in terms of the other structures, we could not determine pragmatic completion in the same way we coded for prosodic and syntactic completion. As a result we only coded pragmatic

completion for actual speaker changes. This means that we can only investigate a small part of the pragmatic completion points: those that were actually taken up for turn-taking. After the analysis, these pragmatic completion points were also coded in the orthographic transcription and in the database.

Although the whole corpus was used in most cases in this study, some questions were answered using a subpart of the corpus. In these cases, this is indicated in the text.

PART II

Chapter 1: Introduction

In this part, we will test our definition of turns-at-talk as tripartite structures. We do this by looking at turn-taking in our corpus. As we discussed in Chapter 1, the turn-taking model describes the organization of turn-taking in conversations. It consists of two distinct components: the turn-allocation component and the turn-constructural component. The turn-constructural component describes the building blocks of turns-at-talk (TCUs) whereas the turn-allocation unit governs the process of speaker change at the boundaries of these units. We argued that the turn-taking model allows us to test our definition of TCUs in an empirical way. The turn-allocation component states that turn-taking only occurs at the boundaries of complete TCUs. Only at the boundaries of complete TCUs the turn-allocation component is activated. This means that following the turn-taking model, we can interpret every speaker change in principle as an orientation of the new speaker to the foregoing turn as being possibly complete. In terms of our definition of TCUs, we predict that speaker changes only occur at the boundaries of turns with the following configuration: <+,+,+>. Graphically:

Speaker Change → <+,+,+>.

We will test this hypothesis in Chapter 2, the quantitative part of our study.

We predict that the vast majority of the speaker changes occur at the boundaries of units that are syntactically, prosodically and pragmatically complete. In this study, we define any change of speaker as a speaker change. In Part I, we argued that the exemption of specific types of turns from this investigation introduces circularity in our argument. It is strange to exclude certain turns from the investigation because they do not constitute real turns in a study that tries to answer the question what these turns-at-talk are. Furthermore, if these turns do behave in a specific way with respect to turn-taking they will stand out as a group of their own in our statistical analysis.

Our definition of turns-at-talk gives us seven discrete possible counterexamples.

Figure 1

Speaker Change →
<-,+,+>
<+,-,+>
<+,+,->
<-,+,->
<-,,-,+>
<+,-,->
<-,,-,->

This is interesting because the frequency of these specific counterexamples might give us additional insight in the ways the units on these three levels cooperate in the production of turns-at-talk. Note that we only expect a statistical trend and not a categorical result. Like all pragmatic theories the turn-taking model states guidelines that can be broken by participants. This does not mean that the model is faulty. Nor does it mean that the turns that violate these principles are incomprehensible. However, it does mean that turns that do violate these principles will have a marked status in the interaction. These turns are not devoid of meaning, but they acquire additional meaning as marked conversational moves. This brings us to the qualitative part of our study.

Chapter 3 contains the qualitative analyses of the counterexamples for our hypothesis. These qualitative analyses will take the form of deviant case analyses. In deviant case analyses, we look at a set of counterexamples and analyze these counterexamples in a detailed manner. The goal of the analysis is to see whether, even in these cases where a pragmatic principle is broken, interactants still orient towards these principles by treating these cases as marked. In this way, we can also discover turns-at-talk that might not adhere to the turn-taking model, as is claimed in a number of studies.

In this part, we will only look at the implication that speaker change implies the presence of the boundary of a complete TCU. The opposite relation does not hold. The turn-taking model is non-deterministic and a-symmetrical. This means that turn completion does not cause turn-taking: the turn-allocation model explicitly allows for some speaker continuations. Although turn-taking gives us positive evidence of the interpretation of the foregoing turn as possibly complete, the absence of turn-taking does not allow for similar inferences.

Chapter 2: TCUs in Dutch conversations

2.1. Introduction

In this chapter, we will take a closer look at the ways in which syntactic, prosodic and pragmatic structures work together in the construction of turns-at-talk in informal Dutch conversations. In Part I, we presented a model of the turn that claimed that turns-at-talk are best analyzed as complex structures with units at three distinct linguistic levels: syntax, prosody and pragmatics. We claimed that complete Dutch TCUs are units where the boundaries of these three levels coincide. That is, Dutch TCUs consist of possibly complete units on all three levels. We showed that the relative distribution of these three levels is not deterministic. Participants have a choice in the way they combine these various structures in the packaging of their turns. In this chapter, we will take a closer look at these units and look at the ways these structures work together in the construction of TCUs.

In this chapter, we have two goals. Our first goal is an overview of the distribution of the units on the three levels of linguistic structure in our corpus. We will look at the ways the various linguistic units are aligned. We will take a purely structural, quantitative view of our data. We will not look at the function of these structures as interactional meaningful units, but we will only look at the relative distribution of the boundaries on these various structures.

Our main goal in this chapter, however, is to test our hypothesis that Dutch TCUs are in fact composite structures. That is, we want to show that prosody, grammar, and pragmatics provide interactants with the resources to construct and interpret turns-at-talk. Furthermore, we want to show that all three levels are equally important. Interactional units are only treated as complete TCUs when the boundaries on all three levels coincide. We will test this hypothesis by looking at turn-taking. As we pointed out in Part I of this study, turn-taking becomes relevant at the boundaries of TCUs. The turn-allocation component is activated every time a possible completion point of the turn underway is reached. This means that turn-taking implies that the current speaker interprets the foregoing turn as possibly complete. In paragraph 2.3 we will test the hypothesis that speaker change implies complete structures on all three levels.

2.2 Units in our corpus

In this paragraph, we will look at the distribution of the various linguistic units in our corpus. In Part I we argued that the units on the various levels are independent. Here we will look at the relative distribution of these units in our corpus. As a starting point we will take Ford and Thompson (1996). As we pointed out in Part I of this study the coding of the three linguistic units can be problematic since not all three structures seem to contain discrete parts. Especially the coding of pragmatic completion is problematic. Given a certain point in a conversation it is possible to determine whether or not the structure underway is pragmatically complete. However, it remains unclear for what points this analysis should be made. For example, recognition overlap shows that pragmatic completion cannot be defined in terms of syntax alone. On the other hand, without the subdivision of syntax into discrete units, it remains unclear what parts constitute a pragmatic whole. Or even

more fundamentally, whether or not it makes any sense to regard pragmatic units as a composite structure rather than a holistic one.

This observation has serious implications for the way we code our corpus in a structural approach. A study of the alignment of the boundaries of these various units presupposes that we can code these three structures in an independent way. In doing so, our first concern is to identify discrete points for which it makes sense to code these boundary points on the various levels of linguistic structure. Given the nature of these linguistic structures, syntax seems a natural place to start. Syntactic completion is dependent on the completion of the lexical items that constitute syntactic structure. So, syntactic structure is easily reduced to discrete units. For every word boundary one can code whether or not the syntactic structure up to that point is possibly complete. When we take the syntactic completion point as the basis of our analysis, one can ask whether or not the units on the other levels are possibly complete at those particular points. When we take syntax as our starting point, the distribution of the other levels looks as follows.

Table 1. Complex completion points as a function of syntactic completion

Syntactic completion points	9.000 (100%)
Syntax + Intonation	4280 (47%)
Syntax + Pragmatics	5143 (57%)

Table 1 shows that if we look at turns as tripartite structures, syntax is not a good predictor of turn completion. This makes sense because syntactic structures can contain multiple completion points. Example 1 illustrates this point.

Example 1.

1. B: maar jullie hadde dus helemaal geen aantekeningen <+,+,+>
2. *but you had so totally no notes*
3. *but you did not have any notes at all*
4. A: Nee Madeleine is toen nog snel even naar huis gegaan <+,-,+>
5. *no Madeleine is then still quickly a moment tohome went*
6. *no Madeleine quickly went home*
7. A: met de auto <+,-,+>
8. *with the car*
9. *with the car*

The clause in line 4-7 contains two syntactic completion points. One after *gegaan* (“went”) and one after *auto* (“car”). Prosodically, the clause in Example 1 is realized in a single intonation contour. Pragmatically, the unit is also complete after *gegaan* (“went”) and after *auto* (“car”). Note, that the clause in line 2 is pragmatically ambiguous after *nee* (“no”). The interpretation of *no* (“nee”) is ambiguous in this context because of the negation in line 1 (*geen*, “none”). It could mean that indeed they did not have any notes (as an acknowledgement of the negative content of the foregoing clause. But it can also express a negation of the propositional context of

the whole clause, as is the case in this fragment. They *did* have notes, because Madeleine went home. Note also, that even if we take the lexical make-up of these units as our starting point, it still can be difficult to decide whether or not a clause is possibly complete sequentially. Is the prepositional phrase *met de auto* (“with the car”) part of the pragmatic projection or not? In these cases we looked at the sequential context of the utterance. In this case, B’s question concerns the fact whether or not they had any notes. This question is answered after *gegaan* (“went”). Also, the fact that she went by car seems to be a specification of *snel* (“quick”) in the main clause. Furthermore, if we look at the rest of the conversation the main topic of the interaction is the speech and the relevant notes for this speech. The fact that Madeleine used the car is not taken up as a topic for further talk.

Table 1 shows that if our conception of the turn as a tripartite structure is correct, syntax can only play a marginal role in the organization of turn-taking. Syntax can restrict turn-taking, but syntax by itself cannot indicate turn completion. Thus syntax only governs turn-taking in a negative way. Syntactic projection can mark a turn as incomplete, but syntactic completion in itself is not a good indicator of turn completion. Therefore, we need at least some additional structure to account for our turn-taking data. One of these units, we argued, could be the prosodic make-up of turns-at-talk. When we look at Table 1 we see that not all syntactic completion points are also prosodic completion points. Only 47 percent of all syntactic completion points are also prosodic completion points. This means that we can view prosodic structure as a commentary voice with respect to syntactic completion points. In this sense, grammatical sentences restrain turn-taking, giving the minimal units of conversations. Prosody would then select the syntactic completion points that are also unit boundaries. When we look at the interplay of prosodic and syntactic structure, however, we see a more diffuse picture.

Table 2. *Syntactic completion as a function of prosodic completion*

Intonation + Syntax	4280 (89%)
Intonation – Syntax	518 (11%)
Total	4798 (100%)

Table 3. *Prosodic completion as a function of syntactic completion points*

Syntax + Intonation	4280 (47%)
Syntax – Intonation	4720 (53%)
Total	9000 (100%)

Table 2 and Table 3 show the interplay of prosodic and syntactic units in our corpus. The resulting picture is interesting. First, it is clear that if turns-at-talk are best analyzed as 3-tuples, syntax is not a good predictor of turn completion. However, as Table 2 shows, prosody cannot be seen as a mere commentary voice on syntactic structure. Prosodic structure is independent of syntactic structure. Not all prosodic completion points are also syntactic completion points. This means that prosody provides interactants with an independent way to package their turns-at-talk.

Although syntax seems to restrict the minimal units of interaction, Table 3 shows that prosody at least in some cases (11 percent) packages a syntactic incomplete unit as a prosodically independent unit. This number is substantially larger than the number found in Ford and Thompson (1996). In their corpus, only 1.2 percent of all intonation contours do not align with syntactic structures. However, it is in line with the finding of Croft (1995). In his corpus, 91 percent of the IUs consist of their full set of complements.¹

Looking at the interplay between syntax and prosody it is clear that both structures need to be taken into account to explain the turn-taking phenomena. Neither syntactic nor prosodic completion is a sufficient condition for a turn to be possibly complete. But what about pragmatic completion? We saw that only 57 percent of all syntactic structures are also pragmatically complete. This shows that pragmatic completion is not a function of syntactic completion. Ford and Thompson (1996) show that pragmatic completion is not a function of prosodic completion. This suggests that pragmatics plays an independent role in the turn-taking process. However, the study of pragmatic completion is problematic. When we look at pragmatic completion we run into some difficulties as we pointed out in our discussion of Ford and Thompson (1996). Ford and Thompson (1996) define pragmatic completion points based on prosodically complete units that function as complete actions in their sequential environment. This means that in their approach every pragmatic completion point by definition is also a prosodic completion point. In this paragraph, we also looked at pragmatic completion from a syntactic viewpoint. We only described the pragmatic completion of stretches of talk that are also syntactically complete. However, if we take syntax or prosody as the starting point of our discussion, we introduce a serious bias towards one of the three structures. This may lead to a distorted view of the turn-taking process. On the other hand, it is not clear how we could code pragmatic completion in our corpus without falling back on some sort of discrete unit as the basis of our analysis. As we pointed out in Part I, students of language tend to have fairly concrete intuitions of prosodic and syntactic units, but when we turn our attention to pragmatic units things become less clear. As a result we could not count pragmatic units in the same way we counted pragmatic and prosodic completion points. We can, however, determine pragmatic completion for a given point as we did in this paragraph with respect to syntactic completion. In paragraph 2.3, we will take this observation as our starting point and look at speaker change as an indication of turn-taking. This allows us to code every speaker change with respect to pragmatic completion.

2.3. *Speaker Change and TCUs*

In this paragraph, we will use speaker change as an indication of the fact that participants interpret the foregoing unit as possibly complete. As we stated in Part I, our main goal in this study is to describe the turn-constructive component. We

¹ Note, however, that this figure relates to all produced elements. This means that PPs that are in retrospect analyzable as continuations of the foregoing clause are also taken into account. These phrases are not counted in this study, since in most cases the syntactic structure up to that point is also possibly complete.

claimed that turns-at-talk are best described as complex units resulting from the interplay of prosodic, syntactic and pragmatic units. However, we also pointed out some problems.

The first problem is that it is impossible to code pragmatic completion without referring to one of the other linguistic units. As we showed in Part I, pragmatic completion cannot be equated with syntactic or even lexical completion. We argued that if one takes pragmatic completion seriously it is not possible to define pragmatic completion in a discrete way. However, if pragmatic completion is defined in terms of prosodic and/or pragmatic units our argument becomes circular.

The second problem we run into in studying turns-at-talk is the non deterministic and a-symmetric nature of the turn-taking model. The status of speaker changes is very different from the status of the absence of a speaker change. If a next speaker takes the floor the turn-allocation component predicts that the next speaker interprets the foregoing turn as possibly complete. This means that speaker change constitutes positive evidence of an orientation of at least one of the participants to the foregoing unit as possibly complete. The absence of turn-taking, on the other hand, does not allow us to make any inference about the foregoing structure. It might be the case that participants interpret the foregoing turn as incomplete (thus refraining from turn-taking), but it might also be the case that none of the participants take the floor despite the fact that a TRP has passed. The turn-allocation component explicitly allows same speaker continuations.

However, it is exactly this character of the turn-taking model that allows us to study pragmatic completion without referring to other linguistic units. Although it is not possible to point out discrete pragmatic units in a corpus, it *is* possible to determine whether or not pragmatic completion has been reached for any given point in a specific sequential context. This means that we can determine for each speaker change whether or not it occurs at a point of pragmatic completion. For this study that is all we need. Our aim is to study TCUs by looking at speaker change. This is justified by the turn-taking model that states that turn-taking occurs at the boundaries of possibly complete structures. As a result one can assume that actual speaker change is an orientation to the completion of the foregoing structure. As a result we can side-step the problem that we cannot a priori code pragmatic completion.

When we look at our corpus we find a total of 3342 speaker changes. Of these speaker changes 2105 (63 percent) occur at points of possible completion (<+,+,+>). This number is smaller than the proportion that Ford and Thompson found for English (71 percent). This discrepancy can be attributed to the different definitions of turn-taking. Ford and Thompson exempted certain speaker changes from their corpus. We defined turn-taking as any kind of speaker change. Given our definition of turn completion we have seven types of counterexamples. Table 4 gives the frequencies of turn-taking at these specific configurations.

Table 4. Speaker changes as a function of configuration type

Configuration	Number of speaker changes
<+,+,+>	2105 <63 %>
<+,+,->	562 <17%>
<+,-,+>	111 <3%>
<-,+,+>	50 <2%>
<-,-,+>	98 <3%>
<-,+,->	48 <1,4%>
<+,-,->	12 < less than 1%>
<-,-,->	356 <11%>
Total	3342 <100%>

<syntax,prosody,pragmatics>

Table 4 shows that the vast majority of speaker changes occur at points where the foregoing unit was possibly complete on all three levels of linguistic structure. This is in line with our assumption that TCUs are best described as tripartite structures ($X^2=417.75$, $p<.001$). If speaker change is an indication that the foregoing turn was possibly complete, these results show that TCUs are (at least linguistically) best described as complex structures.

However, Table 4 also shows a large set of counterexamples. More interestingly, these counterexamples are not distributed evenly over the other configurations. This raises the question about the status of these counterexamples. This question will be taken up in chapter three.

2.4. Conclusion

In this chapter, we had two goals. First, we wanted to give a quantitative description of the interplay of the linguistic units found in our corpus. This distribution of the various structures showed that none of the three linguistic units can be seen as a function of the other units. The distribution of syntactic completion points also showed that syntax alone cannot explain the turn-taking data. Syntactic structures often contain multiple completion points. This suggests that although grammatical structure can restrict turn-taking, it cannot signal turn completion on its own. Also, a view of prosody as a commentary voice to syntactic structure (pointing out the relevant syntactic completion points) is not consistent with the data. We also found prosodic units that were not syntactically complete. Prosody and grammar in particular were shown to be independent structures. This raises the interesting question how participants use these structures in the packaging of their turns. This question will be taken up further in Part III of this study, where we will study one specific sequential slot that allows for different packaging of the same linguistic materials. These specific sequential contexts can shed light on the question how these linguistic structures cooperate in the construction of turns-at-talk in real time.

Our second goal in this chapter was not only to show that syntactic, prosodic and pragmatic units are independent structures, but also to show that participants, in fact, orient to all three linguistic units in actual conversations. We

claimed that, although it is impossible to code pragmatic completion a priori in our corpus, it is possible to show an orientation of participants to pragmatic structure when we look at turn-taking. The turn-allocation component states that turn-taking gives positive evidence that participants treat the foregoing unit as possibly complete. This means that (although the absence of turn-taking does not provide any evidence with respect to turn completion) a study of actual turn-taking allows us to observe what units are treated as possibly complete by the interactants.

When we looked at actual speaker changes in our data, the data showed that the majority of the speaker changes (63 percent) occurred at the boundaries of structures where prosodic, syntactic and pragmatic units coincided. However, a large number of speaker changes also occur at points where one or more of the three levels are incomplete. In the next chapter, we will look at these counterexamples in more detail. There we will give a qualitative description of the counterexamples. Our goal in the next chapter is twofold. First, we ask the question whether a careful examination of the counterexamples allows us to rethink our definition of turns-at-talk. Can we adjust our view of turns-at-talk in such a way that the correspondence with our data improves? Second, we give a deviant case analysis of some subsets of our counterexamples. More precisely, if our definition of turns-at-talk is correct we expect that, at least in some of these counterexamples, interactants will orient to these turn-taking practices as marked, in one way or another. A detailed sequential analysis of the data might show that even in these cases participants still orient towards these turns-at-talk as constituted by stretches of talk where the boundaries of pragmatic, prosodic and syntactic units coincide.

Chapter 3: Counterexamples

3.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter we presented the quantitative results of our study. We saw that the vast majority of speaker changes occur at points where the turn underway is complete on all three levels under investigation: prosody, syntax and pragmatics. However, we also saw a number of counterexamples. In this paragraph, we will take a closer look at some of these counterexamples. Let us take another look again at our model of a turn-at-talk. We claimed that a turn is best described in terms of three distinct levels of structure: prosody, grammar and pragmatics. We also claimed that the turn-allocation component become relevant at the boundaries of turns-at-talk. That is, at points where the units on all three levels are possibly complete (<+,+,+>). This means that there are seven possible counterexamples (<-,-,->;<+,-,->;<-,+,->;<-,-,+>;<+,+,->;<-,+,+>;<+,-,+>). In this chapter, we will take a closer look at these sets of counterexamples.

First, we will look at a class of turns that are best described as recipient tokens. As we said before, these turns are very often exempted from studies of turn-taking because they do not seem to claim the floor for an extended period of time and as such they do not seem to constitute a real speaker change (actually, these items are often treated as signals that the hearer does not want to take the turn). Earlier we formulated three objections to this approach. From a methodological point of view it seems undesirable to exclude certain turns beforehand from the investigation since this only weakens the hypothesis. Also it seems to introduce an aspect of circularity. It seems strange to use the notion of a turn-at-talk in the coding of your materials, when in fact this notion is under investigation. And finally if it is the case that there exists a unified set of counterexamples (our unified sets of counterexamples) one would expect that these should emerge from an analysis of the data. Furthermore, it stands to reason that such a set of counterexamples shows regularities of its own that could be described using the same units that are stipulated to govern turn-taking. If this is the case, excluding these turns would only decrease our understanding of the turn-taking process.

In the second paragraph we will look at a similar set of counterexamples in which the turn underway clearly projects more to come pragmatically, but where some sort of repair work needs to be done that cannot wait. Interestingly, in our corpus these phenomena seem to occur at the boundaries of syntactic and prosodic units (<+,+,->). By its very nature, repair work is done as close as possible to the stretch of talk that made the repair necessary. These examples are interesting because they show what this first possible moment for repair in a turn might be. Or in other words, it shows us the smaller units that constitute these larger pragmatic projects. We will argue that what constitutes a possible point for a repair initiation is determined by the prosodic and syntactic make-up of the turn underway.

In the third paragraph we will look at sets of counterexamples that show that pragmatic completion cannot be equated with syntactic completion or prosodic completion. That is, these counterexamples occur at places where syntactic and prosodic units are not complete, but the produced turn clearly indicates that the prior turn was pragmatically complete (<-,-,+>). These examples are interesting for at least

two reasons. First, they give additional evidence for the claim that, at least in certain sequential contexts, pragmatic completion cannot be equated with the discrete units that constitute that unit. It is clear that pragmatic completion can project larger units than the clause, but these examples show that pragmatic completion can also be smaller than the clause. Second, these counterexamples show a clear orientation to their marked nature. That is, in their production they show a clear orientation to the incomplete nature of the foregoing turn. As such they seem to give additional support to our initial claim. Interestingly these counterexamples also occur in sequential contexts where a well timed response or reaction is crucial (for example after the telling of a joke or anecdote).

In the last paragraph, we will look at counterexamples that really seem to contradict our hypothesis: turn-taking at points where none of the units on the three levels are complete (<-, -, >). One would expect that these examples are treated as marked by the participants, but this is not always the case. Although the majority of these speaker changes are produced in a marked way, a large group of these counterexamples are treated as unproblematic speaker changes. Apparently, participants can choose to treat these speaker changes as unproblematic. However, even in some of these cases one can show that the foregoing turn was incomplete because it is taken up later on in the conversation by the participant whose turn was *interrupted*.

3.2. Recipient tokens

In this paragraph, we will take a look at the first kind of counterexamples: recipient tokens. Recipient tokens are small words or sounds that are produced as a reaction to the foregoing turn like *mmh*, *ja* (“yes”) or *nee* (“no”). Although sometimes these little words seem to indicate that they also claim understanding and/or acceptance of the foregoing turn, it has been shown in the literature that the ontological status of these words is problematic. Here we will only look at the function of these little words with respect to turn-taking. Please take a look at Example 1.

Example 1.

1. A: ik ging dus uiteindelijk met David naar dat concert.
2. *I went so eventually with David to that concert*
3. *so eventually I went to the concert with David*
4. A: maar ook dat bleek nog lastig genoe[_{g<+,+,+>}
5. *but also that turned out difficult enough[h:*
6. *but that also turned out to be very difficu[lt*
7. B: [mmh
8. [mmh
9. [mmh
10. A: want we hadden geen vervoer
11. *because we had no transportation*
12. *because we did not have transportation*
13. B: tsss
14. tsss
15. tsss

Example 1 is a part of a dinner conversation between friends. A is telling about a concert he attended the week before. Up to this point in the conversation, A was telling about the problems he encountered visiting this concert. His original date cancelled and, since he already bought the tickets, he decided to go with his friend David. In line 4, he projects a continuation of his troubles-report *maar ook dat bleek nog lastig genoeg* (“But that also turned out to be very difficult”). This stretch of talk is produced as a single clause and is prosodically complete. Yet, pragmatically the turn clearly projects more to come. In this context, A is telling how difficult it was to visit the concert. Up to this point he has told about quite a few troubles he encountered trying to visit the concert. In line 4, he projects yet another instance of trouble-telling. Even when he found someone to accompany him to the concert, transportation seemed to become problematic. At the end of this turn B produces a *mmh*. In line 10, A continues his story giving the reason why it was problematic to get to the concert. In line 13, B reacts to this additional bad luck with a display of disbelief. The placement of the recipient token in line 3 clearly contradicts our expectations that turn-taking can only occur when the foregoing turn is complete on all three levels. Although the turn is syntactically and prosodically complete, pragmatically the turn projects more to come. In our corpus, this seems to constitute a pattern: 92 percent of the recipient tokens that contradicts our expectation (note that these are not all recipient tokens since recipient tokens also occur after possibly complete turns) occur at the boundaries of syntactic and prosodic units.

This production of recipient tokens is organized around the boundaries of units with the configuration $\langle +, +, - \rangle$ and $\langle +, +, + \rangle$. This suggests that it is the prosodic and syntactic units that define the units that are oriented to and not the pragmatic units. This makes sense because larger discourse units are made up from smaller units that have their own specific functions and meaning and as such need sequential positions where interactants can react to these units. Apparently, the relevant structures that participants orient to in these cases are the syntactic and prosodic structures of the turns-at-talk. Rather than randomly placed, these tokens seem to have their own specific spots where they become relevant. Example 2 gives an example from a multi-party conversation.

Example 2.

1. A: twee dingen dus
2. *two things so*
3. *so two things*
4. (0.6)
5. A: de fietsta[s
6. *the bikeb[ag*
7. *the b[ag for the bike*
8. B: [mmhh
9. [mmhh
10. [mmhh
11. C: [ja
12. [yes

13. [yes
14. A: en de kinderstoel
15. *and the childchair*
16. *and the chair for the child*
17. C: precies
18. *exactly*
19. *exactly*

Here both B and C react to the first item of the list, while it is clear that a second item is projected. This suggests two things: first, discourse units are made up of smaller units that have their own relevant boundaries, and second, at least some of these smaller units are treated as independent units in the sense that participants orient to these structures.

What does this tell us about turns-at-talk? One could argue that recipient tokens are really not turns at all. In all examples the current speaker continues. Furthermore, in Example 1 it is clear that the recipient token does not have any semantic value. Since this recipient token is a reaction to an announcement it can only be a reaction to the procedural part of the turn. This means that the recipient token is not so much a reaction to the list as it is being produced up to that point, but a reaction to the fact that a list is being produced. In this view, recipient tokens only show involvement and maybe understanding and acceptance of the turn underway. They do not claim the floor, nor do they disrupt the ongoing larger project. Not treating them as turns, however, would not do justice to two observations. First, these larger projects are clearly made up of smaller units that have distinct boundaries that participants orient to. Second, at least in some of these cases these smaller units are also treated as units that need to be oriented to by participants. In multi-party conversations more participants place recipient tokens at the same sequential location. This means that these larger projects are oriented to by the participants in two ways. As larger wholes that claim the floor for an extended period of time, but also as a sum of smaller parts that have their own interactional status and meanings.

These observations seem to suggest that syntax and prosody are the linguistic structures that guide turn-taking in these cases, whereas pragmatics only restricts the kind of actions that can occur at specific boundaries. This may seem only a rhetorical point, but looking at the data in this way allows us to raise questions that remained hidden up to that point. For instance it gives us a new perspective on these larger projects. It allows us to observe what the smaller units that constitute these larger projects actually are.

One could argue of course that participants orient to smaller pragmatic units. But this point raises some new problems. First, we do not know what these smaller projects might be, and we cannot identify them in our corpus. At least not in terms of pragmatics itself. This means that the only way to find out what these smaller units are, is to look at the identifiable units that constitute them. These smaller units seem to coincide with prosodic and syntactic structure. Second, although it is the case that these larger pragmatic projects consist of smaller units that may or may not be identifiable as smaller pragmatic components, it seems that speakers still have a choice as to how they package and phrase these smaller units.

These choices can be realized both in prosodic and syntactic structure. Please take a look at Example 3, and Example 4.

Example 3.

1. A: goed ik haal morgen dus eerst mama op
2. *fine I pick tomorrow so first mother up*
3. *fine, so I will pick up mother first tomorrow*
4. B: ja
5. *yes*
6. *yes*
7. A: dan ga ik nog even langs de winkel
8. *then go I still a moment by the store*
9. *then I will go to the store*
10. A: en dan halen we samen die stoelen [op
11. *and then pick we together those chairs[up*
12. *and then we will pick up those chairs t[ogether*
13. B: [fijn
14. [great
15. [great

Example 4.

1. A: 't stinkt daar ook enorm
2. *it smells there also huge*
3. *it also smells very bad over there*
4. (0.3)
5. A: echt niet te geloven joh
6. *really not to believe man*
7. *really unbelievable man*
8. (0.6)
9. A: maar e:h die- die hebben geloof ik ook wel vier honden,
10. *but e:h they they have believe I also even four dogs*
11. *but i think they have no less than four dogs*
12. A: een boxer twee herders en een poe[del
13. *a boxer two sheppards and a po [odle*
14. *a boxer two sheppards and a po [odle*
15. B: [haha extreem
16. [(laughter) radical
17. [(laughter) radical

Examples 2, 3, and 4 all contain lists and as such they have clearly identifiable component parts. However, participants do not orient to these smaller units, but they orient to the syntactic and prosodic packaging of these units into interactional units by the speaker. In sequential contexts where lists are realized in a single intonation contour, these reactions are absent. Speakers have a choice in the linguistic realization of lists. They can package the components parts as interactional units on

their own, or they can realize the list as a single linguistic structure. The syntactic and prosodic packaging in these cases does not *reflect* the status of the stretch of talk as an independent unit. The packaging contextualizes this stretch of talk as an independent unit. In Example 2 we saw that the two items of a two-part list are produced as independent syntactic and prosodic units. Participants oriented towards both items on the list. In Example 3, we also see a larger pragmatic project consisting of three items. A and B are planning the upcoming week. Up to this point they have been discussing what they will do the next day and in line 1-10 A gives a summary of their plans. He will pick up their mother, then get some items from the store and finally he will pick up some chairs they need for a party. These items are known from the conversation up to this point and A thus clearly projects a list. The way he packages this list is somewhat different from the production of the list we saw in Example 2. Here the first item is produced in an intonation contour of its own. Also the syntactic form is that of an independent main clause. Notice, however, that there is a clear pragmatic projection (*goed* "fine" and *eerst* "first"). In line 4, B responds to this first item with a recipient token. The second and third items of the list are produced in a single intonation contour and are also produced in a single syntactic unit (coordinated main clauses). Interestingly, B only responds to these two items after the third item on the list. This suggests that it is the syntax and the prosody of this turn that constitutes the smaller parts of this larger project. Of course, A might have chosen to produce the second and third item of the list as an independent main clause and in an independent intonation contour. In these cases, we would not want to claim that B would have responded to these units. As we pointed out in Part I turn-taking is not obligatory. What we do want to claim, however, is that participants will not respond to the component parts if they are not produced as independent units by a speaker.¹

This means that speakers can create points where recipient tokens can be placed and where these recipient tokens might be relevant for the ongoing conversation. Pragmatic units are thus defined in terms of their prosodic and

¹ In our corpus we found some interesting counterexamples to this hypothesis. Please look at the following example:

1. A: maar e: eh ja- 't gaat dus eigenlijk wel goed met hem,
2. but eh yeah actually he is doing ok
3. B: mmmh
4. mmmh
5. (0.3)
6. A: hij gaat o[ver en dan volgend jaar naar een nieuwe school
7. he passed this grade and next year he will go to a new school
8. B: [ja
9. [yeah

In this case there is a pragmatic projection of more to come after line 1. However, it is not clear that the speaker will produce multiple reasons why she thinks he is doing alright. Notice that the recipient token is also produced in overlap with the last syllable. The hearer places his turn early in the absence of a clear projection of multiple list items, resulting in overlap.

syntactic packaging and it is this packaging that hearers orient to. Component parts can be produced as independent syntactic and prosodic units. In this case, they can be treated interactionally as independent units. However, they can also be produced as a single linguistic unit. In this case, they tend to be treated as a single interactional unit as well.

Example 4 gives another illustration of this principle. Here two roommates discuss the smell in the house of one of their neighbors. In line 9, A gives a possible explanation: these neighbors own four dogs. In line 12, she gives a list of these dogs. From the conversation up to that point it is clear that this list will contain four dogs in total (which, of course, does not imply that the list will also have four items). She produces this list in a single intonation contour. B reacts to the list as a whole. Here again we see that participants orient to the syntactic and prosodic make-up of the turn at hand. Neither the larger pragmatic project, nor the smaller pragmatic units can explain the placement of recipient tokens.

These examples suggest that turn-taking is best understood as governed by the prosodic and the syntactic make-up of turns-at-talk. The projection of larger pragmatic projects does not restrict turn-taking in any way. The prosodic and syntactic make-up of these larger projects, however, does play a role in the organization of turn-taking. We did see, however, that these locations were selected for a specific set of actions that in a way seemed subordinate to the larger pragmatic project at hand. Recipient tokens are placed at locations where the boundaries of syntactic and prosodic units coincide. We argued that this does not mean that these speaker changes should not be analyzed as turn-taking. It seems circular to exempt certain speaker changes from our study. Furthermore, these speaker changes clearly have an interactional function and as such they constitute interactional acts. This leaves us with the conclusion that pragmatic completion is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for turn-taking. Turn-taking can be explained independent from these larger pragmatic units. These larger units, however, do play an important role in the selection of the types of actions that can occur at specific points in an interaction. That is to say, prosody and syntax determine whether or not turn-taking is possible, whereas pragmatic structures restrict what can be done in those particular slots.

However, we also found counterexamples that seem to suggest that pragmatic structure *does* play an important role in the organization of turn-taking. To these counterexamples we turn in paragraph 3.3.

3.3. Counterexamples at points of pragmatic completion (<-, +>)

In the last paragraph we argued that the projection of larger pragmatic projects does not restrain turn-taking. We concluded that turn-taking does not seem to be restricted by that kind of pragmatic projection, but rather by the prosodic and syntactic packaging of turns-at-talk. In this paragraph, we will look at another set of counterexamples that seems to suggest the opposite: turn-taking at the boundaries of stretches of talk that are not complete prosodically and syntactically, but that are complete pragmatically (<-, +>). Please take a look at Example 7.

Example 7.

1. A: Frits was weer zoou:h irritant
2. *Frits was again extremely annoying*
3. *Frits was extremely annoying as usual*
4. (0.2)
5. A: dan ze- dan belooft ie dat ie 't doet
6. *then then promises he that he it does*
7. *first he promises that he will do it*
8. (0.2)
9. A: maar dat k[un je het mooi vergeten
10. *but that c[an you it beautiful (part) forget*
11. *but you c[an forget about it*
12. B: [ja dat doet ie bij mij ook altijd.
13. *[yes that does he with me also always*
14. *[yeah same story here*

In this example, two roommates are discussing their problems with another roommate (*Frits*). In this dorm, people are expected to do chores. A is reporting her frustration that *Frits* is not doing his part to B. In line 1, A gives an evaluation of the situation (*Frits was weer zoo:h irritant*, “*Frits was extremely annoying as usual*”). She then continues with a specification of her annoyance with *Frits* (*dan belooft ie dat ie 't doet*, “*First he promises that he will do it*”) in line 5. In this utterance, she already projects a continuation. More specifically she projects a clear type of continuation: a contrastive relation. She then produces this contrastive relation in line 9. The contrast is also marked by the connective *maar* (“*but*”). In line 12, B adheres to A’s description of *Frits* by saying that he acts the same way with her. B places her turn at a point where the ongoing turn is not complete syntactically or prosodically. Yet, it is clear that the turn is complete pragmatically, because B’s turn clearly indicates that she understood A’s turn in line 9. Also, she reacts to the contents of this line and not to A’s utterance in line 5. This means that B reacts to the meaning of the utterance and not to the syntactic and prosodic packaging of this meaning.

Example 8 shows a similar situation later on in the same conversation.

Example 8.

1. A: ja maar ik heb het gewoon gehad
2. *yeah but I have it just had*
3. *yeah but I have had it with this*
4. A: want e:h noue:h
5. *because eh now eh*
6. *because now*
7. (.)
8. A: het is nu gewoon mooi gewee[st
9. *it is now just beautiful been*
10. *now it just is enough*

11. B: [ja
12. [yeah
13. [yeah
14. A: we blij- we kunnen wel blijven klagen,
15. *we sta- we can PART stay complain*
16. *we can go on complaining*
17. A: maar als het niet verandert
18. *but if it not change*
19. *but if it does not change*
20. A: [dan moet ie eruit
21. [*then has to he out*
22. [*then he has to go*
23. B: [dan houdt 't [op
24. [*then stops it* [*V*
25. [*then it is enough*
26. A: [ja nou precies ja
27. [*yeah now exactly yes*
28. [*yeah exactly*

In this fragment, A and B are still discussing the behavior of their roommate. In lines 1 through 8, A tells B that her patience has come to an end. In line 11, B responds with a recipient token. A then continues in line 14, formulating some sort of ultimatum. According to A, talking is useless. If things do not change, the roommate will have to leave the house. A packages her clause in a special way. First, she sets up a contrast with the foregoing clause using *maar* (“but”). This contrast is strengthened by the lexical items in line 14 (*wel blijven*, “PART stay”). Then A produces a complex clause: an *als ..dan*-construction (“if ... then-construction”). This means that both syntactically and lexico-semantically there is a clear projection of more to come. However, B takes the floor in line 23. B’s utterance is interesting for two reasons. First, the placement of her utterance coincides with a syntactic boundary within the complex clause. After the first clause, B produces her turn. This clause is also prosodically independent. After line 17, A’s turn is prosodically complete. Syntactically a simple clause has been produced. But lexico-semantically more is projected to come. However, pragmatically the turn seems to be complete. If one takes the idea of pragmatics as an independent tier of talk seriously, B’s reaction shows that the turn is pragmatically complete. B’s reaction shows that she knows what A wants to say, and by giving her reaction in that particular place she indicates that she thinks that turn-taking is relevant at that particular point. Also, there is no indication in the conversation that this turn-taking is in any way marked. As is in the case of *recognition overlap* (Jefferson 1979) this seems to indicate that pragmatic completion cannot be equated with lexical or syntactic completion. Turns can be pragmatically complete both in their meaning and in their interactional status as turns without the syntactical and/or lexical

materials that carry this pragmatic function being complete.² These examples clearly are counterexamples for our hypothesis that turn-taking implies completion on all three tiers. Yet, even these examples show an orientation to other units than the units on the pragmatic tier.

In example 8, B's turn is placed on the boundary of a prosodic unit. This is typical of these kinds of constructions. Also, B places her reaction on the boundary of a clause. Syntactically, the unit underway is not complete (a main clause is still projected), but B does seem to orient to the syntactic parts of the larger construction. B places her reaction at the boundary of the conditional adverbial clause. Also, she packages her contribution in a special way: syntactically, her turn is analyzable as a continuation of the foregoing turn. She produces what she thinks is the projected continuation of this incomplete turn both in meaning *and* in syntax. Lerner (1987, 1993, 1996, 1999) coined this phenomenon *collaborative construction*. He points out that in these cases the syntactic make-up of a clause is used as an interactional resource in turn-taking:

(...) this chapter has described some of the turn-constructural resources for initiating intra-turn talk by recipients (...), and it has examined some of the forms this entry can take. An orientation to grammatical structure (...) provides recipients with resources for recognitional, pre-transitional (...) and progressional completion of the turns in progress (...). As such, these grammatical practices in the emergent construction of turns-at-talk can furnish semi-permeable points of reference for organizing bits of sequential and interactional business." (Lerner 1996, p.268)

Looking at it from this perspective, B's turn has two different interactional implications. First, the fact that she takes the turn indicates that she interprets the turn-underway as complete in one way or another. Second, the syntactic packaging and the meaning of her own turn indicate that she interprets A's turn as incomplete: she packages her turn as a continuation of A's turn. The results can be analyzed as a single construction that is realized by two distinct speakers. Note, that this is possible because A produced her own turn in a specific way: the complex syntactic construction and the prosodic realization of the construction allowed (or maybe even invited) this particular reaction. Here again the syntactic and prosodic make-up of the turn seems to present the turn as a complex unit that allows for turn-taking at this particular point. Albeit in a very pragmatically restricted way.

Functionally, these constructions seem to have a specific meaning.

² This also seems to indicate that pragmatic units behave differently than syntactic units. Syntactic units are made up from phrases which in turn are made up from words. This allows us to determine for every point in a stretch of talk whether or not it is syntactically complete. For pragmatics we do not have this option. These examples clearly show that interactional meaning is not associated with words in a simple direct way. In interpreting interactions participants use all kinds of linguistic knowledge. They have clear expectations about what could come next and they use this knowledge in the interpretation and construction of turns-at-talk.

Producing the projected part of the utterance of a current speaker can have specific interactional functions. In our corpus, these constructions occur in typical contexts. We already saw some examples of assessments and opinions that were construed collaboratively. Producing the second part of an opinion clearly strengthens one's alignment with the propositional content of that opinion. In these cases, hearers not only adhere to the position in a reactive way, but they become speakers themselves and collaboratively formulate the opinion. Another sequential context where collaborative constructions occur is in the case of jokes and anecdotes. In these sequential contexts, the placement of the reaction by the other participants has great interactional import. Noticeably, reactions to jokes and anecdotes tend to occur *early*. One specific way to achieve this is by collaboratively constructing the punch line of a story. Example 9 and Example 10 illustrate this.

Example 9.

1. A: want hier benede
2. *because here down stairs*
3. *because down stairs*
4. (0.2)
5. A: ik [had gistere dus geen pasje bij me
6. *I [had yesterday so no pass with me*
7. *I d[id not have my pass on me*
8. B: [ja
9. [yes
10. [yes
11. B: mm[hh
12. A: [en: ik wilde daar naar binne
13. [and: *I wanted there to inside*
14. [and *I wanted to go in*
15. (.)
16. B: en [dat ging niet
17. and[*that went not*
18. and[*that did not work*
19. A: [en dat ging niet
20. [*and that went not*
21. [*and that did not work*

Example 10.

1. B: en de laatste tijd ga ik vaak
2. *and the latest time go I often*
3. *and lately I often go*
4. B: als ik vroeg kom
5. *if I early am*
6. *when I arrive early*
7. B: op a twee naar binne
8. *at A two to inside*
9. *inside at A two*
10. B: via de oude hoofdingang en dan
11. *via the old main entrance and then*
12. *using the old main entrance and then*
13. B: hou je dat kaartje voor die deur en dan
14. *hold you that pass in front that door en then*
15. *you hold the pass in front of the door and then*
16. B: gaat die deur open
17. *goes the door open*
18. *the door opens*
19. B: en ik stond daar benende
20. *and I stood there down stairs*
21. *so I stood there down stairs*
22. B: en ik hou dat kaartje d'r voor en
23. *and I hold that pass there front and*
24. *and I hold up the pass in front of the door and*
25. B: ik had- wilde zo staan wachte tot die deur openg[aaat
26. *I had- wanted that way stay waiting until that d[oor opens*
27. *I was waiting for that door to open* [
28. A: [ja mooi niet
29. [yeah pretty not
30. [yeah forget it
31. B: [hahahah
32. [laughter
33. A: [hahahaha
- [laughter

Examples 9 and 10 are taken from a conversation between co-workers. Their office building has been reconstructed and since that moment the new electronic doors do not function properly. In this part of the interaction, they share anecdotes and experiences they had with the (mal)function of these doors. In Example 9, A relates his experiences with these doors. His story has a clear structure: he did not have his electronic pass on him, he wanted to enter the building, but he could not. In line 16, B produces the punch line in overlap with A.

Example 10 shows a similar example that occurs a little later in the same conversation. Here it is B's turn to share his experiences with the new doors. B's story also has a clear structure that is explicitly marked by lexico-semantic

indicators *en dan* (“and then”). In line 25, B projects a contrastive relation with a modal construction (*wilde zo staan wachte*, “wanted that way to stay waiting”): he was waiting for the doors to open. But it did not happen. Here A produces the punch line of the story in line 28 in overlap with the last syllable of B’s turn before B gets a chance to deliver the punch line of the story himself. In fact, B does not produce the end of his story at all in this fragment. In lines 31 and 33, A and B both laugh in response to the story. In this sense, this is truly a collaborative story: a crucial part of the story is delivered by one of the initial recipients and not in overlap with the primary speaker. Notice also that sequentially there is no indication of any trouble. A and B both treat the story as completed after A’s utterance in line 28.

Example 9 and 10 also show that these collaborative utterances are not always licensed by clearly marked lexico-semantic or syntactic constructions. In both cases, there is a clear indication of contrast, but the punch line can only be inferred by the sequential context and the interpretation of the communicative context of the interaction. In both cases, the collaborative utterance is also lexically and grammatically fitted to the foregoing turn. In Example 9, the punch line is connected to the foregoing clause by the coordinator *en* (“and”). In Example 10, the *ja* (“yes”) and the elliptical construction clearly mark the dependency of this stretch of talk to the foregoing turn.

What do these counterexamples tell us about our initial hypothesis? First, the occurrence of units that are pragmatically complete, but syntactically and prosodically incomplete (<-,-,+>), indicates that pragmatic completion cannot be equated with completion on any of the other linguistic levels.³ Second, it shows that (at least in some cases) pragmatic completion takes precedence over syntactic and prosodic completion. As such, it shows a clear orientation to pragmatic structure. This is contrary to what we found in the case of recipient tokens. There we argued that the placement of recipient tokens was governed by the prosodic and syntactic packaging of turns, rather than by the projection of larger pragmatic projects. However, the pragmatic orientation in the cases at hand is towards shorter TCUs rather than towards larger pragmatic projects. In the last paragraph, we saw that pragmatics did not restrain turn-taking during a larger pragmatic project. Here, however, we see that pragmatics can and is used in early starts and collaborative constructions. This suggests that pragmatics *does* play a role in the determination of the smallest units of a turn.

But these examples also show that even in these cases where the role of pragmatic units is evident, syntax and prosody also play roles. Looking at these collaborative constructions, the syntactic and sometimes prosodic make-up of these clauses show that in these cases participants *do* orient to the syntactic/prosodic packaging of the foregoing turn. This orientation is clear in cases where the next speakers continue the syntax and prosody of the foregoing turn. As such, they show a clear orientation to syntactic and prosodic packaging of this turn up to that point.

³ This finding indicates that a definition of pragmatics structure in terms of prosody and/or syntax is not justified (contrary Couper-Kuhlen 1996, Selting 1992, Ford and Thompson 1996). Not only does such a definition introduce circularity, it is not on a par with the empirical data found in our corpus.

Looking at the sequential context in which these collaborative constructions occur we also see a clear role for prosodic and syntactic units. These collaborative constructions are often licensed by the production of a story (or complex clause) by the current speaker as a collection of smaller units. For example, the production of the first part of an *als...dan*-construction (“if...then-construction”) in an independent intonation contour allows for the production of a collaborative construction. One could even say that this particular way of packaging these constructions *invites* the production of such a collaborative construction.

In conclusion, we can say that although these collaborative constructions constitute counterexamples for our initial hypothesis, they also show a clear orientation to our definition of TCUs as complex units. Syntactically and prosodically they show an orientation to the foregoing unit as incomplete. They are packaged as continuations of the foregoing clause, thus underlining the incomplete status of these clauses. Functionally, the marked nature of this form of turn-taking can be explained in relation to the sequential contexts where these speaker changes occur. Some sequential contexts (for example the telling of jokes, assessments, repair) make the timely placement of turns interactionally relevant. In these cases, participants can use the syntactic and prosodic packaging of turns-at-talk in an interactionally meaningful way.

3.4. Counterexamples with marked turn-taking

In the last paragraphs we looked at counterexamples that are treated as unproblematic by the participants. In this paragraph, we will look at counterexamples where the interaction clearly shows signs of troubled or marked turn-taking organization. We will present a qualitative analysis of some prototypical counterexamples. Our goal will be to describe the practices of interactants in these marked contexts and to argue that even in these cases one can show that participants orient towards turns as tripartite structures. Please take a look at our first example, Example 11.

Example 11.

1. A: maar het blijft een lev[en
2. *but it remains a* li [fe
3. *but it still is a* li [fe
4. B: [maar het gaat [om de KWA- KWALITEIT
5. [*but it goes* [*about the qua- quality*
6. [*but it is the q[uality of life*
7. A: [>NEE NEE nee nee
8. [*NO NO no no*
9. [*NO NO no no*
10. A: leven is lev[en
11. *life is* li[fe
12. *life is* li[fe
13. B: [>maar als je niETs meer kun
14. [*but if you nothing anymore can*
15. [*but if you cannot do anything anymore*

16. B: als je leven geen kwaliteit of waarde meer voor je heeft.
17. *if your life no quality or value anymore for you has*
18. *if your life has no value for you anymore*

In Example 11, two friends discuss a topic that at that time received a lot of attention in the Dutch media: euthanasia. A is a clear antagonist, but B thinks that in some special cases euthanasia should be allowed under a strict monitor by the government. In line 1, A states her opinion: taking a life is wrong under any circumstance. In line 4, B introduces a caveat, the quality of life should also be taken into account. A starts her next turn in overlap with B and repeats her point of view. A life is a life, regardless of the quality of life. At the end of this turn, B takes the turn again. In lines 13 and 16, she also restates her point of view: euthanasia should be allowed if a person feels that his or her live is without meaning.

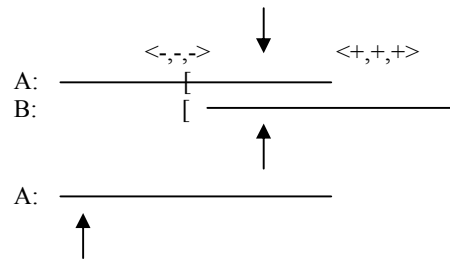
The turn-taking in line 7 is a clear counterexample with respect to our hypothesis. B's turn is pragmatically, syntactically and prosodically incomplete. Note that A cannot react to the pragmatic content of B's turn, because B's turn up to that point is devoid of meaning. The *maar* ("but") only indicates that she will state a counterexample. A's reaction in line 7 and 10 is a response to the projection of a counterexample, rather than to a specific, explicitly stated counterexample.

When we look at the formal characteristics of B's turn and A's reaction to this turn, a few features stand out. First, the beginning of A's turn in line 7 is louder than the foregoing utterances and the continuation of that same utterance in line 10. Second, A's turn is also produced faster than the surrounding stretches of talk. Third, in the beginning of A's turn the lexical item *nee* ("no") is repeated four times. Fourth, after the onset of A's turn, B's speech becomes louder. Also, at the first possible completion point after A's turn, B takes the floor, and she repeats the gist of her earlier turn.

Looking at Example 11, one can conclude that there are a number of features that indicate marked turn-taking. Both the production of the turn by A, and the reaction to this turn by B show signs that something special is happening. One could argue that these special features indicate that participants treat this speaker change as marked. As a consequence, one could conclude that this speaker change realized in this particular way, actually shows an orientation to our definition of interactional units.⁴ In this paragraph, we will take a closer look at the packaging of turns in sequential contexts where speaker change occurs at a point where none of the units on the three levels are possibly complete. Graphically:

⁴ These observations are closely related to the question what constitutes an interruption in interactions. Based on our model we would predict that speaker change on any configuration with a minus sign is a possible interruption. That is, these contexts can be treated as interruptions by the participants. Of course, again this is not deterministic: participants can choose to treat interactional problems in any way they see fit. This means that interruption need not be treated as problematic by participants. What we do expect however is that the set of features that we describe in this paragraph will only occur in these positions in this particular configuration.

Figure 1.



For each of the counterexamples we will look at three specific loci in the turn. These are indicated in Figure 1 by arrows. For each of the counterexamples we answered the following three questions:

1. How does A react to the speaker change?
2. How is the turn of B packaged? That is, how are the counterexamples produced syntactically, pragmatically and prosodically? Are there any formal characteristics of these turns that set them aside from other turns?
3. What happens at the first possible completion point after the speaker change?

In the remainder of this paragraph we will illustrate these analyses by looking at some prototypical examples.

In Example 11 we saw that after the speaker change, A changed the prosodic packaging of her turn: the remainder of her turn was louder than the foregoing part. This is a prototypical reaction in these kinds of sequential contexts that seem to show a clear competition for the floor. In these cases, we also find repetition of lexical material and a change in speech tempo. Examples 12 through 14 illustrate this.

Example 12.

1. A: en toen ging ie na[a- NA: BENE::HE
2. and then went he [to to to down stairs
3. and then he went [downstairs
4. B: [<JA DA >dat heb ik ook eens gezien
5. [yes tha- that have I also once seen
6. [Yeah I have also seen that before

Example 13.

1. A: eerst dacht ik da dah zo hoorde maar la[te (.) LATEH NIE meer
2. *first thought I that that this way supposed but later later not anymore*
3. *at first I thought that this was normal but later not anymore*
4. B: [DAS OOK ZO
5. [*that-is also like that*
6. [*but it is true*

Example 14.

1. A: opeens was ie weg
2. *suddenly was he gone*
3. *he left suddenly*
4. A: da vo[nk zozo ZO LULLIG van em
5. *thatfo[und-I soso so nasty of him*
6. *I thou[ght that was very nasty of him*
7. B: [moet je NIET vergeten
8. [*should you not forget*
9. [*you should remember that*

In all these examples, A changes the prosodic realization of her turn after the onset of the turn of the next speaker. This seems to suggest that there is some sort of competition for the floor. A shows an orientation to the foregoing turn as being incomplete by striving for the completion of that particular turn. One of the ways this is achieved is by speaking louder. Another way is through repetition and a slower speech rate. In Example 12 and Example 14, repetition of lexical items and a slower speech rate allow A to produce the gist of her turn clear of overlap.

Of course, not every example shows this kind of competition for the floor. There are also examples where a participant simply stops a turn short, after the onset of a new turn. Please take a look at Example 15.

Example 15.

1. A: 't is niet een verloren zaak of zo
2. *it is not a lost cause or so*
3. *it's not like it is a lost cause*
4. A: ik moe gew[oo-
5. *I have to ju [st*
6. *I just have to*
7. B: [maar je blijft het gewoon proberen
8. [*but you keep it just trying*
9. [*but you just keep trying*

In line 4, A stops the production of her turn after the onset of B's turn in line 7. In these fragments, the speaker change is not treated as problematic by the participants.

This does not mean that the unit underway was complete in any way. Speakers can treat interactional phenomena in a number of ways. Here we just point to the fact that this specific set of prosodic features coincides with this kind of sequential environment. These features need not appear, but if they appear it is in this specific sequential context. And in those cases they contextualize the foregoing turn as incomplete.

When we look at the overlapping turns, we see a similar set of prosodic features. The onset of these new turns often show different volume levels than the surrounding syllables, lexical repetition and a change in speech rate. Please take a look at Example 16 and Example 17 for some prototypical examples.

Example 16.

1. A: dat blijft to[ch het belangrijkste punt
2. *that remains still the most important point*
3. *but that remains the crucial issue*
4. B: [>ja ma- ma- <JE VERGEE:T > je vergeet dat alle afdelinge
5. [*yes bu bu YOU FORGET you forget that all departments*
6. [*yes but you forget that all departments*
7. B: daar toestemming voor moeten geven
8. *there clearance for have to give*
9. *have to give clearance for that*

Example 17.

1. A: maar ze zijn nu veel minder
2. *but they are now much less*
3. *but lately they are much less*
4. A: die laatst [plaat DIE LA-
5. *that the other day plate tha LA-*
6. *the last plate*
7. B: [NEE:eH NEE ze ware altijd al rot
8. [*NO eh No they were always already rotten*
9. [*no they always have been rotten*

When we look at the onsets of these new turns and at the ways these new turns are realized in the foregoing examples we see that the prosodic realization of these turns is marked. There is a change in volume and speech rate. We also observe that there is a lot of repetition of lexical materials. The production of these turns thus seems marked. This indicates that even the initiators of the overlapping turn orient to the foregoing turn as incomplete. When we look at the continuation of these interactions we also see a sequential orientation to the incompleteness of these structures. Speakers frequently recycle parts of their turns when overlap occurs. Please take a look at Example 18 and 19.

Example 18.

1. A: je kunt niet
2. *you can not*
3. *you cannot*
4. A: eerst subsidie bij de een aanvragen en eh
5. *first subsidy at the one ask and eh*
6. *ask for subsidy from one partner and eh*
7. A: en dan ook nog een lenig sluite bij e:h bij de an[der=
8. *and then also too a loan close with eh with the other*
9. *aks for a loan from another partner*
10. B: [JAWEL DA KA-
11. [yes that ca-
12. [yes that is
13. B: [da ka
14. [that ca-
15. [that is
16. A: [= >]je zult dan toch moeten <kIE:z[e
17. [= >]you will have then still have to chose
18. [you will have to chose in that situation
19. B: [jawel da kan WEL
20. [yes that can so
21. [yes you can
22. B: als je het maar opgeeft.
23. *if you it but-PART report*
24. *as long as you report it*

Example 19.

1. A: weet je wat jij moet doen
2. *know you what you should do*
3. *do you know what you should do*
4. B: ja
5. *yes*
6. *yes*
7. (0.6)
8. A: je moet die tent verko[pe
9. *you must that place s[ell*
10. *you must sell that place*
11. B: [ja maar:eh d[a- da-da-
12. [yes but eh t [ha- tha- tha-
13. [yes but eh t [ha- tha- tha-
14. A: [JE MOET NU-
15. [you must now
16. [you have to
17. (0.8)
18. A: je moet gewoon nu verkope en daar zelf directeur blij[ve

19. *you have just now sell and there yourself director stay*
20. *you just have to sell the place and stay in charge yourself*
21. B: [ja ma-
22. [yes bu-
23. [yes bu-
24. B : maar da probeer ik wel
25. *but that try I PART*
26. *but that's what I try to do*
27. B: maar dat moet dan wel lukken
28. *but that has to then PART succeed*
29. *but it also has to work out*

In Example 18, two business partners discuss their financial possibilities. They want to apply for a loan, but they also want to apply for a government grant. In line 1 through 7, A states that they cannot do both. They will have to make a choice. In line 10, B challenges this opinion (*jawel da ka*, “yes that ca-”), but his turn is overlapped by the onset of a new turn by A in line 16. B does not finish his turn. However, at the first possible completion point of A’s turn, B recycles his turn. B’s turn is packaged as a recycling in the sense that it uses the same lexical material as the foregoing disbanded turn.

In Example 19, a similar situation occurs. In another business meeting two businessmen discuss the future of their company. In line 1 through 8, A advises B to sell his company. In line 11, B reacts. This reaction clearly projects a dispreferred response (*ja maar*, “yes but”). A starts a new turn in overlap with B’s turn in line 14. After this turn, B recycles his old turn at the first possible completion point. That this turn is indeed a recycled version of the prior turn is signaled by the repetition of lexical material (*je moet nu*, “now you have to”). The placement of this turn is again at the first available *complex* possible completion point and not at the first *syntactic* completion point. These examples indicate that participants treat the foregoing turns as incomplete. At the first possible sequential opportunity they recycle the materials that were cut short by the onset of the new turn.

In this paragraph, we looked at sets of counterexamples. In all these counterexamples, turn-taking occurs at points where the turn is pragmatically, syntactically and prosodically incomplete (<-,-,->). Our goal was to give a qualitative analysis of these fragments. We argued that these fragments show an orientation to the incompleteness of the foregoing turns. In our analysis, we answered three questions. What happens to the packaging of the turn that is being overlapped? How is the overlapping turn realized prosodically and what is the sequential consequence of the overlap? We showed that in all of these three loci, participants orient towards the incomplete status of the foregoing turn. Both in the onset of the new turn and in the continuation of the overlapped turn a specific set of prosodic features was found. These turn parts are produced louder than the surrounding turns, they contain repetition of lexical material, and they also show a change in speech tempo. Looking at the sequential continuations after these overlapping turns, we saw that speakers of the initial turn recycled the materials from their ongoing turns. This shows a clear orientation to the foregoing turn as incomplete.

3.5. Conclusion

In this chapter, we looked at counterexamples for our hypothesis that speaker change implies turn-completion: speaker change \longrightarrow $\langle +, +, + \rangle$. Our goal was a qualitative analysis of some of these contexts. We had two goals in this chapter. The first was a detailed description of sets of counterexamples in order to get a better understanding of the ways in which syntax, prosody and pragmatics work together in the production of interactional units. The second goal was to analyze these deviant cases to see if these fragments show an orientation to their marked status with respect to our hypothesis. We looked at three distinct sequential configurations: $\langle +, +, - \rangle$, $\langle -, -, + \rangle$ and $\langle -, -, - \rangle$.

The first configuration $\langle +, +, - \rangle$ turned out to be the primary locus for a specific set of interactional actions: recipient tokens. We showed that the placement of recipient tokens is primarily governed by the syntactic and prosodic make-up of turns-at-talk. We found that the projection of larger pragmatic projects does not restrict turn-taking. Recipient tokens and specific forms of repair were frequently found in sequential contexts where larger pragmatic units were projected. However, we did find that pragmatic projection restricts the *kind of actions* that can occur at those particular sequential slots. We conclude that on the level of turn-taking only the packaging of turns-at-talk in different independent units is relevant. What happens at these particular spots is restricted by the pragmatic interpretation of the turn underway.

The second configuration we looked at was $\langle -, -, + \rangle$. Here, pragmatics *does* seem to play an important role. In sequential contexts where both prosody and syntax were incomplete, speaker change does occur. This suggests that pragmatic completion cannot be reduced to the prosodic and syntactic units that supposedly carry this pragmatic meaning. Although pragmatic projection cannot restrict turn-taking through the projection of larger projects, pragmatic units *can* cut the units on the other two levels short. People form expectations of the ongoing interaction and they orient to these expectations in the organization of turns-at-talk. However, even in these cases participants also orient towards the prosodic and syntactic make-up of the clause underway. Not only are these collaborative structures licensed by the syntactic and prosodic make-up of these units, the production of the second parts of these collaborative constructions also show an orientation towards the linguistic realization of these units. In these collaborative turns, speakers mirror the syntax that was projected in the first part. As such, they show an orientation to the incomplete status of the turn so far.

The last configuration we examined was $\langle -, -, - \rangle$. These speaker changes constitute real counterexamples for our hypothesis. In this part of the study, we tried to show an orientation to the turn-taking model by means of a deviant case analysis. We showed that both in the onset of these overlapping turns and in the reaction to these turns participants use specific prosodic features in the competition for the floor. These features included a rise in volume, a decrease in speech-rate and the repetition of lexical materials. We argued that these marked prosodic realizations indicate an orientation to the foregoing turn as incomplete. This is corroborated by an analysis of the sequential follow-up to these overlapping turns. In these

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sequential contexts, speakers repeat and recycle parts of the overlapped turn, thus treating these turns as incomplete.

Chapter 4: Conclusion

In this part of our study, we had three goals. First, we described the distribution of the various completion points in our corpus. Second, we tested our hypothesis that speaker change implies that the foregoing turn has reached a point of possible completion (<+,+,+>). And third, we gave a deviant case analysis of the counterexamples found in our corpus.

In Chapter 2, we looked at the distribution of syntactic, prosodic and pragmatic completion points in our corpus. Starting out with syntactic completion points we found that syntactic completion points are the most pervasive in our corpus. This made sense because syntactic structures often contain more than one possible completion point. In our corpus, we found 9000 syntactic completion points. Of these completion points only 47 percent (n=4280) are also prosodic completion points. 57 percent (n=5143) of the syntactic completion points are also pragmatic completion points. When we take prosodic completion points as our starting point, we see that 89 percent (n=4280) of these completion points are also syntactic completion points. Only 11 percent (n=518) of the possible prosodic completion points are not syntactic completion points. This shows that there seems to be a clear relation between syntactic structures and prosodic structures in our corpus. However, it also shows that we need both prosodic and syntactic completion points for the explanation of turn-taking phenomena.

In Paragraph 3 of Chapter 2, we tested the hypothesis that speaker change implies that the foregoing turn reached a possible completion point. This expectation was only partly corroborated by the data. Only 63 percent of the speaker changes occur at points of possible completion. However, given our strict definition of turn-taking this was expected.

In Chapter 3, we looked at counterexamples for our hypothesis. Our goal was a qualitative analysis of the counterexamples in the form of a deviant case analysis. We looked at three distinct configurations: <+,+,->, <-,-,+> and <-,-,->. The first configuration turned out to be the primary locus for a specific subset of turns-at-talk: recipient tokens. We showed that the placement of recipient tokens is primarily governed by the syntactic and prosodic make-up of turns-at-talk. We found that the projection of larger pragmatic projects does not restrict turn-taking. Recipient tokens can be found under the scope of pragmatic projections. However, pragmatic projection did seem to restrict the *sort of actions* that can occur at those particular locations. We argued that this shows that for the placement of recipient tokens only the packaging of the turn as an independent unit is relevant. What happens at these spots, however, is restricted by the larger pragmatic project.

The second configuration under investigation was <-,-,+>. In these particular slots, pragmatics *does* play an important role. In these contexts, speaker change occurs even though the turn underway is syntactically and prosodically incomplete. We argued that this shows that pragmatic structure cannot be reduced to the syntactic and prosodic units that carry this pragmatic meaning. Although pragmatic projection is too weak to restrict turn-taking in the projection of larger projects, pragmatic structure does seem to be able to cut units on the other levels short. However, even in these cases there is a clear orientation to the prosodic and

syntactic packaging of the clause underway. Not only are these collaborative structures licensed by the syntactic and prosodic make-up of these units, the production of the second parts of these structures also shows an orientation towards the packaging of these units. In these collaborative turns, the new speakers mirror the syntax that is projected in the first part. As such they show a clear orientation to the incomplete status of the turn so far.

The last configuration we examined was <-, -, >. These speaker changes seem to constitute real counterexamples for our hypothesis. In this part of our study, we showed an orientation to the turn-taking model by way of a deviant case analysis. We showed that the turns in these locations show specific prosodic configurations. We argued that these prosodic devices are indicative of a competition for the floor. These prosodic features include a rise in volume, a decrease in speech rate and the repetition of lexical material. Our analysis of these features as signals of competition for the floor is corroborated by our analysis of these fragments. In these contexts, speakers repeat and recycle parts of the overlapped turn, thus treating these turns as incomplete.

PART III

Chapter 1: Introduction

In Part II of this study we described turns-at-talk in Dutch conversations. We hypothesized that turns were best described as consisting of three distinct levels: prosody, syntax and pragmatics. In order to test this hypothesis, we looked at turn-taking in informal Dutch conversations. We argued that if the turn-taking model is correct, turn-taking should give us a clear view of what constitutes an interactional unit in Dutch. The turn-taking model states that turn-taking is governed by two distinct components: the turn-constructive component and the turn-allocation component. The turn-taking model states that at the end of turn-constructive units (TCUs) turn-taking becomes relevant. Here three things might happen:

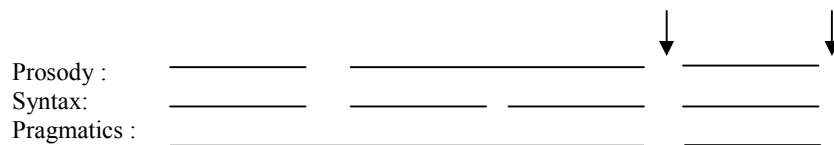
1. the current speaker can select the next speaker
2. if the current speaker does not select the next speaker, the next speaker can select himself as the new speaker
3. or the current speaker continues.

This means that turn-taking can be taken as an argument that the foregoing turn was possibly complete. If the turn-allocation component only becomes relevant at the boundaries of TCUs, speaker change indicates that the new speaker treats the foregoing stretch of talk as possibly complete. In a similar way, we can formulate our research as an attempt to describe the turn-constructive component.

We also argued that the turn-taking model is a-symmetric. Although turn-taking indicates that the new speaker interprets the foregoing turns as possibly complete, the absence of turn-taking does not indicate that the participant interprets this stretch of talk as incomplete. At the boundaries of possibly complete turns hearers may decide not to take the turn. In fact, this is explicitly stated in the third option of the turn-allocation component. Turn-taking is not obligatory. So, although one can hypothesize that turn-taking implies a possibly complete turn, the opposite does not hold. We coined this the non-equivalence assumption (the implication between turn-taking and turn completion is one-sided). In Part II, we only looked at this one-sided implication.

We hypothesized that turns should be described on (at least) three distinct levels: syntax, prosody and pragmatic units. We proposed a model where hearers interpret turns as these tripartite units during their conversations and predicted that a turn is only treated as a TCU if the levels of these structures coincided. Graphically:

Figure 1.



In Figure 1 the arrows indicate the transition relevant places. In this part, we will take a look at the sequential position indicated by the first arrow. This sequential position can be best characterized as follows: a speaker reaches a point of possible completion. None of the other participants take the floor and the current speaker continues. In this part of the study, we will look at the ways these same speaker continuations are packaged and produced. We will also look at the different interactional functions of the different continuations we find in this particular sequential slot.

We described a turn as follows: <syntax +/-, prosody +/-, pragmatics +/->. That means we suggested that any part of a turn can be described as a 3-tuple indicating the completion on the respective three levels. Following the non-equivalence assumption we tested the following implication in Part II:

turn-taking \longrightarrow <+,+,+>.

At the end of Part II we concluded that this hypothesis is only partly corroborated by the data. Although turn-taking was a good predictor of syntactic and prosodic completion, the relationship between turn-taking and pragmatic completion is more complex. The role of pragmatic units in the organization of turn-taking is ambiguous. Our data show that larger pragmatic units do not play a role in the organization of turn-taking. Participants treat larger pragmatic projects as composite structures whose component parts are defined by prosody and grammar. We concluded that turn-taking is best described in terms of syntactic and prosodic properties of a stretch of talk. It seems that the logistics of turn-taking is governed on this local level, whereas the organization of the topic of the conversation is a more global matter. Syntax and prosody determine where turns can be placed, whereas pragmatics determines what actions can be realized in these particular sequential contexts.

In Part II we saw that the prosodic and syntactic packaging of turns-at-talk determines their status as an independent unit. It was the syntactic and prosodic make-up of the clause that determines whether or not a specific part of speech is treated as a unit. The placement of recipient tokens and the initiation of repair show that it is not so much the pragmatic status of the turn at hand that determines its interactional status as an independent unit, but the way it is produced as a prosodic and syntactic structure. Whether or not a stretch of talk is treated as an independent unit depends on the way the speaker produces this specific stretch of talk prosodically and syntactically. This means that by means of coordination, subordination and prosodic integration speakers can combine parts of their turn as new units. On the other hand, by producing this same stretch of talk in independent clauses and in new intonation contours speakers can treat those parts as independent structures in their own right. We showed that these are not just formal characterizations of these turns, but that these respective packaging options are treated differently by participants in conversations. We concluded that the organization of turns-at-talk is sensitive to these part-whole relations and that a description of these relationships is necessary for a clear understanding of turns-at-talk.

In this part, we will take up both of these issues again. Our goal is twofold. First, we will take a closer look at the relationship between turn completion (<+,+,+>) and speaker change. However, given the non-equivalence assumption we can do so only in a qualitative way. Although the turn-taking model allows for the option that the current speaker continues after a point of possible completion, sequentially a possibility for turn-taking has passed. This clearly has interactional meaning. The fact that the hearer(s) did not use this possibility has interactional consequences. This means that, at least in some cases (for example in cases where there is a clear preference for turn-taking as in the case of the production of an adjacency pair) one expects that this interactional fact is taken up by the participants. That is, we expect to find at least some orientation of the interactants to the fact that the hearers passed up on the opportunity to claim the floor. So, our first goal in this part is to find additional evidence for our claim that turns are best described in terms of syntactic, prosodic and pragmatic units. Our strategy will be to build a sub-corpus of clear examples of same speaker continuations after possible completion points. Our expectations in this part are qualitative of nature: we expect that, at least in some cases, participants orient to these complete structures as passed opportunities for speaker change.

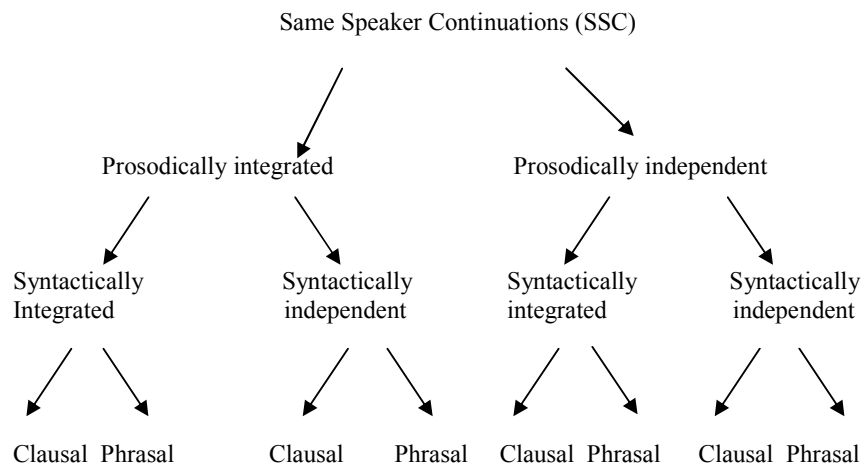
Our second goal is to take a closer look at the way syntax and prosody are used to package turns-at-talk. In Part II, we argued that the part-whole relationship of stretches of talk plays an important role in the organization of interactions. In this part, we will follow up on this claim and look at the different ways a speaker may continue after none of the other participants have claimed the floor after a possible completion point. The syntax and prosody of Dutch allow speakers to add materials to the right periphery of their clauses. Prosodically, new units can be packaged as a continuation of the foregoing intonation contour. Syntactically, a variety of optional phrases can be added to a single clause or new clauses can be added to the foregoing clause either by means of coordination or subordination. This means that speakers have a choice with respect to the ways in which they package their new turns. Given our conclusion that the part-whole relationship plays an important role in the interpretation and production of turns-at-talk we expect that these options are used by the participants in an interactionally meaningful way. In this part, we will look at the ways speakers package their new turns after a possible completion point has passed. We expect that continuations that are analyzable as continuations of the foregoing unit have a different interactional status than continuations that are realized as new and independent units.

So in analyzing our new sub-corpus we have two perspectives. We expect to find some sort of orientation to the fact that an opportunity to claim the floor has been passed by the other participants and we expect that the prosodic and syntactic packaging of these continuations plays a role in the interactional status of the same speaker continuations. Since prosodic and syntactic units are independent from each other, this gives us four possibilities for these continuations.¹ However, since we

¹ Prosodically and syntactically integrated; prosodically and syntactically independent; prosodically integrated but syntactically independent; prosodically independent but syntactically integrated.

argued in Part I that the clause has a special status between the syntactic structures found in Dutch conversations we make a distinction between phrasal and clausal continuations giving us a total of eight distinct ways in which these continuations can be packaged. Graphically:

Figure 2. Possible ways to package same speaker continuations



In the remainder of this part of our study we will look at the interactional status of these different SSCs. In Chapter 2, we will look at clausal SSCs. In Chapter 3, we will look at a special case of syntactically integrated SSCs: *omdat*-clauses (“because”-clauses) with main clause word order. These are of special interest because the connective *omdat* (“because”) triggers subordinate clause word order in standard Dutch. However, in spoken corpora we also find main clause word order. This is of special interest in this part of our investigation, because this construction thus occurs with two distinct syntactic ways to package these clauses. Finally, we will take a look at phrasal SSCs in chapter 4.

Chapter 2: Clausal continuations after a possible completion point

2.1. Introduction

In this chapter, we will look at one specific set of counterexamples with respect to our stronger hypothesis: clausal continuations after a possible completion point. In Part II, we argued that turn completion does not determine speaker change. The turn-taking model explicitly allows for the possibility of same speaker continuations. As a result we only looked at the one-sided implication that speaker change implies turn completion. However, at the end of Part II and in the introduction to Part III we argued that one expects that at least in some contexts participants orient to foregoing turns as possibly complete. Such an orientation would give additional support to our claim that a possible completion point indeed did occur. Furthermore, we claimed that these continuations are interesting from another point of view. After a possible completion point speakers have a choice with respect to the packaging of their turns. They can formulate these SSCs as a syntactic continuation of the foregoing turn or they can produce a new independent syntactic unit, thus adding another independent formal unit to their turn. Here we will focus on one of these cases: clausal SSCs that are syntactically packaged as continuations of the foregoing possibly complete unit. Graphically:

A: [main clause]_{<+,+,+>} (pause) [subordinate clause]

After the main clause A's turn has reached a point of possible completion. However, none of the other participants take the floor and A continues with a subordinate clause. This clause is syntactically packaged as a continuation of the foregoing clause. That is, in retrospect, this new subordinate clause can be analyzed as belonging to the main clause. Syntactically, the new subordinate clause is attachable to the foregoing clause. This sets these examples apart from main clause continuations. Please take a look at Example 1 and Example 2.

Example 1.

1. A: hij kon dat zelf op dat moment ook niet_{<+,+,+>}
2. *he could that himself at that time also not*
3. *he couldn't do it himself at that time*
4. (0.3)
- 5. A: omdat hij met die boot zat_{<+,+,+>}
6. *because he with that boat sat*
7. *because he had that boat*

Example 2.

1. A: dat hij dat gaat doen kun je overigens wel vergeten_{<+,+,+>}
2. *that he that goes do can you by the way PART forget*
3. *you can forget about him doing that*
4. (0.5)
- 5. A: hij heeft het vorig jaar ook niet gedaan_{<+,+,+>}
6. *he has it last year also not done*
7. *he also didn't do it last year*

In Example 1, A comes to a point of possible completion after *niet* (“not”) in line 1. After a pause (in which the other participants do not take the turn) she continues with a subordinate clause giving a cause for the state of affairs sketched in line 1. Both utterances can, in retrospect, be analyzed as a single sentence. In this view, the short pause that separates these clauses can be analyzed as an utterance internal pause.

Example 2 shows a similar sequential context. A reaches a point of possible completion. None of the other participants takes the turn. After a pause, A then continues with a new clausal unit. Structurally, this clause has main clause word order. As a consequence, an analysis of the turn as a single syntactic unit is not an option. Rather than a cause, this clausal continuation gives an argument for the proposition entertained in line 1.

As it stands both examples constitute counterexamples for the implication that complete structures always result in speaker change. A speaker comes to a point of possible completion and stops speaking. However, none of the other participants take the turn. After a pause, the same speaker continues. On a syntactic level however, the two examples differ. The first example allows for an analysis in which the whole turn is analyzed as a single syntactic unit, in the second example this is not the case. This raises the question, whether these two ways of packaging SSCs are also functionally and interactionally different. Please have another look at Example 1 (repeated here in extended form as Example 3):

Example 3.

1. A: hij wou o-
2. *he wanted*
3. *he wanted*
4. A: hij wou zelf OOk wel gaan
5. *he wanted himself also PART go*
6. *he wanted to go himself*
7. (0.2)
8. A: dus het wa- het was verder geen onwil ofzo
9. *so it wa- it was further no sabotage or anything*

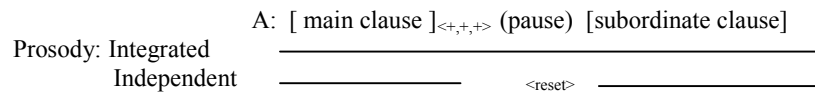
10. *so he was not trying to sabotage things*
11. (0.3)
12. B: *mmhmmh*
13. *mmhmmh*
14. *mmhmmh*
15. A: (0.2)
16. A: *alleen e:h*
17. *just e:h*
18. *just e:h*
19. A: (.)
20. A: *alleen > hij kon dat zElf op dat moment ook niet*
21. *just > he could that himself at that time also not*
22. *it was just that at that time he could not do it himself*
23. (0.3)
- 24. A: *omdat hij met die boot zat*
25. *because he with that boat sat*
26. *because he had that boat*
27. B: *ja ik begrijp 't*
28. *yeah I understand it*
29. *Yeah I understand*

A and B are colleagues. They discuss the organization of an event that went amiss because a mutual friend (C for further reference) could not attend. In line 1 and 4, A states that C really wanted to come. His absence was not by choice. B does not react and A adds another sentence: the absence of C was not by choice. After a pause, B produces a minimal response in line 12. Then in line 20, A produces a reason for C's absence: C had other obligations. Again, B does not respond. In line 24, A continues with a subordinate clause stating a cause for the absence of C. In line 27, B responds displaying understanding for C's predicament.

In this example, A advocates C's case. B, however, is not inclined to overtly accept this explanation. During the whole example his participation is minimal. A continues to argue C's case giving an argument/cause for his absence (he had other obligations). B, however, does not respond. A's contribution in line 24 can be seen as a further specification of this cause. Only after this specification, B accepts A's account. Syntactically the specification has the form of a subordinate clause. This allows for a post-hoc analysis in which it is treated as a part of the prior clause. As such, one could argue, it redefines the prior possible completion point as a lapse in the production of a larger, multi-clausal, sentence. Thus *deleting* the transition relevant place (Ford, Fox and Thompson 2002). In realizing the specification as a grammatical continuation A allows for the treatment of this stretch of talk as a single turn. The possibility of integration in the interpretation structure of the foregoing clause coincides with the interpretation of the two clauses as a single sentence and thus as a single turn. It not only provides a new possible completion point, it also deletes the prior transition relevant place. In retrospect, both clauses are treated as a single structure. In the remainder of this chapter, we will pursue this line of reasoning further and we will extend it to include the prosodic make-up of these subordinate clauses.

Prosodically, one of two things may happen: the subordinate clause can be packaged as a continuation of the foregoing clause or the subordinate clause can be produced in an intonation contour of its own. The difference is the absence or presence of a declination reset, respectively. Graphically:

Figure 1.

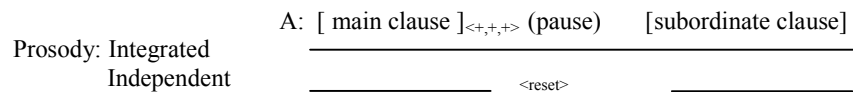


This gives us two distinct possibilities. One in which prosody and grammar both point in the same direction: both syntactically and prosodically the turn is analyzable as a single unit. And one way of packaging in which prosody and syntax give mixed signals. Prosodically, the subordinate clause is realized as an independent unit, but syntactically one can analyze both clauses as part of the same structure. In the remainder of this chapter, we will look at the functions of these different structures. In paragraph 2.2, we will give a short overview of the subordinate clauses that occur as SSCs in our corpus. In paragraph 2.3, we will look at the interactional function of one particular SSC: subordinate clauses that are the result of some particular dispreferred continuation. In paragraph 2.4, we will look at the semantic/pragmatic function of one particular SSC: *omdat*-clauses (“because-clauses”). In the last paragraph of this chapter, we will look at a special case: *omdat*-clauses with main clause word order.

2.2. Subordinate clauses as SSCs

In this paragraph, we will give an inventory of the subordinate clauses that function as SSCs in our corpus. In this section, we will give an overview of the various kinds of subordinate clauses that occur in the sequential environment that is depicted in Figure 1 (repeated here as Figure 2):

Figure 2.



A speaker reaches a point of possible completion. None of the other participants take the floor and after an optional pause the same speaker continues. Grammatically these continuations are realized in the final field of the sentence. Ford (1993) coined these continuations *Post-completion extensions* (PCEs), but here we will use the term *same speaker continuations* (SSCs).

2.2.1. Subordinate clauses as interactional units

Before we embark on our investigation of subordinate clauses we have to say something about what subordinate clauses are. Traditionally finite subordinate clauses can take on a number of different forms: complement clauses, adverbial

clauses and relative clauses. However, the interactional function of these clauses does not seem to be the same. The goal of this chapter is to describe the discourse or interactional function of these clauses in an empirical way. We ask ourselves whether the syntactic make up of stretches of talk is mirrored in their syntactic function. Subordinate structures in this particular slot are interesting in this respect because they constitute a new clausal structure after a possibly complete syntactic structure (a main clause). That is, on the one hand, they have a formal characteristic that suggests that they are dependent on the foregoing unit and as such a continuation of that unit (they are marked as subordinate clauses). On the other hand, they have a formal characteristic that seems to suggest that they are independent units (they *are* clauses). This raises questions about the function of these units in discourse (especially if we also take the prosodic make-up of these clauses into account).

In Dutch (almost all) subordinate clauses have a special word order (see paragraph 4.2. of Part I for the specifics). In these constructions, the verb occupies the *second pole* whereas the *first pole* is filled with a subordinator. This holds for all three subordinate clause types we mentioned earlier.

Example 4.

1. A: ik heb hem een boek gegeven *dat* ik zelf ook heel mooi *vind*
2. *I have him a book gave that I myself also very beautiful find*
3. *I gave him a book that I like very much myself*

Example 5.

1. A: ik ga nu *omdat* ik ook nog *moet trainen*
2. *I go now because I also still have to train*
3. *I am leaving because I have to train*

Example 6.

1. A: Ik denk *dat* ik niet ga
2. *I think that I not go*
3. *I think that I will not go*

Example 4 shows a relative clause. The subordinator/complementizer is *dat* (“that”) and the *second pole* is filled with the verb *vind* (“find”). The verb is placed at the end of the structure rather than in the *first pole*. Examples 5 and 6 show the same structure. Example 5 shows an adjunct clause and example 6 shows a complement clause.

Within the study of discourse (spoken and written) the relationship between discourse units and clauses is a point of debate. Although within functional approaches there seems to be a consensus that the sentence is not the right unit for the analysis of discourse, there is some disagreement about the discourse status of the various clause types. We will not address this issue here. Our aim in this study is

important part of the first utterance. Thompson (2002) argues that this shows that complement clauses are not less prominent than their matrix clauses and thus, that it is hard to maintain that there exists a relationship of subordination between the two clauses. Thompson claims that the complement expresses an attitude towards a referent in the discourse, whereas the matrix clause expresses an epistemic relationship between the speaker and the content of the complement clause.

Verhagen (2005) argues along similar lines, although in this case the focus is on written discourse. Verhagen distinguishes between CT-clauses (the matrix clause or sentence level) and the complement-clause (or the object level) in these constructions. Verhagen shows that CT-clauses do not constitute the main line of discourse. He claims that a CT-clause

“does not designate an object of conceptualization, but rather instructs the addressee to construe it in a particular way and thus to engage in cognitive coordination with another subject of conceptualization (Verhagen 2005, p. 150)”

In this view discourse develops along two distinct levels. On the object-dimension where the story unfolds (the domain of the complement-clause) and on the intersubjective dimension (the realm of the matrix clause). The construction as a whole combines these two distinct dimensions of discourse.¹

Both studies (Thompson 2002 and Verhagen 2005) show that the relationship between the matrix clause and the complement is different from the relationship between a main clause and an adjunct clause. Adjunct clauses are loosely associated with the main clause. The main clause is not dependent on the adjunct clause for its interpretation. The matrix clause, on the other hand, cannot perform its discourse function without the complement.² As a result complement clauses are not part of the specific sequential context under investigation: the matrix clause cannot be analyzed as possibly complete without the complement clause. Therefore, in the remainder of this chapter we will focus on relative clauses and adjunct clauses.

2.2.2 *An inventory of subordinate clauses as SSCs*

In our corpus we find a wide variety of subordinate clauses that occur in this specific position. However, the relative frequency of the different subordinate clauses varies.

¹ Verhagen (2005) shows that this analysis also side-steps some known problems in the analysis of discourse topics. This gives additional support for this analysis.

² A similar argument can be made for relative clauses. Relative clauses can be used to provide additional information of the referent, but they can also be necessary for the identification of the referent. In the last case the referent is dependent on the relative clause. These *restrictive* relative clauses also have a special prosodic make-up. As a result they cannot occur in the specific sequential slot under investigation.

The vast majority of them are adverbial, but we also find relative clauses that are separated from their heads.³ Table 1 gives the relevant numbers.

Table 1. Frequency of relative clauses and adverbial clauses added to possibly complete utterances by same speaker⁴

Relative clauses	12 (6 %)
Adverbial clauses	188 (94 %)
Total	200 (100 %)

Table 1 shows that relative clauses are relatively rare in this particular sequential context. This is because they do occur very frequently in this particular grammatical slot (the final field). In fact, the final field is the default position for long relative clauses in Dutch. In our corpus, however, all but 12 relative clauses are prosodically integrated with the foregoing clause that contains their lexical head. An explanation could be that relative clauses are not very suitable for the communicative and/or semantic functions that are realized by this particular setup. We also found a skewed distribution of different types of adverbial clauses in our corpus. Table 2 gives the adverbial clauses by type.

Table 2. Adverbial clauses after possible completion point by type

Temporal	35 (19 %)
Conditional	22 (12 %)
Concessive	5 (2 %)
Causal	126 (67 %)
Total	188 (100 %)

Table 2 shows that although all types of adverbial clauses occur in this sequential slot their frequency varies significantly. Concessive adverbial clauses are overall very rare in our corpus (not only in the right periphery of the clause). This might be contributed to their relative cognitive complexity and their very specific communicative function. Conditional clauses are also relatively scarce in this particular syntactic slot, but they do occur much more frequent in other structural positions. Most conditional clauses are placed turn-initially. When they do occur in the final field, they are most likely to be incorporated prosodically in the matrix clause. Contrary to Ford (1993) our corpus hosts quite a few temporal clauses in post-completion position. Temporal clauses are used freely, both in sentence initial

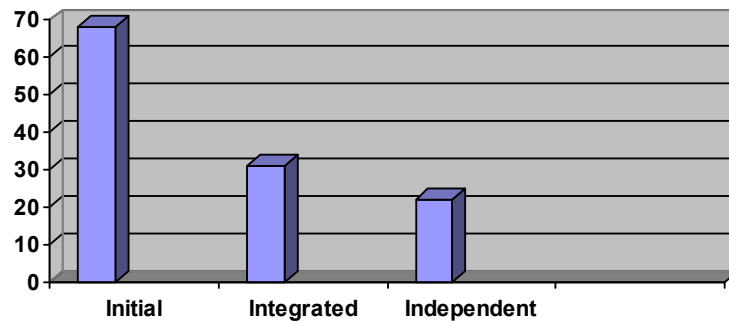
³ We also found small clauses in this particular slot. These structures were excluded from our investigation. Here we will only take a look at finite clauses.

⁴ Here, we will have nothing to say about the usage and/or frequency of possible completion extensions by another speaker (but see Ford 1993)

and sentence final position. There is only a slight preference for sentence final position. When placed in the final field, however, they are more likely than not to receive their own intonation contour. This is not on par with the findings of Ford (1993) who found a preference for prosodic incorporation in sentence final position.

The vast majority of adverbial clauses found in the final field are causal in nature. Surprisingly, almost all the causal adverbial clauses in our corpus are realized in the final field. Sentence initial placement, as is found frequently in written text, is not used in our corpus. A possible explanation is that this particular construction is reserved for more planned kinds of speech. Figures 3, 4 and 5 summarize some of these results.

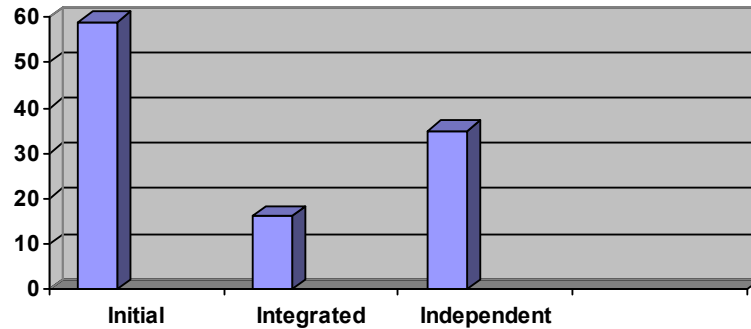
Figure 3. Distribution of conditional adverbial clauses with respect to the matrix clause⁵



Of all conditional clauses (n=121), 44 percent (n=53) are placed in the final field. 42 percent (n=22) of these conditional clauses are realized in an intonation contour of their own.

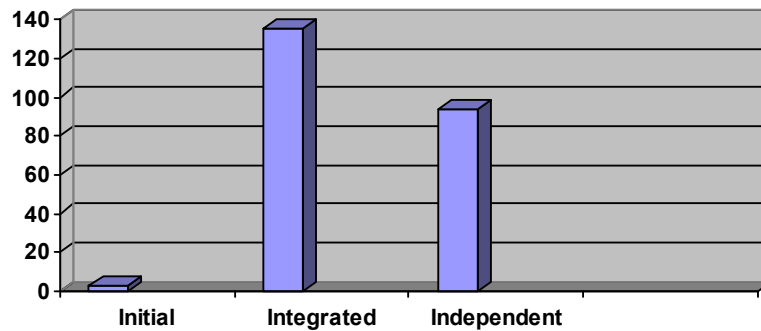
⁵ The *initial* column gives the number of clauses that occurred at the beginning of the clause. The *integrated* and *independent* columns give the number of clauses that are produced in the right periphery. The *integrated* column gives the number of prosodically integrated clauses, whereas the *independent* column gives the clauses that were produced with a declination reset.

Figure 4. Distribution of temporal adverbial clauses with respect to the matrix clause



Of all temporal clauses (n=110), 46 percent are realized in the final field (n=51). 69 percent (n=35) of these temporal clauses are realized in an independent intonation contour.

Figure 5. Distribution of causal adverbial clauses with respect to the matrix clause



Almost all causal clauses are realized in the final field (n=229). 41 percent (n=94) of these causal adverbial clauses are realized in an intonation contour of their own. When we look at these data in light of the figures presented in table 2, we can see that (at least in the case of causal clauses) participants have a choice in the packaging of adverbial clauses that follow a possible completion point. Not all adverbial clauses following a possible completion point are prosodically separated from the foregoing matrix clause. This has some interesting implications for the way syntax and prosody can be used to organize turns-at-talk. This will be the object of

investigation for the remainder of this study. In the next paragraph, we will look at one specific function these adverbial clauses have in informal Dutch interactions.

2.3. *A functional characteristic of one usage of SSCs*

In the foregoing section we looked at the various subordinate clauses that occur after possible completion points. In this section, we will look at one particular communicative function of SSCs: SSCs that occur in the sequential context of dispreferred responses. In this part, we will not give a complete treatment of the different ways in which SSCs are used in this particular slot. Rather, we want to discuss one particular usage of SSCs. The goal of this paragraph is to show how, even in the absence of turn-taking, participants may still orient to possible completion points as interactionally meaningful reference points. The goal will be a qualitative description of various examples where participants explicitly orient to the foregoing units as possibly complete and to show how the packaging of SSCs might play a role in these sequential contexts. As such, this part may give additional support to our definition of turn-constructural units.

As we pointed out earlier, SSCs are not by definition problematic. The turn-taking model explicitly allows for some speaker continuations as an integral part of the turn-taking system. However, in some cases a transition relevant place occurs in the scope of an interactional projection that *does* make speaker change interactionally relevant. In these cases, it *is* meaningful if none of the other participants take the floor. This is the case for instance in the scope of the first part of an adjacency pair. The production of the first pair part (a question) makes the production of the second part of the adjacency pair (the answer) conditionally relevant. If this second pair part is not produced, it is noticeably absent from the interaction and its absence is interactionally meaningful. For example, in the case of invitations a lack of response is interpreted as a rejection of that particular invitation and the speaker may initiate different kinds of repair-routines (Fox and Jaspersoon 1995, Schegloff 1979, 1997, Selting 1988). In these cases, the projection of a second pair part and thus a speaker change is very clear.

SSCs in these contexts often show a clear orientation towards these kinds of dispreferred or absent responses. Please take a look at Example 9.

Example 9

1. A: ma- > maar als je het zo bekijkt
2. *bu but if you it so look at*
3. *but if you look at it that way*
4. A: zo in het licht van die ontwikkelingen dan
5. *so in the light of those developments than*
6. *in light of those developments than*
7. (.)
8. A: dane:h dan wordt het al een stu- stukje begrijpelijker he
9. *then eh then becomes it already a bi- little bit more understandable*
10. *then it is easier to understand, right*
11. (0.5)
12. A: >want je doet toch wat je kan om je zaak te beschermen toch

13. *because you do PART what you can to your business to protect right*
14. *because you do what you have to to protect your business right*
15. (0.5)
16. A: *en dan valt het dus allemaal wel wat mee*
17. *and then falls it so all PART a bit V*
18. *then it turns out better than expected*
19. (1.0)
→ 20. A: *als je dat erbij betreft*
21. *if you that also consider*
22. *if you take that into account as well*
23. B: *mmhm*

In Example 9, A and B discuss an embezzlement case. In the conversation up to this point, B has expressed her disbelief over the conduct of the managers in charge, whereas A is taking a more lenient point of view. In Example 9, she argues her case. In line 4, her argument reaches a point of possible completion. She ends her turn with a clause that explicitly expresses an understanding for the conduct of the manager. The clause ends with the tag question *he* (“right”). B, however, does not take the floor. In line 12, A continues with the recycling of her prior argument *want je doet toch wat je kan om je zaak te beschermen* (“because you do what you have to to protect your business”). Once again, she ends her turn with a tag question, which could be interpreted as an invitation for an evaluation from the side of B. B however, does not comply. A continues with a summary in line 16. Again, stating her main point that the conduct is justifiable. However, her efforts are unsuccessful. In line 20, she produces a conditional adverbial phrase, again stating the mitigating circumstances. It is only after the realization of this clause that B produces a reaction, albeit a minimal one. It is clear that in this example the subordinate clause is used in the pursuit for a preferred response. A keeps recycling her point of view and her arguments until B produces a reaction that underlines her argument.

Adverbial phrases as SSCs are often found in this particular context. One might argue that they are especially suited for this particular function, because they create a new completion point while still continuing the foregoing clause. As such they fulfill two interactional functions at the same time. They provide a new completion point at which the hearer could place a preferred response and retrospectively they define the boundary of the main clause as a turn initial boundary.⁶

⁶ Notice that in this particular fragment coordinated structures are also used in the same sequential context. So if this analysis is correct it might be the marking by the connective, more than the syntactic subordination that is relevant here. It is also possible that coordinated and subordinated structures have different functions in these contexts. We will see a similar situation in the cases of fragments (chapter 4) where phrases in the final field will be compared with phrases in the RD-field. There we will argue that these structures indeed are functionally distinct. Here, we will not address this issue.

he recycles his main point: it was a collective decision (C was present). Note that he does not produce any new argument. He merely restates his former point. He already stated that C was present when the decision was made (*Hij had daar dus zelf een hand in*, “so he participated in this whole affair”). This SSC has the form of a temporal adverbial clause. In line 27, B explicitly adheres to A’s point.

Here again the adverbial clause is used to create an additional completion point. In this case, it was not the absence of a response that triggered the SSC, but the production of a dispreferred response. This analysis is also corroborated by B’s reaction. B seems to interpret the SSC as an invitation for a preferred reaction. In line 30, he produces an explicit adherence to A’s point of view. Notice, that this could not be the result of the content of A’s SSC in line 30, since it contains no information that is new to the conversation. This seems to suggest that B reacts to the interactional meaning of the SSC as a restatement and not to the propositional content of this adverbial clause.

In this paragraph, we looked at one particular function of adverbial SSCs. We had two goals in this paragraph. First, we wanted to show that even in the absence of turn-taking participants orient towards stretches of speech with boundaries at which the syntactic, prosodic and pragmatic units coincide as complete structures. Although turn completion does not determine turn-taking, it is still possible to show an orientation to possibly complete structures in interactions.

Second, we wanted to show how the syntactic packaging of SSCs might influence its interactional function. We argued that adverbial SSCs are particularly well fitted for the task of pursuing preferred responses, because they achieve two interactional goals at the same time. They provide the hearer with an additional completion point at which the preferred response can be realized *and* in retrospect they redefine the last possible completion point as a turn internal break. However, we also argued that it was not so much the syntactic make-up of the SSC that achieved this function, but its lexico-semantic marking. Coordinated structures achieve the same interactional function. Apparently, it is the linking of the two clauses that participants orient to and not the subordinate or coordinate structures. In Chapter 3, we will take this issue up again, when we discuss phrasal continuations in the final field and in the RD-field.

All the SSCs in this paragraph were realized in their own intonation contour. However, as we stated earlier, the product of the syntactic and prosodic possibilities gives us four potential structures for the right periphery:

Figure 6.

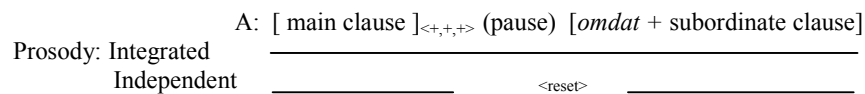
1. [main clause] [main clause]
2. [main clause] [main clause]
3. [main clause] [subordinate clause]
4. [main clause] [subordinate clause]

The first two possibilities fall beyond the scope of this study. In paragraph 2.2, we looked at the distributions of the various adverbial phrases in our corpus. There we also discussed the frequencies of the third and fourth option for all adverbial clauses. In paragraph 2.4, we will take a closer look at the semantic/pragmatic differences between the third and the fourth option. When are adverbial clauses realized in the same intonation contour as the main clause and when are they realized in an intonation contour of their own? In paragraph 2.4, we will restrict our analysis to one particular kind of adverbial clause: adverbial clauses that are introduced by the connective *omdat* (“because”). There are three reasons for this restriction. First, the English counterpart of *omdat* (“because”) has been extensively studied. This makes a comparison between the two languages possible. Second, *omdat*-clauses are prototypically subordinate clauses, but in spoken Dutch we also find *omdat*-clauses with main clause word order (this issue is taken up in paragraph 2.5). Third, as we showed in paragraph 2.2, causal adverbial clauses are the most frequent in our corpus.

2.4. *Omdat*-clauses in right periphery

In this paragraph, we will look at SSCs that take the form of *omdat*-clauses (“because-clauses”). As we noted earlier, speakers have two options in realizing SSCs: prosodically integrated and prosodically set apart. Graphically:

Figure 7.



In Part I we argued that recent interactional studies indicate that the presence or absence of a declination reset is the relevant prosodic feature in the case of prosodic integration (Couper-Kuhlen 1996, 2001; Ford, Fox and Thompson 2002). If a stretch of talk is realized with a declination reset it is prosodically independent, if a declination reset is absent it is prosodically integrated in the foregoing prosodic

contour. Couper-Kuhlen (1996) even speaks of intonational coordination and intonational subordination:

“In the case of intonational subordination, the second intonation phrase is subordinate to the first in the sense that its reference grids form a prolongation of those for the first intonation phrase. In the case of intonational coordination, the gridlines of the second intonation phrase are partially independent of those in the first. (Couper-Kuhlen 1996, p. 402)”⁷

On the basis of this observation we proposed our hierarchy of the integration of interactional units. We argued that the packaging of stretches of talk occurs at two distinct and independent tiers: the syntactic tier and the prosodic tier. This gives us a hierarchy of more or less integrated speech. On the extremes we have units that are syntactically and prosodically independent and units that are syntactically and prosodically integrated. Between these extremes we have two mixed categories. Units that are prosodically integrated, but that are syntactically independent, on the one hand, and units that are prosodically independent but that are syntactically integrated, on the other hand. In this paragraph, we will look at one part of this spectrum: syntactically integrated adverbial clauses that may or may not be realized with a declination reset.⁸ Our main goal will be a semantic/pragmatic description of these structures. More precisely, we will ask the question whether or not these two prosodic realizations of *omdat*-clauses have a different interactional and semantic meaning.

For English it has been argued that there is a relation between the prosodic realization of *because*-clauses and their structural status and semantic/pragmatic meaning (Couper-Kuhlen 1996).⁹ English *because*-clauses can be divided in two distinct semantic readings corresponding with the categorization of Sweetser (1990).¹⁰

Because-clauses can express direct causal, real world relations, on the one hand, and indirect epistemic and speech act relations, on the other hand. In the first case, the *because*-clause has the syntactic characteristics of a subordinate clause, while in the second case the relationship between the clauses is more “paratactic or coordinative” (Couper-Kuhlen 1996). Furthermore, the first set of *because*-clauses is realized without a declination reset, whereas the second set of *because*-clauses is

⁷ Couper-Kuhlen equates prosodic units with TCUs. This makes the definition of a TCU circular, as we pointed out in Part I.

⁸ In the next chapter we will look at the other end of the spectrum when we discuss a construction that seems to be restricted to colloquial Dutch: *omdat*-clauses with main clause word order.

⁹ Couper-Kuhlen (1996) does not present a quantitative analysis of her corpus. She only describes the correlation: “correspond *rather strikingly*”, “*Significantly* it is a direct causal relation which is *typically* involved when because clauses are configured without declination reset”, “speech-act causal clauses *tend to be* configured *systematically* with declination reset”

¹⁰ See Part I, Chapter 3 for a discussion of this categorization.

realized with a declination reset. So, for English the prosodic realization of these clauses reflects the syntactic and semantic characteristics of *because*-clauses. On the basis of these observations Couper-Kuhlen suggests that there are two distinct constructions that are associated with *because*-clauses.

“Such constructional schemas can be thought of as abstract templates for the construal of semantic/pragmatic relations of cause and reason between clauses. They belong to the set of grammatical resources which speakers have at their disposal for the articulation of clausal relations in discourse. (Couper-Kuhlen 1996, p. 407)”¹¹

These construction schemata are not only correlated with these meanings, they can also *construct* these meanings. That is, direct causes can be presented as indirect relations by using the specific construction schema.

In analogy with the situation for English we might expect that *omdat*-clauses can also be divided into two distinct constructions. A direct causal construction and an indirect epistemic or speech act construction. However, for Dutch the situation is slightly different because Dutch also has a causal connective with coordinative syntax: *want* (*because, for*). *Want* seems to specialize in the indirect relations, whereas *omdat* seems to specialize in the direct, causal relations. This division of labor, however, is by no means complete: both connectives occur with both relation types as Table 3 shows.

Table 3. Relation type as a function of connective (Spooren, Sanders, Huiskes and Degand, 2010)

	Direct (content)	Indirect (epistemic/speech act)
<i>Omdat</i>	106 (90.6%)	11 (9.4%)
<i>Want</i>	61 (42.7 %)	82 (57.3%)

When we look at our corpus it is clear that *omdat* (“because”) can indeed occur with both relation types. Example 11 gives an example of a direct causal relation.

Example 11.

1. A: maar wie betaalt er dan bijvoorbeeld niet?
2. *but who pays there than for example not*
3. *but who is not paying then*
4. B: nou e[h]
5. *well [eh]*
6. *well [eh]*
7. A: [die zak die we toen hebben geschreven

¹¹ For a discussion of construction schemas see Part I, Chapter 2.

8. [*that jerk that we then have written*
9. [*that jerk to whom we wrote*
10. A: heeft die beta[ald
11. *has he pay[ed*
12. *did he pay?*
13. B: [*nou eh dat ligt wat lastig*
14. [*well eh that lies a bit complicated*
15. [*well that is a bit complicated*
16. B: want eerst nie
17. *because first not*
18. *because at first he did not*
19. B: maar later w[el=
20. *but later ye[s=*
21. *but later he did*
22. A: [mooi
23. [good
24. [good
25. B: =hij konnie betalen
26. = *he could not pay*
27. = *he could not pay*
28. B: omdat z'n bedrijf failliet was
29. *because his company broke was*
30. *because his company was broke*

In Example 11, A and B discuss B's business. A is a friend who sometimes helps out with administrative tasks. One of these tasks is to call or to write to people who do not pay the bills. Here they discuss one other business that has caused problems before. In line 13, B describes the situation. At first, they did not pay, but later they did. Then she continues with the reason why this person did not pay the bill: he was not able to pay, because his company went broke. The *omdat*-clause here gives the direct, real world cause for the lack of payment.

Example 12 gives an example of an epistemic relation.

Example 12.

1. A: ik ga er toch niet naar toe
2. *I go there anyway-PART not there to*
3. *I will not go there anyway*
4. (0.4)
5. A: omdat hij toch ook nooit naar mijn dingen komt
6. *because he anyway-PART also never to my things comes*
7. *he never attends my things anyway*

Here A discusses an upcoming musical performance of a friend. In line 1, she states that she is not going to attend. In line 5, she formulates the reason why she does not want to go: this particular friend never attends any of her social events. It is clear that this fact does not cause A not to go. Based on this fact she *decides* not to go.

When we look at the prosodic realizations of these *omdat*-clauses we see that both clauses follow the pattern of English. When we look at the pitch peaks on the last accent of line 25 (*Konnie*, “could not”) and the first accent of line 28 (*bedrijf*, “company”) in example 11, we see that there is no declination reset. The pitch peak on *bedrijf* (“company”) is lower than the pitch peak on *Konnie* (“could not”). When we look at example 12, we see a different picture. Here the first accent on *ook* (“also”) is higher than the pitch peak on *toch* (“anyway”). So, in this case we do have a declination reset.

When we look at the other *omdat*-clauses in our corpus we see that, although not one-to-one, there is a clear relation between the prosodic make-up of these *omdat*-clauses and the relation they express. Table 4 gives the results.

Table 4. Prosodic relation of *omdat*-clauses as a function of relation type

	Direct (content)	Indirect (epistemic/Speech act)	Total
Integrated	132 (72%)	3 (7%)	135 (59%)
Independent	53 (28%)	41 (93%)	94 (41 %)
Total	185 (100%)	44 (100%)	229 (100%)

Table 4 shows that in our corpus *omdat*-clauses more often express direct relations than indirect relations.¹² The vast majority of these direct relations are prosodically integrated with the main clause. The relation between prosodic configuration and relation type is significant ($X^2=61.2$, $p<.001$). Indirect relations are more often realized in an intonation contour of their own. Notice also that, although both trends are strong, this trend is stronger for indirect relations than for direct relations.

These data show that there is a clear relation between the relation type an *omdat*-clause expresses and the prosodic make-up of this clause. In these cases, it is the prosody that correlates with the semantic content of the clause rather than the syntactic make-up of the clause. *Omdat* as a subordinator can signal all relation types. In these cases, it is the prosodic make-up of the clause that seems to indicate what relation type is used. As we noted earlier *omdat* is also used as a coordinator in colloquial Dutch. This raises several questions. First, whether this other syntactic make-up is also associated with different relation types. Second, whether the different syntactic make-up also leads to a different prosodic realization. In the next paragraph, we will take up these questions.

2.5. A special case: *omdat*-clauses with main clause word order

In the last section we discussed clausal extension to possibly complete turns. We looked at various types of clauses that occur in the right periphery and gave an analysis of some of the interactional functions of these clauses in this particular

¹² Note, however, that these figures differ from those presented in Table 3. This difference might be the result from the different corpora that are used.

sequential slot. We showed that clauses behave very different from fragments in the sense that they always seem to be oriented to by participants as TCUs in their own right. This led us to conclude that the clause has a special status in conversations with respect to the status as a unit.

There is no difference between main clauses and subordinate clauses. Both clause types are treated as independent units.¹³ We did, however, find a difference in interactional function. There is a correlation between the presence or absence of a declination reset and the interactional meaning of the attached clause. Concentrating on the case of *omdat* we saw a trend that integrated *omdat*-clauses describe causal relationships in the real world, whereas non-integrated *omdat*-clauses are used more often to express reasons and motivations. On the other hand, we also saw some exceptions to this pattern: most notably, content relations that are realized in an intonation contour of their own. The other possible exception (clauses expressing reasons or motivations expressed in an integrated intonation contour) was almost absent from our data. The relevant results are repeated here as Table 5.

Table 5. Prosodic relation of *omdat*-clauses as function of relation type

	Direct (content)	Indirect (epistemic/Speech act)	Total
Integrated	132 (72%)	3 (7%)	135 (59%)
Independent	53 (28%)	41 (93%)	94 (41 %)
Total	185 (100%)	44 (100%)	229 (100%)

Following Couper-Kuhlen, we argued that it is not the intonation of the foregoing clause that is crucial for the analysis of these attachable clauses. However, it is the presence or absence of a declination reset at the beginning of the attachable clause that is oriented to by participants. Prosody provides additional clues for the status of the attachable clause as a TCU on its own. The result is a hierarchy in which clauses can be produced as more or less incorporated with the foregoing clause. Figure 10 gives a summary.

¹³ Following Couper-Kuhlen we looked at topical organization as an indication of the status of a unit as an independent conversational move. Units that are taken up as the topic of further talk are analyzed as independent units. Couper-Kuhlen also uses the implication in the other direction: the absence of such a treatment is seen as an indication that the unit is not oriented towards as an independent unit. We argued in Chapter 2 that this does not follow: although there is a clear bias to react to the last discourse unit; it is not uncommon that speakers link their contributions to units that are prior to last. As a consequence we cannot use this as an argument for the discourse status of the skipped unit.

Figure 10. A hierarchy of more or less incorporated subordinate clauses.

	Syntax	Prosody
1. maximal integration	Subordinate	No reset
2. mixed category	Subordinate	Declination reset
2. mixed category	Main clause	No reset
3. maximal separation	Main clause	Declination reset

Figure 10 shows a continuum of integration of clause combining. On the one hand, we have the maximally integrated structure: a subordinate clause that is also prosodically integrated. On the other hand, we have the maximally detached structure: two main clauses with an intonation contour of their own. In between we have two mixed categories. For lack of an empirical judgment I have presented these structures as being on par with respect to the integration of the two clauses. These two mixed categories are of special interest because of the contradictory signals of syntax and prosody. Again following Couper-Kuhlen we argued in the foregoing section that this could be analyzed as a degrammaticalization of the first construction schema associated with *omdat*-clauses in the right periphery. There we also hinted at another development in the Dutch grammatical system that points in this direction: *omdat*-clauses with main clause word order. Dutch subordinate clauses are structurally distinct from main clauses. In main clauses the first pole of the sentence is realized by the finite verb whereas in subordinate clauses this position is realized by the connective (subordinator/complementizer). *Omdat*-clauses, however, can occur both with main clause word order and subordinate clause word order. In our corpus of *omdat*-clauses (n=250), forty-three had main clause word order. Example 13 illustrates this construction.

Example 13.

1. A: maar hij was boos
2. *but he was angry*
3. *but he was angry*
4. (0.5)
- 5. A: omdat eh we wouden weg
6. *because eh we wanted away*
7. *because we wanted to go*
8. A: maar hij was nog aan het pakken
9. *but he was still packing*
10. *but he was still packing*

In line 1, A describes the anger of her husband. There is no reaction and after a short pause she adds another clause. This clause is lexically fitted as a continuation of the foregoing clause by the connective *omdat*. However, grammatically the clause does not have subordinate clause word order. From the perspective of normative grammar this is an error: *omdat*-clauses cannot have main clause word order (see also

Haeseryn et. al. 1997). However as we stated before this ‘error’ is relatively common in spoken Dutch. One perspective one could take is that this is an instance of language change. In this view, the new *omdat*-construction with main clause word order is getting more and more acceptable. One could argue that the connective *omdat* is changing from a subordinator to a coordinator. This is exactly what Günthner (1996) proposed for *weil* (“because”) in German. She discusses this development in terms of grammaticalization theory (Hopper and Traugott 1990). Whether this is also the case for Dutch, we cannot say within the scope of this study.¹⁴ In the absence of any diachronic data we will only describe the synchronic situation as found in our corpus. More interestingly for the scope of our study is Günthner’s claim that the new clause structure for the connector *weil* also changes meaning: *weil* clauses with main clause word order only express indirect meanings. This is interesting because it shows a difference in the meaning (and thus in the interactional function) of two distinct grammatical realizations of *weil*-clauses. The less integrated word order seems to have a specialized meaning.

Of course, the same questions are relevant for Dutch *omdat*-clauses. Whether or not main clause *omdat*-constructions are new due to language, one can still expect that these constructions have different interactional functions. If the part-whole distinction plays an important role in the interpretation of interactional structures, one would expect that these two constructions behave differently. This raises the question whether the construction with main clause word order is used in specific interactional contexts. Can we generalize over the occurrences of this structure and distill some sort of interactional rationale for the presentation of these clauses with this particular word order? In the remainder of this paragraph we will look at these questions in more detail. In Paragraph 2.5.1, we will give a short overview of Günthner (1996) that will serve as the starting point of our investigation. In Paragraph 2.5.2, we will look at the sequential contexts in which these *omdat*-tokens occur and in Paragraph 2.5.3, we will discuss the semantic interpretation of *omdat*-clauses with main word order. In Paragraph 2.5.4, we will present our conclusions.

2.5.1. The German case: *weil*

In this paragraph, we will discuss the German connective *weil* (“because”). As we discussed in the introduction, the German connective *weil* shows a similar grammatical distribution as the Dutch connective *omdat* (“because”). Both connectives occur both with subordinate and coordinate clause structure. Günthner (1996 1993) presents an analysis of the connective *weil* within the paradigm of grammaticalization theory. She observes a change in the use of *weil*-clauses: in standard German *weil*-clauses are only acceptable with subordinate clause order.

¹⁴ It might be the case that the *omdat*-construction with main clause word order is relatively new and finds its way into standard Dutch through spoken discourse. On the other hand it might also be the case that this construction was always present in spoken Dutch, but that it was only brought to our attention by the emergence of large databases of spoken language.

However, in her corpus *weil*-clauses are also packaged in main clause word order. She analyzes the two structures as the result of an ongoing language change.

In her analysis, Günthner stresses the pragmatic difference between the two constructions: *weil*-clauses with main clause word-order are treated as interactional moves in their own right. Subordinate *weil*-clauses, on the other hand, are also semantically and pragmatically subordinated to their main clause. This suggests that there might be some iconic relationship between the syntactic make-up of the clause and the semantic and pragmatic interpretation of the same clause. *Weil*-clauses that are, post hoc, analyzable as continuations of the foregoing clause are also treated interactionally, semantically and pragmatically as continuations of that unit. The dependence of the subordinate word order is also seen in the placement of these clauses. Subordinate clauses can occur both before and after a main clause, whereas the main clause word order *weil*-clauses can only occur after the clause they form a tandem with.

This makes sense, because if main word order *weil*-clauses are pre-posed, the word order signals independence whereas the lexical signal *weil* indicates that the clause operates in conjunction with another clause. The distinction between the two constructions thus also shows in the structural position of the main clause. Subordinate clauses in the front field are semantically more integrated than subordinate clauses that are produced in the right periphery. *Weil*-clauses with main clause word order only occur in the right periphery of the sentence. When *weil*-clauses occur in the, more integrated, initial field position they are syntactically subordinate to the main clause. Thus, their pragmatic function is mirrored in their grammatical make-up.

The distinction between main clause word order *weil*-constructions and subordinate word order *weil*-constructions is also mirrored in the prosodic realization of the respective clauses: main clauses are produced in an intonation contour of their own, while subordinate clauses are prosodically integrated with the main clause. There seems to be a relationship between the syntactic packaging of the clause and another linguistic unit: prosody. This also shows that at least three distinct linguistic units indicate the independent status of the unit. Grammatically they are realized as main clauses signaling their syntactical independence. They are produced in an intonation unit of their own, signaling their independent prosodic status. And finally, interactionally they are treated as units in their own right. It thus seems that all three units discussed in Part II of this study work together to produce these interactional units.

Günthner argues that *weil*-clauses with main clause word order also seem to specialize with respect to the textual relations they express in terms of the domains proposed by Sweetser (1990). *Weil* can signal relationships in all three domains: content, epistemic and speech-act. *Weil* clauses with main clause word order, however, seem to specialize in the indirect domains: they only express epistemic and speech-act relations. In her corpus all *weil*-clauses that support foregoing speech-acts show main clause word order. She does not provide exact figures for the frequency of the distributions of the *weil*-clauses over the various domains, but she provides examples of epistemic relations that are expressed by *weil*-clauses with main clause word order. There are no verb second *weil*-clauses in her corpus that express content relations. The way these clauses are grammatically fitted to the main

clauses mirrors an aspect of their pragmatic meaning: their loose connection to the foregoing clause. A close connection between the state of affairs described in the two clauses in the cases of content relations is mirrored in their subordinate syntax, whereas the loose relation between the meaning of the two clauses in the case of epistemic and speech-act relations is mirrored in their coordinate syntax. In the first case, we are dealing with real world causality. In the second case, some sort of *mind* is introduced. This might be in the form of reasoning (in the case of epistemic relations) or in the form of interactional actions (speech-act relations).

Günthner concludes that the two grammatical realizations of *weil*-clauses constitute distinct constructions with distinct interactional and semantic meanings and a distinct prosodic realization. She places her results within the framework of grammaticalization theory of Traugott and Hopper. *Weil*-clauses with main clause word order in both domains are ‘separately assertable’. That is, they could occur as separate assertion. The clauses have their own illocutionary force and are rhematic. This independent status is mirrored in the prosodic realization and the grammatical fitting of these clauses: they are produced in an intonation unit of their own and show main clause word order. In the remainder of this chapter, we will look at Dutch *omdat*-clauses. As stated earlier we will not deal with the historical aspect of these grammatical realizations of *omdat*-clauses. Our main focus will be on the question whether *omdat*-clauses with main clause word order and *omdat*-clauses with subordinate word order should be treated as two distinct constructions. We will do this by looking at the following two questions:

1. do *omdat*-clauses with main clause word order specialize to convey relations in the epistemic and speech act domain?
2. are *omdat*-clauses with main clause word order realized in an intonation contour of their own?

The focus in this discussion will be to place these structures in our wider discussion of units in Dutch conversations: are *omdat*-clauses with main word order treated as independent interactional units? To answer these questions, first we have to take a look at the sequential contexts these constructions occur in.

2.5.2. *The sequential context*

In this paragraph, we will look at the sequential contexts of *omdat*-clauses with main clause word order. Following Günthner (1996) and Couper-Kuhlen (1996) we argued in the preceding paragraphs that a possible explanation of main clause word order in *omdat*-clauses could be found in the grammaticalization theory of Hopper and Traugott.¹⁵ The *omdat*-clauses are more loosely connected to the foregoing clause both in the topical and in the sequential domain. In the topical domain these

¹⁵ Not all our findings corroborate Hopper and Traugott's findings. They predict a trend for connectives from coordinator to subordinator; i.e. from less grammatically to more grammatically incorporated. The development of *omdat*, however, shows a different trend. The connector changes from a subordinator to a situation in which it also is used in coordinative constructions. See also Günthner (1996)

omdat-clauses shift towards a usage as discourse markers in which role they connect not sentences, but chunks of text. This loose kind of clause combining is mirrored in the syntax: coordinate structure instead of subordinate clause structure. Although we did not adopt the historical perspective for our Dutch data the semantic and syntactic characterizations for these two constructions still might hold for Dutch.

Looking at the sequential context of the *omdat*-clauses with main clause word order in our corpus, it seems that also in the sequential domain, they are less tightly connected to the foregoing clause. Other materials sometimes intervene and more often than not these clauses are separated from the foregoing clause by a pause. This suggests that sequentially they are more loosely connected to the foregoing clause.

When we look at our corpus, the sequential contexts in which these *omdat*-tokens occur do seem to suggest a lack of planning and a very loose relation with the foregoing clause. Please take a look at Example 14.

Example 14.

1. A: maar we doen er niet zo moeilijk over
2. *but we do there not so difficult about*
3. *but we do not make a fuss about it*
4. A: ja omdat ze
5. *yes because she*
6. *well because she*
7. A: die heeft het ook altijd wel moeilijk om moeite om snel tot
8. *that one has it also always PART difficult to difficulty to quickly to*
9. *she has a hard time to a hard time to quickly*
10. A: bijvoorbeeld de clou te komen zullen we maar zeggen
11. *for example the point to come shall we say*
12. *get to the point shall we say*

In Example 14, A discusses her friend's storytelling abilities. In line 1, she mitigates her criticisms saying she and her friends 'do not make a big fuss about it'. In line 4, she then starts to elaborate giving a reason why they do not mind: some of them share her disability to swiftly deliver a punch line. However, after having produced only a single word (*ze*, "she") A halts and produces a re-start. She changes from the pronoun to a deictic marker (*ze*/"she" becomes *die*/"that one") and then she produces the rest of the account, repairing her contribution along the way (*moeilijk*/"difficult" becomes *moeite*/"difficulty"). This shows that also sequentially and in terms of planning these clauses seem to be less tightly connected to the foregoing clause. Please take a look at Example 15.

Example 15.

1. A: ja maakt van zichzelf een grap omdat ie dus uh
2. *yeah makes of himself a joke because he so eh*
3. *yeah he makes a joke of himself because he eh*
4. A: ja hij doet allerlei dingen uh dat ie niet meer meetelt

5. *yeah he does all kinds of things that he not anymore counts*
6. *yeah does all kinds of things that set him apart*
7. A: *in de maatschappij*
8. *in the society*
9. *from society*

In line 1, A gives a very strongly put evaluation of one of her friends: he is making a joke of himself. The subsequent justification of this appraisal seems to be planned because it is produced in a single intonation contour. However, after just a few words the production of the turn halts and A formulates a repair (noticeably a restart) which also shows disfluencies and is repaired along the way.

One might even argue that these cases are not examples of *omdat*-clauses with main clause word order at all. In this view, A selects a construction format in line 1 to elaborate her story. After a short pause, however, she stops this construction (projected by *omdat*) and starts a *new* construction with main clause word order. Although this clearly would be a preferable view (since we do not need to assume a different construction) we will argue that the relative frequency of the construction and most notably the occurrence of a large set of examples without such disfluencies make this analysis less likely. Please take a look at Example 16.

Example 16.

1. A: *nou dat zou ook gebeuren maar toen werd 't een*
2. *well that would also happen but then became it a*
3. *well that was what was supposed to happen but then it became an*
4. A: *organisatorisch probleem omdat de ene werd ziek*
5. *organizational problem because the one became ill*
6. *organizational problem because one fell ill*
7. A: *die dat zou doen die dat zou doen de ander de werd*
8. *who that would do who that would do the other the became*
9. *who would do that and the other was the other was*
10. A: *overspannen*
11. *overworked*
12. *overworked*

In Example 16 the *omdat*-clause is realized in a context where there is some planning problem, but here the problems only occur at a first possible completion point *after* the *omdat*-clause. In this example, A talks about an organizational problem at the school he works at. A planned event was canceled because the person responsible for the planning fell ill and his substitute had a mental breakdown. The reason for the problem is stated in line 2 and is realized as an *omdat*-clause with main clause word order. Again the production of this clause is very disfluent. However, as we stated earlier the disfluency here occurs after a first possible completion point has been reached. This suggests that the disfluencies are not so much related to the *omdat*-clause.

This example is also typical in another sense. In this example, the stretch of talk after the *omdat* is not a single clause, but a set of clauses. The *omdat* here seems

to function as a connector between a statement (*toen werd 't een organisatorisch probleem*, “then it became an organizational problem”) and two other statements (*de ene werd ziek*”one became ill” and *de ander werd overspannen*”the other became overworked”) . Interestingly, only both clauses *together* are responsible for the problem (if only one of them were ill, the other could take over). Thus, *omdat* connects a statement with two arguments that together justify the first assessment. This seems to suggest that in these contexts *omdat* links discourse units rather than clauses. This very interesting phenomenon is not restricted to this single case (n=12). In these cases, *omdat* seems to establish an even looser relation between two text parts in comparison to simple clause combining. *Omdat* seems to function as a *text connective* in these instances. The loose connection not only shows in lack of planning and the resulting production errors. In these examples, *omdat* connects a single clause with a combination of clauses (most frequently a coordinated structure) or even chunks of text. As a result, *omdat* seems to function more as a discourse marker (Schiffrin 1986, 1987).

Please take a look at Example 17.

Example 17.

1. A: hoe weet je dat?
2. *how know you that*
3. *how do you know?*
4. B: omdat ik een keertje toen was het op
5. *because I once then was it out*
6. *because I once asked when we were out*
7. B: en toen ging ik vragen
8. *and then went I ask*
9. *and then I asked*
10. B: is er nog chocomel?
11. *is there still chocolate milk*
12. *is there still any chocolate milk left?*

In Example 17, A and B discuss the assortment of the school cafeteria, most notably the absence of one particular beverage (*chocomel*, “chocolate milk”). In line 1, A asks B how she knows that the cafeteria does not serve this particular drink. In lines 4 through 10, B answers the question by telling an anecdote: she once asked whether the cafeteria still had some and they told her that they do not sell *chocomel* at all. In this example, the *omdat* connects the whole telling with A’s question in line 1.

Please take a look at Example 18.

Example 18.

1. A: dat gaat niet zo goed dan
2. *that goes not so well then*
3. *that is not going well then*
4. B: ja precies
5. *yeah exactly*

6. *yeah exactly*
7. C: *'t komt ook wel omdat zeg maar twee mensen staan*
8. *it comes also PART because say but-PART two people stand*
9. *it is also because like two people are standing*
10. C: *dan naast oma te praten en van de rest krijgt ze toch niets mee*
11. *then next grandmother to talk and of the rest get's she get's PART
nothing V*
12. *next to grandmother and she doesn't understand the rest*

In Example 18, A, B and C are planning a family dinner and they discuss their grandmother's role in this event. In line 1, A claims that in the past their grandmother did not particularly like these get-togethers. B agrees in line 4. In line 7, C gives a reason for this lack of success. This reason is produced as a conjunction of two main clauses and linked to the foregoing clause by *omdat*.

These examples show that *omdat*-clauses with main clause word order are in various ways less tightly connected to the foregoing clause. Figure 11 gives the results for the whole set of *omdat*-clauses with main clause word order (n = 43):

Figure 11.

Sequential make-up ¹⁶	
Repair/restart/disfluencies	15
Conjunction/discourse marker	12
Rest	16
Total	43

Figure 11 shows that *omdat*-clauses with main clause word order occur in situations where the relationship between the clauses is in some way or other less tight compared to other kinds of clause combining. One could take this as an argument that this usage of *omdat* is in fact an error. Speakers select a causal construction as a continuation of their interaction (an *omdat*-construction), but rather than continue with a subordinate clause they abandon this project and restart and produce a clause with main clause word order. Or they find out that the projected continuation consists of multiple clauses that only together constitute the relationship and thus opt for a coordination of main clauses. This, however, does not explain the other cases (16 in total; 37 percent) where the *omdat*-clauses are produced without any indication of trouble. There the main clause word order cannot be attributed to these factors. Furthermore, we will argue the whole set of *omdat*-constructions can functionally be described as a homogeneous set that sets them apart from *omdat*-

¹⁶ Here I treat these two categories as disjunct sets. This is of course not the case. In the cases where *omdat* connects a main clause with multiple other main clauses disfluencies can appear. However, our primary argument is that these clauses are less tightly connected to the foregoing materials than typical connectives. Since the conjunction/discourse marker is a stronger set we only counted disfluencies in the rest of the materials.

constructions with subordinate clause structure. This also seems to suggest that these constructions are not just the result of planning errors. To this functional characterization we will turn in the following paragraph.

2.5.3. A semantic characterization

In Chapter I of Part III of our study we discussed the semantic function of *omdat*-clauses in the right periphery in terms of the domain theory of Sweetser (1990). We found a correlation between the prosodic realization of these clauses and their semantic content. *Omdat*-clauses that function in the content domain are produced with an integrated intonation contour (no declination reset), whereas *omdat*-clauses in the epistemic and the speech-act domain are realized in an intonation unit of their own (with declination reset). This suggests that there is a relation between prosodic integration of the two clauses, on the one hand, and semantic meaning, on the other hand. We argued that the semantic difference in these cases could also be seen as a difference in integration. In the content domain, *omdat* connects two propositions that are connected in reality in a causal manner. Event A causes event B in a direct way. In the epistemic and the content domain, the relation is looser in the sense that it is a *consciousness* that relates the two clauses. This can be in the form of an inference (epistemic) or in the form of an account for an interactional action (speech act relation).

In the case of *omdat* clauses with main clause word order one expects to find more indirect relations. If the syntactic structure reflects the relation type, one expects that syntactic integration (subordination) and syntactic independence (coordination) correlate with the different relation types. This is the case in German (Günthner 1996). This expectation is, however, only partially born out by our Dutch data as is shown in Figure 12:

Figure 12. *Omdat*-clauses with main clause word order by relation type

Domain	
Content	11 (26 %)
Epistemic	30 (70 %)
Speech act	2 (4 %)
Total	43 (100 %)

When we look at table 12 some trends become clear. There is a clear relation between main clause *omdat*-constructions and indirect relations ($X^2=10.26$, $p=.0014$). This is on par with the findings for German. When we look at all three relation-types it is also clear that there is relation between relation type and these constructions ($X^2=28.68$, $p<.001$). Epistemic relations are the most frequent. However, still a substantial part of the *omdat*-clauses with main clause word order constitute content relations (26 percent). Example 19 gives an example.

Example 19.

1. A: we stonden niet echt op de helling
2. *we stood not really on the slope*
3. *we did not stand on the slope*
4. A: omdat we waren iets te laat
5. *because we were a bit too late*
6. *because we were late*
7. A: en de weg was al afgezet
8. *and the road was already blocked*
9. *and the road was already blocked*

In Example 19, A talks about an outdoors cycling event she visited with a friend the other day. They planned to watch this event from a nearby hill for maximum visibility. This plan, however, was frustrated by their tardy arrival: the road to the hill was already blocked. The causality here is clearly located in the content domain: the fact that they could not stand on the slope is a direct result from the fact that they were a bit late.¹⁷ Please take a look at Example 20.

Example 20.

1. A: daardoor ging ook die laatste keer niet door
2. *because of that went also that last time not through*
3. *because of that the last one was cancelled*
4. (0.4)
5. A: omdat Piet had z'n schoenen vergeten en m'ne:h e:h
6. *because Piet had his shoes forgot and eh eh*
7. *because Piet had forgotten his shoes and eh eh*
8. C: mijn schoenen pasten waren natuurlijk te klein
9. *my shoes fit were of course too small*
10. *my shoes fit were too small of course*

In Example 20, a group of friends discuss their weekly soccer match in an amateur competition. A soccer match requires a minimal number of players for each team and this particular team had some trouble in rallying up enough people on different occasions. As a result they lost these matches without even playing. Here they discuss why the last match was cancelled: although they had enough players, Piet forgot his shoes and was not able to play. The causality in this example is clearly situated in the real world content domain. The fact that Piet forgot his shoes is the direct cause for the fact that the match was cancelled.

¹⁷ Also note the fact that here and in fragment 17 *omdat* combines a main clause with two other clauses that together form the second part of the relation.

This shows that, different from the situation in German, *omdat*-clauses with main clause word order are used to express content relations. We could still argue that these clauses are less integrated with the main clause than structures that do not exhibit verb second, but this loose connection only shows in:

1. lack of planning (hesitations and pauses)
2. their prosodic make-up (declination reset) and
3. their pragmatic function (they act more like a discourse marker connecting multiple clauses to the foregoing clause)

Semantically they still express real world causality. One could argue that this is in fact an argument that we are dealing with language change. Maybe the change of *weil* is further developed than the change of *omdat*. This is supported by the fact that *weil* with main clause word order has been frequently described in the literature, whereas the Dutch equivalent (to the best of my knowledge), has not been analyzed as a serious alternative of the main clause word order. In that case, we could consider the German situation as the next step in the evolution of *omdat*. In the absence of diachronic data we will remain agnostic on this point here.

Nevertheless, our corpus does contain a clear trend: the majority of *omdat*-clauses with verb second express epistemic relations. Please take a look at Example 21.¹⁸

Example 21.

1. A: ik vind het een beetje jammer omdat omdat gggg
2. *I find it a bit pity because because*
3. *I find it a pity because because*
4. A: hetzelfde argument dat voor ons geldt
5. *the same argument that for us holds*
6. *the same argument that holds for us*
7. A: geldt natuurlijk ook voor jullie
8. *holds of course also for you*
9. *holds for you, of course*

Example 21 is taken from a larger dispute between two colleagues. A disagrees with the current situation because she feels her department is not treated as an equal of B's group. In line 1, she expresses her discontent and in the following line she gives an argument supporting her conclusions: the same reasons that are applied to her situation are also applicable to B. This sequence is best analyzed as an opinion

¹⁸ This fragment is also interesting from a syntactic point of view. Although the second conjunct consists of one clause, the subject of this clause is modified by a clausal adjunct. This is different from the coordination examples we saw earlier, but it is interesting to note that here again the second conjunct of the *omdat* construction consists of a complex clause.

followed by an argument: A states the reason why she is disappointed. No real world causality is involved.

Please take a look at Example 22.

Example 22.

1. A: maar dat is eigenlijk ook voor een deel zijn eigen schuld
2. *but that is actually also for a part his own fault*
3. *but in a way it is also partly his own fault*
4. A: omdat hij had dat natuurlijk niet hoeven doen
5. *because he had that of course not have to do*
6. *because nobody forced him to do that*

In Example 22, A and B are having an argument about C (who is not present). In line 1, A (who up to that point had been defending C) concedes that C also should take part of the blame. In line 4, she gives a reason for this claim: no one forced his actions upon him. It is clear that A's contribution gives an argument for the foregoing clause and thus functions in the epistemic domain.

Another difference with the German situation is the lack of speech-act relations in our *omdat*-corpus. However, this seems to be a characteristic of our corpus: speech act-relations are relatively rare in our data in contexts where connectives are used. Speech act relations very often are not marked. This may be a result of the sort of speech events we recorded (dinner conversations, family meetings, friends having a drink together, et cetera.) It might be the case that marked speech act relations only occur in specific settings or specific activity types. Of course it might also be the case that speech act relations are not very often marked by a connective in Dutch informal interactions. In the absence of more data, we cannot draw any conclusions. Example 23 however, gives an example of a speech-act relation marked by *omdat* with main clause word order

Example 23.

1. A: ga jij nog naar de winkel ,omdat e:h,
2. *go you still-PART to the store because eh*
3. *are you going to the store because eh*
4. A: ik moet van[avond
5. *I have to ton[ight*
6. *tonight I have to*
7. B: [nee dat gaat ECHT niet
8. [*no that goes really not*
9. [*no that really is impossible*

Example 23 shows a conversation between a married couple. In line 1, A asks B if he is going to the store this evening. Although this could be taken to be a simple question, her continuation makes clear that actually it is the start of a request. She

would have gone, but she cannot go because she has a dress rehearsal from her drama class (as is clear from the rest of this example).¹⁹ Also, B's response makes it clear that he interprets A's utterance as a request. His response is not factual (he is not going to the store), but he gives a reason why he cannot go. That this is indeed the interactional context is also clear from the fact that A then goes on to recruit her son for this particular task. A's utterance in line 4 is thus a clear reason for her request in line 1. The reasons she asked B to go to the store is because she has other plans herself. This clearly is a speech act relation, marked by *omdat* with main clause word order.

In this paragraph, we looked at the semantic characterization of *omdat*-clauses with main clause word order. We showed a clear relationship between the syntactic make-up of *omdat*-clauses and the semantic interpretation of their content. There is a clear trend that *omdat*-clauses with main clause word order indicate indirect relations. However, this was only a trend. The picture was less clear than in German. A relatively large subset (26 percent) of this construction also showed content relations. Furthermore, we showed that in our corpus speech act relations marked with this construction are very rare. In the next paragraph, we will take a look at the prosodic realization of this particular construction.

2.5.4. Prosodic realization of *omdat*-clauses with main word order

In this paragraph, we will take a look at the prosodic realization of *omdat*-clauses with main clause word order. We already showed that *omdat*-clauses with main clause word order are more loosely connected to the foregoing clause than *omdat*-clauses with subordinate clause word order. The syntactic integration, or lack thereof, was mirrored both in the sequential context of these constructions and in the meaning of the relations between the conjuncts. Here our main goal is a description of the prosodic realization of this construction. Building on our earlier expectations, we expect to find that *omdat*-clauses are produced in an intonation contour of their own. Thus we expect that prosody will mirror the loose relation between the two conjuncts.

However, looking at the results in Günthner (1996) there might also be a caveat: in German almost all content relations are realized with integrative syntax. Also, these structures were realized in a single intonation contour. That is, the *weil*-clause was also prosodically integrated.²⁰ The picture for Dutch was not so clear. We also found main clause syntax with content relations. This raises the interesting question whether the prosodic make-up of these clauses mirrors the semantic/pragmatic units or the syntactic packaging of these constructions. In the first case, one would expect that *omdat*-clauses that constitute content relations are prosodically integrated. In the second case, one would expect that the prosodic make-up follows the syntax and thus that these constructions are realized in two distinct intonation contours.

¹⁹ Notice also that A's utterance is incomplete. So we cannot say anything about conjunction of multiple reasons in this particular case.

²⁰ As we pointed out earlier, Günthner (1996) does not give a quantitative analysis of her data.

So, we can add a second (weakening) clause to our expectations:

1. We expect that *omdat*-clauses with main clause word order are realized in an intonation contour of their own
2. However, if this construction is realized in a single intonation contour, we expect that the pragmatic/semantic relation will be a content relation.

Figure 13 gives the relevant results.

Figure 13. Prosodic realization of *omdat*-clauses with main clause word order by relation type

Domain	Integrated	Non integrated	Total
Content	4 (36%)	7 (64%)	11 (31 %)
Epistemic	2 (8%)	22 (92%)	24 (67 %)
Speech act	0 (0%)	1 (100%)	1 (2 %)
Total	4 (11%)	32 (89%)	36 (100 %)

There is no clear relation between relation type and prosodic realization ($\chi^2=4.47$, $p=0.107$). The first thing to notice is that the rank totals are not the same as in Figure 2. This is the result of some problems we encountered during the analysis of the materials. In some cases, it was not possible to decide whether or not the *omdat*-clause was prosodically integrated or not. We already showed that 34.8 percent of these *omdat*-clauses are produced with disfluencies, false starts, et cetera. This can be problematic for our analysis. Most of the time these fragments did not constitute a problem, because both the original start and the restart were produced with a declination reset. In these cases, we used the fragment in our analysis. However, in some cases the connective and the first start are produced without a declination reset, but after the disfluency or restart the unit was produced with a declination reset. Since it is impossible to determine how we should analyze these fragments, we excluded these fragments from this part of the study. Please take a look at Example 18, repeated here as Example 24.

Example 24.

1. A: ga jij nog naar de winkel ₀omdat e:h₀
2. go you still-PART to the store because eh
3. are you going to the store because eh
4. A: ik moet van[avond
5. I have to ton[ight

6. *tonight I have to*
7. B: [*nee dat gaat ECHT niet*
8. [*no that goes really not*
9. [*no that really is impossible*

In Example 24, the connective is produced without a declination reset. *Omdat* is part of the same intonation contour as the clause *ga jij nog naar de winkel* (“are you going to the store”). However, the *omdat* is realized in a special way: the prosody and the sequential context suggest that *omdat* is used as a trail-off. The connective is softer than the rest of the clause. There is no clear boundary tone and the intonation contour remains level. Also, the sequential context seems to suggest that B treats the clause in line 1 as potentially complete despite the projected continuation, because he produces his next turn at that particular point in overlap with the projected continuation. This continuation, however, *does* have a declination reset, and is produced in an intonation contour of its own. Since these cases are problematic (one could argue that the clause and the connective are not part of the same structure) we did not take these into account in our analysis.

Another problem occurred in cases where *omdat* combines a single clause with a number of other clauses. Sometimes the first clause of the second conjunct was prosodically integrated, but the other conjuncts were added in intonation contours of their own. The opposite also occurred: the multiple clauses of the second conjunct were realized in a single intonation contour, but the first clause was prosodically set apart. In these cases, we coded the fragment based on the first clause of the second conjunct. That is, the prosody of the clause that contained the *omdat* was decisive. This makes sense because this is the clause that establishes the relation. Interestingly, it turned out that the prosody mirrored the text structure quite faithfully in almost all cases. If the clauses that established the second conjunct were additive (that is, each of these clauses could by itself have established the relationship) they were realized in multiple intonation contours. If, however, the clauses were all obligatory (for example, if only together they fulfill the necessary conditions for an inference), they are realized in a single intonation contour.

When we take a look at the data in Figure 3 in a different way, a clear picture emerges with respect to the prosodic integration of *omdat*-clauses ($X^2=21.78$, $p<.001$). The vast majority (89 percent) of the *omdat*-clauses are realized in an independent intonation contour. This means that prosody seems to mirror the independent syntax of this particular construction. In our corpus, there is no clear relation between relation type and prosodic realization. Content relations are more often realized in the same intonation contour as the main clause than the other relations, but even here the majority of the *omdat*-clauses have an intonation contour of their own. One could argue that content relations are more likely to be prosodically integrated, but this trend is not significant.

Chapter 3 : Phrasal SSCs

3.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter, we looked at clausal SSCs. In this chapter, we will take a closer look at phrasal SSCs. Our goals in this chapter are the same as in the foregoing chapter. First, we will try to show that these phrasal SSCs have a specific interactional function. They provide hearers with a new transition relevant place in sequential contexts where preferred responses are absent. As such they provide additional evidence for our definition of turns-at-talk as tripartite structures. This is the qualitative goal of this chapter. Second, we want to study the interplay between prosodic and syntactic units in the packaging of turns-at-talk. We showed that syntactic integration (coordination versus subordination) correlates with the pragmatic/semantic meaning of interactional units. We also showed that the prosodic realization of these units correlates with the pragmatic and semantic function of these units. In this chapter, we will study the prosodic and syntactic packaging of phrasal units.

The fragments we will be exploring are a subset of what Schegloff (1996) terms *increments*: constituents that are added to turns which, at a just prior point, are interpretable as possibly complete syntactically and prosodically and as possibly complete actions in a local interactional sequence (cited in: Ford and Thompson 1996, also: Tanaka 1999, Tao 1992, 1996; Couper-Kuhlen & Ono 2007a; Ford 2001,2004). Following FFT (2002) we will define an increment as a non-main clause continuation after a possible completion point. In this chapter, we will focus on a specific subset: non-clausal increments. In Dutch, these elements may take on a great variety of phrasal categories and can be used in a variety of linguistic functions:

Example 1.

- 1 A: ze hebben niet betaald (.) een enorm probleem
they have not payed (.) a big problem
they did not pay (.) a huge problem
- 2 A: ik heb gekampeerd (.) in de Ardennen
I have camped (.) in the Ardennen
I have camped (.) in the Ardennen
- 3 A: hij likt altijd aan zijn pootje (.) heel lief
he licks always at his paw (.) very sweet
he always licks his paw (.) very sweet
- 4 A: dat zou ik niet doen (.) nooit
that would I not do (.) never
I would not do that (.) ever

In Example 1 above, the increments are realized as a noun phrase, a prepositional phrase, an adjectival phrase, and an adverb respectively. It is surprising to see that all these increments take the form of traditional constituents (for example, verb

phrases are absent in this particular slot). As was pointed out by Langacker (1999), language groups elements both in the conceptual and the phonological domain.¹ However, the borders of these groups do not always coincide. A stretch may be partitioned differently in the syntactical, the prosodic and the conceptual domain. Classical constituents are those structures where these various groupings *do* align. They are the prototypical building blocks of a language. As a first generalization we can conclude that increments, preferably, take the form of these prototypical building blocks in which the alignment of syntactic, prosodic and conceptual structure is complete.

With respect to the ways in which constituents emerge as portions of material in larger units we can distinguish two kinds of increments. The first class consists of increments that are interpretable as continuations of the immediately prior possibly complete turn. That is, they can be heard as syntactically and semantically coherent with what has come before. These I will call extensions. Please take a look at Example 2.

Example 2.

- 1 A: toen ik daarna weer weg liep van e:h
- 2 *when I afterwards again walked away from eh*
- 3 *afterwards when I walked away from eh*
- 4 A: van de dierenwinkel met mijn penning
- 5 *from the pet shop with my badge*
- 6 *from the pet shop with my badge*
- 7 A: ware paar jongetjes achter me
- 8 *were some boys behind me*
- 9 *some little boys behind me were*
- 10 A: echt jongetjes van tien elf jaar
- 11 *really little boys of ten eleven years*
- 12 *really they could not have been older than ten eleven years old*
- 13 A: die ware =
- 14 *they were*
- 15 *they were*
- 16 A: =aan het prate over waar de beste dealer wohonde
- 17 = *talking about where the best dealer lived*
- 18 = *talking about where the best dealer lived*
- 19 A: [lachen] (1.0)
- 20 [*laughter*]
- 21 A: in de rivierenwijk
- 22 *in the rivierenwijk (city district)*
- 23 *in the rivierenwijk (city district)*

¹ For a detailed discussion see Part I Chapter 3.

In Example 2, the extension is in line 21. In line 16, A comes to a point of possible completion after *wohonde* (“lived”). At this juncture, the utterance is hearable as complete syntactically, prosodically, and pragmatically. However, after a short stretch of laughter by A and a pause, A continues. Interestingly, she chooses to do so with a stretch of speech that can be heard as a syntactic continuation of the foregoing clause. The prepositional phrase *in de rivierenwijk* (“in the rivierenwijk”) can be interpreted as an adverbial continuation of *die ware aan het prate over waar de beste dealer wohonde* (“they were talking about where the best dealer lived”). The adverbial modifier takes the form of a prepositional phrase. In retrospect, the whole fragment can be analyzed as a single structure. The laughter that could be seen as a signal for turn completion, can now be treated as an interjection into a single clause.

In sequences containing the second kind of increment the speaker also comes to a point of possible completion and then speaks again. However, in this case what is added cannot be interpreted as a constituent of the foregoing stretch of talk. A number of syntactic categories can occur in this position, but here I will focus on one particular type: unattachable noun phrases (Ono and Thompson 1994, Helasvuo 1995, Tao 1996). Consider the following example:

Example 3.

- 1 D: kunnen we ook fijn homo’s gaan kijken
- 2 *can we also great gay people go watch*
- 3 *can we also look at gay people*
- 4 D: [lachen]
- 5 [*Laughter*]
- 6 D: ranzige bezigheid
- 7 *rancid business*
- 8 *rancid business*

In Example 3, line 1, D comes to a point of possible completion syntactically, prosodically and pragmatically. After some laughter and a pause he adds an increment. Rather than being a syntactic continuation of the prior clause the increment is unattachable. The noun phrase *ranzige bezigheid* (“rancid business”) cannot be analyzed as a part of the foregoing clause. The structure of the clause in line 1 does not provide a slot for the increment in line 3. Table 1 gives the respective frequencies of the two sorts of increments:

Table 1. Increments by syntactic type

Increments	Total
Attachable (extensions)	104 (85 %)
Non-attachable	17 (15 %)
Total	121 (100 %)

Table 1 shows that the attachable increments are much more frequent. Why this should be the case is not self-evident. This question will be taken up later in this chapter. Having partitioned the set of increments in the grammatical domain, the question then becomes whether or not there is a functional difference mirroring this formal difference. That is, can we show that participants use and orient to these two kinds of increments in radically different ways? This is the topic of the next section.

3.2. *The relation between increments and turns*

In this section, we explore the pragmatic status of the two kinds of increments. Ford, Fox and Thompson (1999) and Helasvuo (2001) stress the iconicity of the different sorts of increments. A parallel is suggested between the syntactic make-up of the clause and the functional interpretation of this stretch of speech in its sequential context. The relevant feature is the presence or absence of a *part-of-relation*. In the domain of syntax, this relation is defined in the form of constituent structure. In the domain of pragmatics, it is defined in terms of turns. The extension-format is then taken as constituting a continuation of the foregoing unit whereas the unattached materials are analyzed as independent turns.

As continuations, extensions create a renewed point of possible completion without producing a new turn. In this view, the part-of-relation in the domain of pragmatics (the whole structure constitutes one single turn) is mirrored in the domain of syntax: the extension is interpretable (in retrospect) as a constituent, and as such a continuation, of the foregoing clause. This opens the possibility of a post hoc analysis in which the foregoing possible completion point is interpreted as a lapse in the production of a larger clause. The possible completion is, in retrospect, reanalyzed as a turn internal pause. Please have another look at Example 2 (repeated here as Example 4):

Example 4.

- 1 A: Toen ik daarna weer wegliep van e:h
- 2 *when I afterwards again walked away from eh*
- 3 *afterwards when I walked away from eh*
- 4 A: van de dierenwinkel met mijn penning
- 5 *from the pet shop with my badge*
- 6 *from the pet shop with my badge*
- 7 A: ware paar jongetjes achter me
- 8 *were some boys behind me*
- 9 *some little boys behind me were*
- 10 A: echt jongetjes van tien ellef jaar
- 11 *really little boys of ten eleven years*
- 12 *really the could not have been older than ten eleven years old*
- 13 A: die ware =
- 14 *they were*
- 15 *they were*

- 16 A: =aan het prate over waar de beste dealer wohonde
17 = *talking about where the best dealer lived*
18 = *talking about where the best dealer lived*
19 A: [lachen] (1.0)
20 [laughter]
21 A: in de rivierenwijk
22 *in the rivierenwijk (city district)*
in the rivierenwijk (city district)

In line 16, A's turn reaches a point of possible completion. Line 16 is the climax of a rather extensive telling. The rendering of the last words of the clause in line 6 with laughter seems to suggest that the preferred continuation of this sequence is some sort of acknowledgement of the prior telling by the other participants. However, no such acknowledgement is given and A produces another stretch of speech: *in de rivierenwijk* ("in the rivierenwijk"). This extension allows for a post hoc analysis in which it is treated as a part of the prior clause. As such, one could argue, it redefines the prior possible completion point as a lapse in the production of a larger clause. Thus in a sense *deleting* the transition relevant place. In realizing the increment as an extension (a grammatical continuation), A allows for the treatment of the sequence as a single turn. The possibility of integration in the interpretation structure of the foregoing clause coincides with the interpretation of the clause and the extensions as constituting a single turn. An extension not only provides a new possible completion point, it also *redefines* the prior transition relevant place as a turn internal pause. In retrospect, the prior clause and the increment are treated as a single turn.

In contrast, unattached materials do not allow for an analysis in which they are interpreted as a part of the foregoing clause. As such they constitute a new action. Unattachable materials do provide another possible completion point and as such a new opportunity for the preferred response, but they realize this objective *at the cost* of a new turn. The prior transition relevant place still stands. FFT give the following description:

"In our data, unattached NP increments embody the performance of a new action, one of assessing and stance-taking towards a referent. Even if the possibly complete prior turn is an assessment, and the Unattached NP may in some sense do the same action, it is nonetheless presented as a further assessment rather than as a continuation. (Ford, Fox & Thompson 2002, p. 30)"

However, in order for such an approach to work one needs an independent notion of what constitutes an action. At the very least this notion should not be related to notions like TCUs or turns or other notions that play a role in the determination of what constitutes an increment.

In order to side-step this problem we looked at a symptom (operationalization) of turns: they can be taken up as topic for further talk. We would then expect to find that the portion of unattachable phrases that is taken up as

further topic of talk is larger than the number of extensions that are treated in this manner.

This kind of hypothesis has a number of drawbacks, the most important one is the lack of a one-to-one correspondence between the presence of a possible topic and the uptake of this topic by one of the participants. Another drawback is the underlying assumption that we can determine unequivocally in any given sequential context which part of a prior utterance is taken up by the next speaker. Having said this, we still found that this approach works as an operationalization of *actionhood* in most cases, and that at least it gives us a quantitative handle on this slippery subject in other approaches. This expectation was only partly born out by our data. Please take a look at Table 2.

Table 2.

Increments	Topical	Non topical	Total
Attachable	38	66	104
Non-attachable	14	3	17
Total	52	69	121

As can be read from Table 2, the number of uptakes of the lexical/conceptual content of unattached phrases is significantly higher than the number of uptakes after extensions ($X^2=12.5$, $p<.001$). However, there are still quite a substantial number of extensions that are taken up as further topic of talk. Example 5 is a case in point:

Example 5.

- 1 A: ze rijden hier altijd met scooters in de straat
- 2 *they drive here always with scooters in the street*
- 3 *they always drive their scooters here in the street*
- 4 (.)
- 5 A: met zestig kilometer per uur
- 6 *with sixty kilometers per hour*
- 7 *with sixty kilometers per hour*
- 8 B: pfff belachelijk
- 9 *pfff ridiculous*
- 10 *pfff ridiculous*
- 11 B: bij ons in de straat rijden ze ook al zo hard
- 12 *near us in the street drive they also so fast*
- 13 *in our street they also drive very fast*

In line 5, A produces an extension. The prepositional phrase *met zestig kilometer per uur* (“with sixty kilometers per hour”) is attachable to the interpretation structure of the foregoing clause. However, B’s response in lines 3 and 4 is directed towards this extension, rather than towards the content of the main clause.

This raises questions about our division of the class of increments.

Extensions are defined on the basis of their grammatical make-up. However, the grammatical status of an increment does not seem to be a good indicator of its pragmatic status. Grammatical incorporation (constituency) is a sufficient condition for a stretch of talk to be classified as an extension. This means that NPs can be extensions, but it is impossible (at least in Dutch) for a PP to be classified as *unattached*. This is a crucial a-symmetry in our definition. Every syntactically integrated increment is an extension, but not every NP occurring in the right periphery is analyzed as an unattached NP. This allows us to correctly classify NPs that function as adverbial phrases like *these days* as extensions. But it also hints at the possibility that it is not so much the grammatical form (NP versus PP) of a stretch of talk, but the conceptual/semantic/pragmatic relation (time and place versus manner) it maintains with the prior material that constitutes its discourse status.

Our data suggest that on a textual level some extensions group more readily with unattachable materials than with other extensions, in the sense that they are taken up as topic for further talk. Some explanatory remarks are in order. The notion increment is defined in two distinct linguistic strata. First, it is defined in terms of the sequential environment: an increment must, by definition, follow a possible completion point. Second, an increment syntactically constitutes a fragment (a non-main clause constituent). The further distinction between unattachable materials and extensions is also based on syntactic criteria. When we group the various increments together on the basis of the criterion whether or not they constitute a turn on their own we see that there is no one-to-one mapping from the division in the ‘action domain’ to the two classes of increments. Although non-actions are always realized as extensions, actions can be realized both as extensions and as unattachable materials.^{2,3} So, the mirroring of the sequential status of an increment in its syntactic make-up, as argued for English in Ford, Fox and Thompson (1999), seems to be absent in Dutch.

However, the relation between syntax and sequential interpretation is not arbitrary. There is a conditional relationship between the syntactic realization of an increment as unattached and its sequential interpretation as a *non-action*. We can formulate the relationship as follows:

1. The syntactic realization of an increment as an extension is a *necessary but not a sufficient condition* for its sequential interpretation as a continuation of the prior action.

² Operationalized in terms of being able to function as a starting point for further talk

³ There are three counterexamples to this claim (see Table 2). This, however, is easily explained by the way we use the notion ‘action’

2. The syntactic realization of an increment as unattachable is a *sufficient but not a necessary* condition for the interpretation of an increment as constituting an independent action.

It seems that unattachable materials are more discriminatory with respect to their discourse status than extensions. This suggests that syntax (more specifically the ‘part of’-relation: constituency) *does* play an important role in the interpretation of speech in its sequential context. However, the data seem to suggest that it is the *absence* of a part-whole relation that is oriented to by the participants. Semantically and syntactically this makes perfect sense. The absence of a part-whole relation constitutes a thematic and syntactic breach. This is mirrored in the sequential interpretation of the increment. The inability to incorporate the foregoing clause and the increment in a post hoc fashion forces the participants to treat the increment as a separate turn. The presence of a part-whole relation, on the other hand, does not allow for similar implications. Languages provide ways in which multiple actions can be integrated in a single structure. Although the most viable form for such an endeavor is clause combining, the relation between clauses and actions may very well be less than perfect.

This raises the interesting question what sorts of increments typically constitute independent actions. A survey of our data suggests that this action/non-action dichotomy within the class of extensions is closely linked to the semantic role of the constituent in the clause. The vast majority of the extensions taken up as topic for further talk introduce participants of the action expressed by the verb, or they are linked more closely to the predication expressed by the clause. They directly modify the process denoted by the verb. Metaphorically, one could say that these extensions force the hearer to “break open” the interpretation structure of the foregoing clause. They are forced to reanalyze the conceptual structure of the foregoing clause. The meaning of the extension cannot be combined with the, already constructed, completed meaning. This sets this class apart from, for example, temporal adjuncts like *yesterday* that can be added as modifications of an already constructed meaning.

In summary, we have seen that syntax does seem to constitute member categories in the sense that the realization of a fragment as unattached material often coincides with the interpretation of that increment as constituting an action of its own. The possibility of a post hoc analysis of the fragment as part of the foregoing clause, on the other hand, does not give rise to any implications concerning the discourse status of that fragment. We also saw that this dichotomy in the class of extensions coincides with the semantic interpretation of the extension. We showed that a number of thematic roles are, more often than not, interpreted as constituting independent actions. In the next section, we will give additional evidence for this analysis in the prosodic domain.

3.3. Prosody

Having analyzed the relationship between the syntactic status of the increments and their pragmatic function in terms of action, we now turn to the prosodic domain. In particular we are interested in the following question:

Does the prosodic make-up of increments mirror their syntactic status, or does it reflect the discourse status of the increment?

In this section, I will argue that the dichotomy in the class of extensions is mirrored in the prosodic realization of these elements. All ‘topical’ extensions share prosodic characteristics with unattached materials, whereas ‘non-topical’ extensions have a different prosodic make-up. Please take a look at the extension in Example 5 (repeated here as Example 6).

Example 6.

- 1 A: ze rijden hier altijd met scooters in de straat
- 2 *they drive here always with scooters in the street*
- 3 *they always drive their scooters here in the street*
- 4 (.)
- 5 A: met zestig kilometer per uur
- 6 *with sixty kilometers per hour*
- 7 *with sixty kilometers per hour*
- 8 B: pfff belachelijk
- 9 *pfff ridiculous*
- 10 *pfff ridiculous*
- 11 B: bij ons in de straat rijden ze ook al zo hard
- 12 *near us in the street drive they also so fast*
- 13 *in our street they also drive very fast*

After a longer story, A comes to a point of possible completion in line 1. After a short pause in which none of the participants take the floor, A continues with an increment in line 5. This increment (*met zestig kilometer per uur*, “with sixty kilometers per hour”) constitutes an extension. It is a PP that can be analyzed as a grammatical continuation of the foregoing clause. Semantically, this prepositional phrase gives a further specification of the speed of the scooters. As such it is best analyzed as a modifier of the verb. The PP modifies the driving as such, rather than the driving through the streets by the young boys. In lines 8 and 11, B responds. Her response is best analyzed as oriented towards the exaggerated description delivered by the increment. B does not react to the fact that these boys are driving their scooters in the street, but she reacts to the speed with which these boys drive their scooters in the street. B does not react to the clause in line 1, but to the increment in line 5. This suggests that the extension must be analyzed as an independent action with its own interactional content and function.

Prosodically the extension is realized as a separate intonation unit. The prosodic make-up has all the characteristics of a prototypical intonation unit:

1. It follows a pause
2. It starts with an upstep (declination reset)
3. It starts with a spurt of faster syllables
4. It contains a pitch accent.

We can further observe that the extension has a wide pitch range and that it is rendered at the same volume as the foregoing clause.

In conclusion we can say that the sequential interpretation of the extension as an independent action is mirrored in its prosodic rendering. The extension is realized in an intonation unit of its own. From a functional perspective, the linguistic form of the extension is ambiguous. On the one hand, the syntax suggests that the fragment is a part of the foregoing clause. On the other hand, the prosodic structure sets it apart as a unit on its own. So, who wins? In such cases it makes sense to look at the sequential interpretation of the extension. In the case at hand, the sequential analysis seems to suggest that it is the prosodic make-up of the clause that is the crucial factor in the interpretation of this stretch of talk as an independent unit.⁴

In Example 6 we gave an example of a phrase that was analyzable as a continuation of the foregoing clause. Prosodically, however, it was realized as an independent unit. Interactionally, the increment functions as an action of its own and it was treated as the focus of the ongoing interaction. Example 7 gives an extension that does not constitute an independent action.

Example 7.

- 1 A: omdat ze heel e:h veel problemen hebben met hangjongeren
- 2 *because they a lot eh many problems have with youths loitering*
- 3 *because youths cause a lot of trouble loitering in the neighborhood*
- 4 A: in de rivierenwijk
- 5 *in the rivierenwijk (city district)*
- 6 *in the rivierenwijk (city district)*
- 7 B: ja ik heb het gelezen
- 8 *yeah I have it read*
- 9 *yeah I read about that*

The extension in line 4 has the form of a PP. Syntactically it could be analyzed, in retrospect, as a part of the foregoing clause. Semantically, it constitutes a locative argument. As such it can modify the whole clause. It takes the representation of the state of affairs expressed in line 1 and places it in a specific location. No reinterpretation of the foregoing clause is necessary. In fact, in traditional grammars these phrases are analyzed as sentence adverbs. In line 7, B takes the turn. Her contribution can only be interpreted as a response to the

⁴ However, we saw that the interpretation of these extensions is also dependent on the semantic contribution of these fragments.

information delivered by the main clause. The PP only recycles information that was already present in the foregoing interaction. A and B discuss a specific part of town. Of this specific location, A states that they have problems with young people who hang out on the streets, causing trouble. As such, the clause in line 1 gives another assessment of this particular place, which actually was the topic of the talk. The extension thus gives no new information that can be taken up in the rest of the conversation. In fact, the interaction continues with a discussion of these *hangjongeren* (“youths loitering in the neighborhood”) that are also causing trouble in other parts of town. This suggests that the extension is not treated as an independent action. Interestingly, the prosodic make-up of the extension mirrors the interactional status of this stretch of talk. Prosodically the increment is integrated in the foregoing intonation contour: it does not start with a declination reset. Here both prosody and grammar present the increment as a part of a bigger whole. This is consistent with the sequential interpretation of the extension as a contribution to a larger action.

In conclusion we can say that the ambiguity in the class of extensions, with respect to the sequential interpretation, is reflected in the prosodic domain. From this point on we will call extensions that constitute independent actions, and thus that are treated as independent units, *class I extensions*. Extensions that are used to elaborate a prior action are coined *class II extensions*. Syntactically, both classes are realized as continuations of the foregoing clause. Prosodically, however, they differ in the way they are realized. Class I extensions are produced in an intonation contour of their own (with a declination reset). Class II extensions are prosodically integrated in the foregoing clause. We also saw that semantically, class I and II extensions differ in their relationship to the foregoing clause. Class I extensions typically modify the predication of the foregoing clause. This forces hearers to alter their interpretation of the foregoing clause. Class II extensions do not alter the semantic/pragmatic interpretation of the foregoing clause. These extensions modify the representation as a whole. As a result, in the class of extension it is the prosodic make-up (which in turn mirrors the semantic function) of these extensions that signals the difference between the interactional meaning of these stretches of talk.

Up to this point we have shown that in the case of extension the interactional function of the increment as a unit and an action of its own is mirrored in its prosodic realization. This suggests that the prosodic realization of stretches of talk plays an important role in their interpretation as independent units. If this is the case we expect that unattachable phrasal SSCs are realized in an intonation contour of their own. This is indeed what we find, see Example 8.

Example 8.

- 1 A: later zag ik een aantal jongetjes
2 *later saw I a number of boys*
3 *later on I saw some boys*
4 A: met zand
5 *with sand*
6 *with sand*
7 A: was een losse tegel ofzo
8 *was a loose tile or something*
9 *there must have been a loose tile or something*
10 A: waren met zand aan het gooien naar de bus
11 *were with sand throwing at the bus*
12 *were throwing sand at the bus*
13 (1.0)
14 A: volle meppen za[nd
15 *full loads sand*
16 *loads of sand*
17 B: [belachelijk
18 [ridiculous
19 [ridiculous

In line 14, A realizes an increment. This increment takes the form of an NP and cannot be analyzed as a continuation of the foregoing clause. In the topological model of the clause of the ANS, this element would be analyzed as part of the RD-field. As such, it is not part of the clause per se. The NP *volle meppen zand* (“loads of sand”) modifies the NP in a prepositional object in the main clause. It does so by partial repetition. A reformulates this object by adding an adjective modifier. These boys not only threw sand at the bus, they threw large amounts of sand. Note that the relationship between this NP and the NP that it modifies is very loose. The modification was not projected by any pronoun or deictic element in the main clause. The increment can be analyzed as a new predication of one of the objects of the foregoing clause. Functionally, the increment creates a new transition relevant place at which the participant can place a reaction. Sequentially, the increment is treated as an action of its own. B’s reaction is oriented to the stronger stance taken in line 14. Prosodically, the increment is realized as an independent unit (with a declination reset).

From a functional perspective, it seems that unattachable materials have the same interactional function as class extensions. Both function as independent actions. Both are taken up as the new focus of the conversation. Yet, syntactically the packaging is very different. Unattachable materials cannot be analyzed as continuations of the foregoing clause (there is no part/whole relation) whereas class II increments are analyzable, post hoc, as continuations of the foregoing clause. This

means that the syntactic packaging of these increments cannot be responsible for their interactional function. Syntactic constituency does not determine the interpretation of the increment. The lack of syntactic part/whole relations seems to be a sufficient condition for the interpretation of the turn as an independent unit, but the presence of a part/whole relation is not a good predictor of the interactional function. This means that constituency only influences the interactional function in a negative way.

3.4. Conclusion

In this chapter, we looked at increments (phrasal SSCs after a possible completion point). We showed that functionally these increments occur in specific sequential contexts. They seem to be fitted to give participants another chance to produce a preferred reaction to the foregoing unit. They can do this in an interesting way: increments can extend the foregoing clause in such a way that the increment is hearable as a continuation of the foregoing unit. Post hoc it is analyzable as a constituent of the foregoing clause. Functionally, we could argue that these increments delete the foregoing possible completion point by extending the foregoing unit. However, not all increments are fitted that way. We also saw increments that are not analyzable as continuations of the foregoing unit. This raised the question whether or not these increments have a different interactional function. This brought us to our second goal of this chapter: a description of the ways in which prosody and syntax work together in the production of interactional units.

We started out by dividing the class of increments into two distinct categories based on a syntactic criterion. Increments that, in retrospect, can be analyzed as part of the foregoing clause, and increments that post hoc could not be analyzed as continuations of the foregoing syntactic structure. The first class we coined *extensions*, the second class we called *unattachable phrases*. Looking at the function of these classes we made two observations.

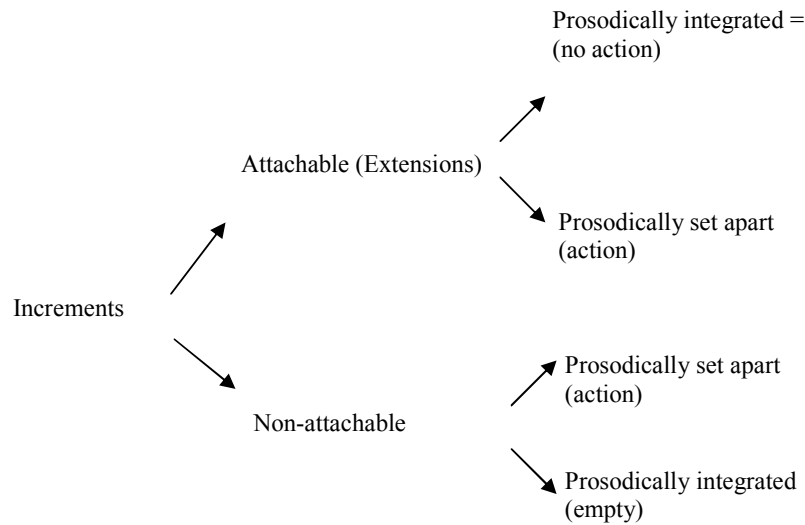
Unattachable phrases seemed to have a clear interactional function. They provided the hearers with a new transition relevant place, where they could place a preferred response to the foregoing telling. These phrases did this in a specific way: they added a new predication to the foregoing clause. Participants were shown to react to these new predications, rather than to the foregoing clause. We concluded that unattached phrasal SSCs function as independent actions and as independent units in conversations. Looking at the prosodic make-up of these phrases, we showed they are realized in an intonation contour of their own (with declination reset).

When we looked at the class of extensions, however, we found that functionally this is not a homogeneous class. Some extensions were treated as actions in their own right, whereas others were treated as subordinate to the foregoing action. Only the first group was taken up as topic of the ongoing interaction. This means that syntactic constituency is not a good predictor of the function of these increments. Syntax, however, does constrain the possibilities of phrasal SSCs in a negative way. When a phrase is not interpretable as a continuation of the foregoing clause, it is treated as an independent action (non-constituency is a sufficient condition for action status). When we looked at the two classes of

extensions, we saw that semantically and pragmatically, these two classes related to the main clause in different ways. The first class adds a new predication to the foregoing clause. Verbal modifiers are a case in point. These new predications cannot be integrated in the meaning of the foregoing clause without a process of reinterpretation. The second class of extensions only adds a new frame to the foregoing clause (temporal or spatial). In these cases, this does not lead to reinterpretation of the foregoing clause. The representation of this clause is simply put in a different frame. When we looked at the prosody, we showed that the first class of increments is prosodically independent. They are realized in an intonation contour of their own (with declination reset). The second set is prosodically integrated.

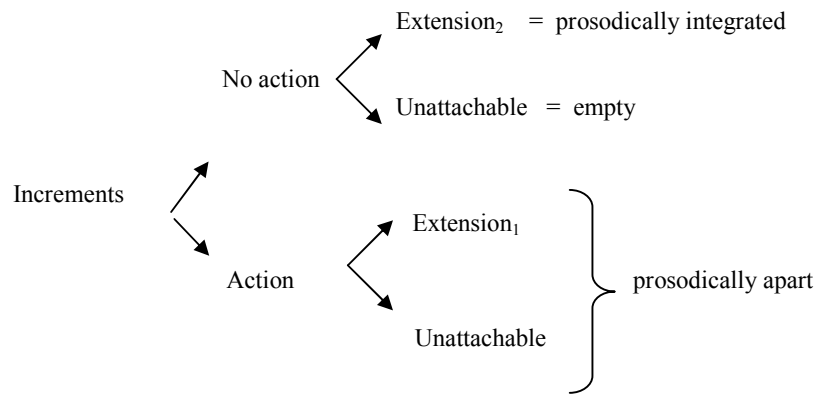
This means that the syntactic distinction of these phrasal SSCs does not seem to reflect any real differences in interactional function. Figure 1 shows our observations based on our syntactic subdivision.

Figure 1. Characterization of increments (syntax based)



As Figure 1 shows, the interactional function of increments cuts right through our initial syntactic distinction. However, if we take the function of the increments as our starting point, a much clearer picture emerges as we show in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Characterization of increments (action based)

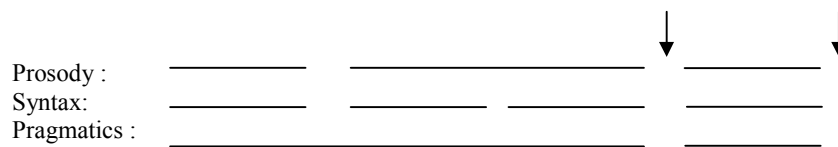


When we take the interactional function of increments as our starting point, we see that syntax and prosody play distinct roles with respect to the interactional function of phrasal SSCs. Syntax restricts the possible interpretation a particular phrase has in a negative way. A new syntactic structure introduces a new interactional unit. However, syntactic compatibility does not correspond to one particular function. Phrases that can be analyzed as continuations of the foregoing clause, are sometimes treated as independent actions and units and sometimes they are treated as a part of the foregoing action. Prosody, on the other hand, does correlate with the action status of phrasal SSCs. Phrases that are produced as continuations of the foregoing intonation contour are not treated as independent units. Phrases that start with a declination reset, on the other hand, are treated as independent actions and units. This suggests that the prosodic realization of fragments is more tightly linked to the interactional function than the syntactic packaging of these phrases.

Chapter 4: Conclusion

In this part of our study, we continued our investigation of turns-at-talk in Dutch informal interactions. In the previous parts of this investigation, we showed that turns are best analyzed as a three-tuple with units on three distinct linguistic levels: syntax, prosody and pragmatics. A complete turn was defined as a structure where the boundaries of syntactic, prosodic and pragmatic units coincide. One could think of a turn as a composite structure, where the respective tiers work together in a coordinated, but also more or less autonomous way. Participants monitor these different structural levels and base their analysis of the turn underway on the distribution of these tiers. Turn-taking becomes relevant when the boundaries of complete structures coincide. Graphically:

Figure 1. Model of TCUs (The arrows indicate the transition relevant places).



We also claimed that it is possible to define each of these units more or less independent from the other levels of structure¹. This is important, because if there exists a one-to-one mapping of one of the units to one of the other units, one can do without that particular tier. This is not to say that there are no connections between these levels. What we do claim is that these levels are not determined by one of the other levels. There might, of course, be constraints on one level based on the units on one of the other levels.²

In Part II, we showed that speakers orient to this turn as a tripartite unit in the organization of turn-taking. The turn allocation component of the turn-taking model becomes relevant at the boundaries of these composite Turn Constructional Units³. This means that speaker change implies that the foregoing turn has reached a

¹ This is a departure from approaches found in the literature where sometimes TCUs are defined in terms of intonation contours (e.g. Selting 1996) and where pragmatic structure is often defined in terms of prosodic structure (e.g. Ford and Thompson 1996).

² The relationship between prosody and syntax is a case in point. Although prosodic structure is not determined by syntactic structure, syntax does constrain the possible prosodic realizations of a stretch of talk.

³ In part I we argued that it is important to distinguish TCUs from the units on these three levels. TCUs are realized using units on these three levels, but the TCU is the composite whole of these units. This is important because otherwise our argument becomes circular as we pointed out in our discussion of Selting (1996) and Couper-Kuhlen (1996).

point where the units on the three distinct levels coincide. We also argued that the opposite implication does not hold: turn completion ($\langle +, +, + \rangle$) does not imply speaker change. The turn-taking model explicitly allows for the option of same speaker continuation.

In this part, our goal was twofold. First, we wanted to take a closer look at the ways TCUs are used to structure Dutch conversations. This part of our study consists of a qualitative analysis of ways participants orient towards TCUs as possibly complete structures. We claimed that even in cases where no speaker change occurs, the fact that the boundary of a possibly complete TCU has passed is still interactionally meaningful. Furthermore, we showed that participants orient to this TCU in the interpretation of the foregoing stretch of talk and in the organization of the continuation of their interaction. Second, we wanted to look at the way in which prosody, grammar and pragmatics are used to create TCUs. That is, we wanted to take a closer look at the interplay of the units on these three levels.

To answer these questions, we looked at a specific sequential position. We studied sequential positions where a speaker comes to a point of possible completion, no other participant claims the floor and the same speaker continues. Our aim was to show that participants can be shown, at least in some contexts, to orient towards the previous stretch of talk as a possibly complete TCU. Our second goal was to describe how syntax, prosody and grammar are used to organize the ongoing TCU. Graphically we looked at the following sequential context:

Figure 2. Sequential context of SSCs

A: _____ $\langle +, +, + \rangle$
(pause)
A: _____

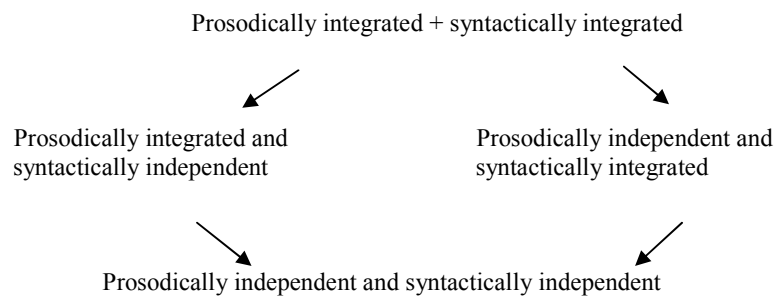
For these sequential contexts we tried to answer the following two questions:

1. Can we (at least in some sequential contexts) show that participants orient to these turns as turns where a possibly complete TCU has passed? In other words, can we show that (at least in some contexts) the stronger implication holds (turn completion implies turn-taking)?
2. How are turns produced and packaged after a possibly complete TCU has been reached and are these different prosodic, syntactic and pragmatic continuations functionally distinct? In other words, can we show that participants use prosody, syntax and pragmatics in an interactionally meaningful way in the packaging of turns-at-talk?

As we showed in part I, syntactic and prosodic units are flexible schemata. In principle, they can be extended extensively in the right periphery. This means that in the sequential contexts under consideration speakers have a choice. They can package the continuation of their turn as a prosodic and/or syntactic continuation of

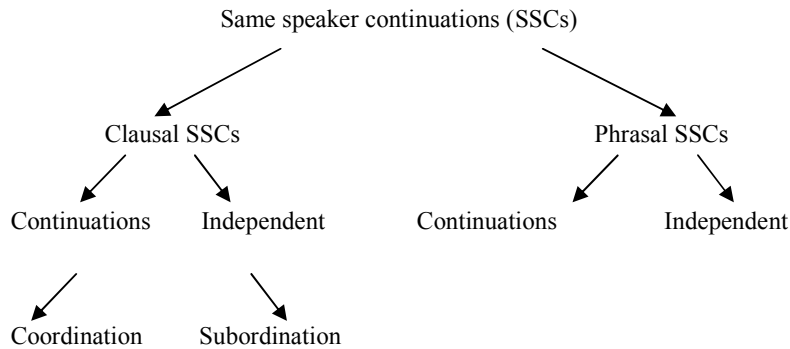
the foregoing turn, or they can package their continuation as a new independent unit on these levels. In this part, we argued that these different ways to package a turn constitute distinct interactional units with different interactional meanings. Given the fact that speakers have a choice both on the prosodic and on the syntactic level, we have four distinct possibilities. We proposed that these four possibilities constitute a hierarchy of ways in which units can be integrated. Figure 3 shows this hierarchy.

Figure 3 A hierarchy of linguistic integration



On the extremes of this hierarchy we find continuations that are totally integrated and totally independent respectively. In the middle of the hierarchy, we find two mixed categories. The status of these mixed categories is unclear and one of our goals in this part was to describe the function and meaning of interactional units that are packaged in these ways. On the syntactic level we made yet another distinction. Speakers can package their turns as syntactic continuations in a number of ways. In this part of our study, we distinguished between phrasal and clausal continuations. Clausal continuations in turn can be divided in coordinate and subordinate structures. Our analysis of these sequential contexts followed this syntactic distinction. In chapter II, we looked at clausal continuations after a possible TCU. In chapter III, we discussed phrasal continuations. In both cases, we looked at continuations that are post hoc analyzable as continuations of the foregoing structures and to continuations that marked themselves as new independent syntactic units. Figure 4 gives the relevant setup.

Figure 4 A classification of SSCs



In this part, we looked at the interactional status of these continuations with respect to their prosodic make-up and their pragmatic/semantic meaning. Our main focus was still on interactional units. We wanted to show that syntax, prosody and grammar cooperate in the realization and production of interactional units. Furthermore, we wanted to show that part-whole relations on all three levels are interactionally relevant categories. That is, we believed that syntactic constituency and prosodic integration are used in the organization of interaction in real time. Also, we wanted to find out whether there is some sort of division of labor between the units on these tiers.

In chapter 2 and 3, we showed that interactionally the extremes of this hierarchy are treated in different ways by the participants. We argued that the packaging of the SSC as a continuation of the foregoing turn, allowed for the post hoc analysis of this turn as a simplex TCU. That is, the first possible TCU boundary is in retrospect cancelled. The result is a unit that can be analyzed as a single interactional unit. The packaging of the SSC as an independent unit, however, does not allow for such an analysis. As a result, these TCUs are only analyzable as complex structures consisting of multiple interactional units.

With respect to the division of labor between the various linguistic units a complex picture emerged. In chapter 2, we looked at clausal SSCs. We gave an inventory of the different kinds of adverbial clauses found in our corpus and their prosodic realization. We saw a clear distinction between the prosodic realization of integrated and independent structures in our data. SSCs that are not analyzable as continuations of the foregoing syntactic structure are never prosodically integrated. SSCs that are analyzable as syntactic continuations of the foregoing structure do allow for this option. However, not all of these SSCs are prosodically integrated. Furthermore, there is no one-to-one mapping between the various adverbial clause types and their prosodic realization. Our data, however, did show a very clear division between coordination and subordination. Subordinate structures are more likely to be prosodically integrated than coordinate structures. Also, there were clear trends between specific kinds of adverbial clauses and the way these clauses are prosodically realized.

Looking at the ways the prosodic and syntactic packaging correlated with the meaning of clausal SSCs, we saw some clear trends. In chapter 2, we looked at one particular type of SSC: SSCs that take the form of an *omdat*-clause. These SSCs are interesting for a number of reasons. First, causal adverbial clauses are the most frequent in our corpus in the right periphery of main clauses. Second, the English and the German equivalent of *omdat* (*weil* and *because*) have been extensively studied. Third, although *omdat*-clauses are realized with subordinate syntax in standard Dutch, we also found a colloquial usage of *omdat* with main clause word order. We analyzed these *omdat*-clauses in our corpus, using the categorization of clause combining proposed in Sweetser (1990). Sweetser distinguishes between direct causal relations and indirect epistemic and speech act relations. We showed that there is a clear correlation between the different semantic/pragmatic usages of *omdat* and the prosodic realizations of the *omdat*-clause. We showed that in our data, prosody was a good predictor of relation type. For example, content relations were more likely to be prosodically integrated than epistemic and speech act relations.

Looking at *omdat*-clauses with main clause word order, we expected that these structures behaved in the same way as prosodically independent *omdat*-clauses with subordinate clause structure. Here again, we expected a correspondence between the *looseness* of the semantic/pragmatic relation and the syntactic/prosodic realizations of these clauses. As stated before, *omdat*-clauses with main clause word order are of special interest, because in standard Dutch the connective *omdat* is always realized with a subordinate clause. In our corpus, however, we found a number of cases where *omdat* introduces a coordinate structure.⁴ This raises the question whether the different syntactic make-up is also mirrored in a change in relation. We showed that although the relationship is not one-to-one, there exists a clear trend that coordinate *omdat*-clauses are used to produce indirect epistemic and speech-act relations rather than content relations. We also found a correlation between the prosodic make-up of these clauses and relation type.

So, what is the resulting picture? It is clear that clausal continuations show an orientation to their status as *continuations*. First, they can be realized in the same intonation contour as the foregoing, possibly complete, turn. This sets them apart from clausal continuations that are not marked in such a way. However, we also showed that the prosodic realization cannot be explained solely in terms of the pragmatic status of these clauses. The prosodic realization also shows a strong correlation with the relationship between the clauses. Some relations show a preference for prosodic integration, whereas other relation types (epistemic and speech act relations) show a preference for prosodic non-integration. Interestingly, the relationship between prosody and meaning seems to be tighter than the relationship between syntax and meaning. Syntax gives a first trend, but it is the prosodic structure that differentiates between the relation types in one particular syntactic context (subordination or coordination). Second, we showed that these

⁴ A similar observation was made for German (Günthner 1996). For German these two constructions are analyzed as part of a language change. In the absence of any diachronic data we do not make a similar claim for Dutch.

clausal continuations are treated as interactionally subordinate to the foregoing clause in the sense that they are not taken up as the focus of the interaction. As such they show an orientation to the foregoing turn as possibly complete.

In chapter 3, we looked at phrasal SSCs. Here again, we distinguished between phrasal continuations that are analyzable as continuations of the foregoing clause (phrases analyzable as taking up a position in the final field in the topological model of the Dutch clause) and phrasal continuations that are less tightly connected to the foregoing clause (phrases placed in the RD-field). For phrasal units, this difference was even more pronounced than for clausal SSCs. Clausal SSCs, by virtue of their clausal status, seem to have a certain independence apart from their syntactic make-up. We argued this was further evidence for the special status of clauses in the language system. Fragments, on the other hand, were shown to be particularly sensitive to the part/whole relation they may or may not have with the foregoing clause. Independent phrasal SSCs were shown to constitute units in their own right, whereas fragments that could be integrated in the interpretation of the foregoing clause were treated as part of the foregoing unit. This was shown by looking at the action status of these respective phrasal SSCs. Independent SSCs are treated as actions in their own right, in the sense that participants orient to these continuations in their reactions. The same does not hold for phrasal SSCs that are analyzable as continuations. Here participants are more prone to react to the content of the main clause. Most strikingly, it is the prosodic make-up of these fragments that is the best predictor of the action status of a phrasal SSC. Figure 5 depicts this situation graphically.

Figure 5 A characterization of increments (Action based)

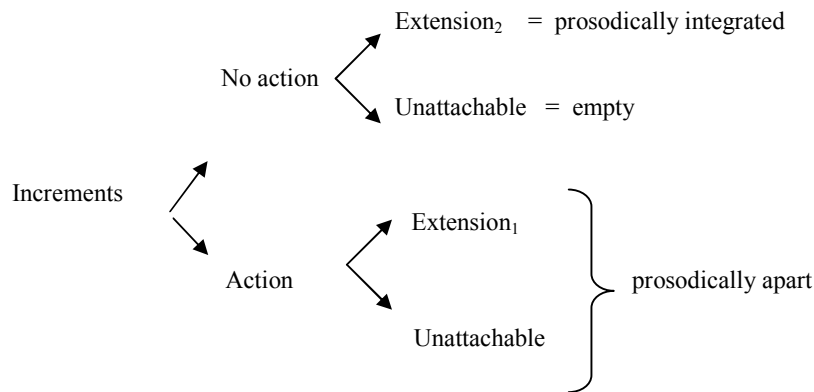


Figure 5 shows that phrasal SSCs that constitute an action are always prosodically independent from the main clause, whereas SSCs that are not treated as independent actions are prosodically integrated. Note also, that the syntactic status of these

phrases does not correlate with their action status. Attachable phrases can constitute actions on their own. Syntactic independence, on the other hand, does seem to be a sufficient condition for action status. Non-attachable phrases are always actions (and are always prosodically set apart).

With respect to non-clausal continuations we saw a similar picture. Only here the picture was even more distinct. We showed that fragments that are marked as continuations are treated as subordinate to the foregoing turn, whereas continuations that are marked as new independent units are taken up as the new focus of the conversation. As such they show a clear orientation to their status as continuations and lend further support for the assumption that syntactic and prosodic part-whole relations are interactionally meaningful categories.

In the case of fragments, however, it is the prosodic and pragmatic status of the fragments that sets them apart as continuations, rather than their syntactic status. Here the syntactic make-up of the fragments is a sufficient condition for a fragment to be treated as a continuation. However, the syntactic integration of a new unit is not a necessary condition. The syntactic make-up of Dutch clauses is such, that it allows for the addition of all sorts of materials in the right periphery of the clause. Some of these are readily analyzed as subordinate continuations, whereas others make a reinterpretation of the foregoing necessary. We argued that these structures cannot be analyzed as simple additions. We also showed that interactants treat these structures differently.

With respect to the interactional packaging of units, fragments and clausal continuations thus seem to behave in a similar way. The analysis of these structures shows that interactants orient to the foregoing unit as possibly complete. Both structures can be used to produce additions to the foregoing structure, which are interactionally treated as subordinate to the foregoing turn. This lends additional support to our initial hypothesis. These structures show that the interactants orient towards the foregoing turn as possibly complete and that they treat the sequential context in such a way (that is as contexts where a place relevant for turn-taking has not been taken up by the other participants). From a functional perspective these structures offer participants a new transition relevant place. They do so in a very specific way, without the addition of new material. This means that participants can only orient to the action in the initial turn. We argued that one can look at these units as formal devices to create new transition relevant places.

The addition of non-integrated fragments, on the other hand, shows that these places need not be recycled without the addition of new materials. These structures not only create a new transition relevant place, but they also add a new interactional unit. As such they constitute a new interactional action. This is also relevant for our initial hypothesis because this shows how syntax, prosody and pragmatics cooperate in the production of turns-at-talk. Participants can be shown to orient to these new units, because they take these new materials up as the focus of the ongoing interaction. Interestingly, we showed that although syntax is a sufficient condition for the creation of fragments that function as independent units, it is not a necessary condition. The prosodic make-up of the fragment and the semantic and interactional meaning of the fragment are better indicators of the status of the fragment as an independent unit. This seems to suggest that syntax only functions as a constraint on the possible interpretations of a stretch of talk (we saw the same

phenomenon when we discussed the clausal continuations). The actual interpretation of this stretch of talk is based on the pragmatic function and the prosodic realization.

PART IV

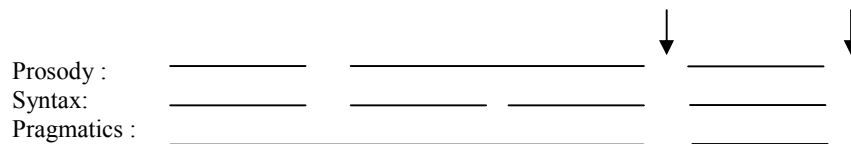
CONCLUSIONS

We started this study with the observation that interactants are able to place their new turns at the boundary of the foregoing turn, without any noticeable gap or overlap. This suggests that interactions are made up of clearly identifiable units that are oriented to by the participants in a specific way. It also shows that these interactional units have a property that we called projection (SSJ 1974, Ford and Thompson 1996, Selting 1996): the units project their own possible endings. Based on their interactional and linguistic knowledge, participants know what it will take for the foregoing turn to be possibly complete. This allows them to predict the endings of turns-at-talk and to react to the boundaries in interactionally meaningful ways.

This assumption is corroborated by the observation that participants are capable of collaborative production of turns-at-talk (Lerner 1996). In these cases, multiple speakers produce a single interactional unit in a single prosodic unit and in a single syntactic form. This shows that participants not only know when or whether a turn is complete, but also that (at least in a fair number of contexts), they have more or less specific expectations of the things to come. Not only on the global pragmatic level (they have expectations of the further topical development of the interaction), but also on the local prosodic and syntactic level.

In this study, we tried to answer the question what constitutes turns-at-talk. What are the relevant linguistic and interactional structures that interactants orient to when they organize their turns-at-talk? We proposed that turns are best analyzed as a three-tuple describing structures on three distinct linguistic levels: syntax, prosody and pragmatics. A complete turn was defined as a structure where the boundaries of syntactic, prosodic, and pragmatic structures coincide. One could think of a turn as a composite structure, where the respective tiers work together in a coordinated, but also more or less autonomous way. Participants monitor these different structural levels and base their analysis of the turn underway on the distribution of these tiers. Turn-taking becomes relevant when the boundaries of complete structures coincide. Graphically:

Figure 1.



In Figure 1 the arrows indicate the boundaries of the interactional units where turn-taking might take place.

We defined turns-at-talk as tripartite structures which are made up out of units on these three linguistic levels. This means that a turn can be described as a 3-tuple: <syntax, prosody, pragmatics>. Every part of a turn can in principle be described by one of eight turn states: <+,+,+>; <-+,+>; <+,-,+>; <+,+,->; <-,-,+>; <-,-,->; <+,-,-> and <-,-,->. Here a plus or a minus indicates the completion or incompleteness of the relevant linguistic unit at that particular point. Interactional units (TCUs) can now be defined as structures where the boundaries of these three distinct levels coincide (<+,+,+>).

We claimed that all three levels are necessary to explain the turn-taking phenomena. Prosody, syntax and pragmatics constitute more or less independent units that are used to produce, organize and structure turns-at-talk.⁵ In this study, we had two main goals:

1. We wanted to show that turns are indeed best analyzed as complex units that comprise syntactic, prosodic and pragmatic units
2. We wanted to describe the interplay of these composite structures in the production of turns-at-talk. That is, we wanted to describe how syntax, prosody and pragmatics are used as interactional resources in the organization of interactions.

To do this, we looked at two distinct sequential positions in interactions: turn-taking and same speaker continuations. We showed that in both sequential contexts interactants can be shown to orient to turns-at-talk as composite, tripartite structures. Turn-taking was the subject of Part II of this study, same speaker continuations are studied in Part III.

We started our study with a description of the various structures in our corpus. We looked at the way syntactic, prosodic and pragmatic structures are distributed in our corpus. The resulting picture showed a wide variety of structures. All possible configurations occurred. Simple syntactic clauses can be produced in multiple intonation contours, but we also found complex syntactic structures (both subordination and coordination) in a single intonation contour. However, the vast majority of all turns-at-talk consisted of a single clause, realized in a single intonation contour.⁶ This means that the single clause can be viewed as the basic building block of interactions. This gives further evidence for the assumption that turns-at-talk can be analyzed as the minimal building blocks of our thoughts, a

⁵ This is important because if there exists a one-to-one mapping of one of these structures to one of the other levels, one can do without that particular tier. This is not to say that there are no connections between these levels. What we do claim is that these levels are not determined by one of the other levels. There might, of course, be constraints on one level of structure based on one of the other levels. The relationship between prosody and syntax is a case in point. Although prosodic structure is not determined by syntactic structure, syntax does constrain the possible prosodic realizations of a stretch of talk.

⁶ Here all elliptical constructions are also analyzed as clauses.

window to our consciousness so to speak. As we discussed in Part I, the relationship between syntactic structure (clauses) and idea units (Chafe 1994), on the one hand, and the relationship between prosodic structure and idea units (Chafe 1994, Selkirk 1984), on the other hand, has been well documented in the literature. It stands to reason that these two structures often coincide in our data.

Looking at clause combining we found that coordination was more frequent than subordination. Within the set of subordinate constructions we found that adverbial clauses occurred more often than complement clauses. However, not all syntactic structures in our corpus are clausal. We also found a large set of phrasal construction types. Of these phrases PPs are the most pervasive structure in our corpus.

Looking at the distribution of completion points on the three levels of linguistic structure, we found that although most prosodic completion points coincided with syntactic completion points, the opposite does not hold.⁷ This was to be expected, since most syntactic structures contain multiple completion points. Actually, that very observation was the basis of our argument that syntax alone could not explain turn-taking phenomena.

As to pragmatic structure, we argued that the nature of pragmatic structure sets it apart from syntactic structure. From a corpus linguistic viewpoint, the study of pragmatic completion is problematic. It is not at all clear how pragmatic structure can be coded, because it is not possible to determine the parts that comprise a pragmatic structure. This results in a situation where one can determine whether a specific stretch of talk is possibly complete at a given time, on the one hand; while, on the other hand, it is not prudent to count or code pragmatic completion points in the whole corpus. We argued that this observation could be side stepped in the present study, because we only claim that speaker change implies completion on all three tiers. In this way, we are able to code pragmatic completion for those points where speaker change actually occurred. Based on the sequential context of these utterances, these points could be coded for pragmatic completion. A stretch of talk was coded as pragmatically complete if the sequential analysis showed that interactants treated this particular stretch of talk as possibly complete. If the sequential analysis showed that in the ongoing conversation the interactants treated the particular stretch of talk as incomplete, the speaker change was coded as occurring on a point of pragmatic incompleteness.

On the basis of this first description of the interplay of prosody, syntax and pragmatic structure in the construction of turns-at-talk, we concluded that the varied distribution of these structures makes a strong point that we need, at least, these three structural tiers to explain turn-taking phenomena. As we discussed earlier, syntax alone can never account for turn-taking, since a single syntactic structure may contain multiple completion points. For prosody one can make the same observation: it is possible to determine whether or not a prosodic structure is possibly complete, but there is no prosodic signal of completion per se.⁸ There might

⁷ Even more so if we take the clause as our syntactic unit of analysis

⁸ In contrast to various technical communication systems natural language does not contain an *end of message* signal. On the contrary, both syntax and prosody define

be prosodic meaning with respect to turn-taking for specific intonation contours (which is a subject for further investigation), but the vast majority of intonation contours do not have a prosodic marking of prosodic completion. Furthermore, prosodic structure can be used to group a single grammatical structure in multiple intonation contours. This means that without the syntactic structure, one can never say whether or not a unit is complete. To make matters even worse, there is no one-to-one mapping of prosodic structure and function with respect to turn-taking. The same intonation contour can be used in a context of turn completion (without any projection on the other levels) and in the context of projection of more to come.⁹ Finally, the pragmatic tier is the only level of structure that can project above the sentence. This shows that one must at least take these three levels into account.

In Part II of this study we looked at turn-taking. We argued that the turn-taking model (SSJ 1974) gives us an empirical way to test our definition of turns-at-talk. This model consists of two components: the turn-constructive component and the turn-allocation component. The turn-constructive component defines the building blocks of conversations: TCUs. The turn-allocation component describes how turn-taking is organized on the boundaries of these TCUs. In terms of the turn-taking model, we could describe our research goals as a contribution to a better understanding of the turn-constructive component.

However, it is the turn-allocation component that allows us to study TCUs in an empirical way. The turn-allocation component states that turn-taking occurs at the boundaries of complete interactional units. This means that the turn-taking model predicts that there will be a relationship between turn-taking and complete interactional structures. Turn-taking indicates that the new speaker interprets the foregoing stretch of talk as a possibly complete unit. This means that every definition of turns-at-talk must be able to describe turn-taking in natural occurring conversations. In Part II, we tested our definition of turns-at-talk by looking at the following hypothesis:

Turn-taking \longrightarrow <+,+,+>

Since turn-taking only occurs at the boundaries of possibly complete interactional units, we predict that turn-taking only occurs at the places where a turn is syntactically, prosodically and pragmatically complete.

The turn-allocation component allows us to view every speaker change as a positive orientation to the foregoing turn as a complete unit. The absence of turn-taking, however, does not have similar implications. The turn-taking model explicitly allows for some speaker continuations. Turn-taking is not deterministic and, in this sense, turn-taking is thus a-symmetric. Turn-taking indicates that the

their completion in a negative manner. The absence of a particular projection (the projection of complement in the case of syntax or the level accent in the case of intonation) defines the structure as possibly complete.

⁹ Intonation contours with a final rise are a case in point. These can be used to realize complete structures, but are also very often used in the context of story telling.

foregoing unit is possibly complete, but the absence of turn-taking does not allow us to draw any inferences. It might be that the turn underway was incomplete, but it might also be the case that the current speaker continued after a possible completion point (option three in the turn-allocation component).

In Part II we looked at the implication that turn-taking implies turn completion in two ways. In Chapter 2, we tested this implication in a large corpus study. In Chapter 3, we gave a qualitative analysis of the counterexamples in a deviant case analysis. We argued that the combination of these two research methodologies is both necessary and fruitful in this particular study. The first reason is that our claim is in essence statistical in nature. This means that quantitative evidence must be given to corroborate our claims. On the other hand, the theories that we study (pragmatic theories) have a special status. They formulate principles that are used in the construction of interactional meaning, rather than rules that are necessary conditions for human interaction. Pragmatic principles can be broken in interactions. The result of these breaches is not miscommunication or total gibberish, but the production of a special kind of marked action. Turns that violate the turn-taking model are not devoid of meaning, but rather they gain additional meaning: they are interpreted in terms of the violation of the turn-taking model. This has two consequences. First, we do not expect to find a one-to-one relation between turn-taking and turn completion (we expect that these pragmatic principles will be broken occasionally). Second, if these principles are broken, we expect to find a clear orientation in the interaction to the marked status of these speaker changes. Here a qualitative analysis of the counterexamples can shed additional light on the phenomena under investigation.

In this study, we defined speaker change in a very mechanical way. Rather than to exempt certain turns from our study, we argued that for a complete understanding of interactional units it is necessary to examine all contributions of a new speaker, whether this speaker claims the floor for an extended turn or not.^{10,11} This is important, for two reasons. First, it is circular to exempt certain stretches of talk from the investigation based on the fact that they do not constitute real turns when the goal of this study is to determine what a turn is. Second, we expect that these phenomena will behave in a systematic way as well. Since these breaches of the turn-taking model have a specific interactional function and meaning, we expect that interactants will use these specific turns in a systematic way. Furthermore, we expect that the placement of these tokens is governed by the same principles as the placement of larger turns. That is, although these tokens can occur at different places than complete turns, we expect that the places can be defined in relation to the same composite structure. We also argued that if it is the case that these items constitute a homogeneous class of counterexamples, this should show up in our analysis.

In Chapter 2 and 3 we tested the following implication:

Speaker Change → Turn completion.

¹⁰ For example in most studies recipient tokens are not treated as turn-taking.

¹¹ However, we did exempt overlap after the last possible accent of a turn as counterexamples.

Initially, only 63 percent of the speaker changes occurred at places where the boundaries of the three structures coincided.¹² We also analyzed different sets of counterexamples. The first set of counterexamples consisted of fragments that showed some sort of orientation to the turn underway. That is, speaker change occurred in a place where the prosodic and/or syntactic structure of the turn underway was not complete. However, the content of the turn of the new speaker showed a clear orientation towards the semantic/pragmatic content of the turn underway, suggesting that these utterances are treated as complete in these interactions. In this chapter, we discussed some collaborative constructions, but also argumentative settings and some settings where the speaker oriented towards some sort of misunderstanding. We argued that these examples show that the pragmatic interpretation of a turn-at-talk is not discrete. In interpreting turns-at-talk we have specific expectations of the things to come, and we act on these expectations. These examples seem to suggest that, at least in some well defined contexts, pragmatic structure must be treated independent from the syntactic structure that it comprises. Interestingly, some of these counterexamples show a clear orientation towards the composite structures of these turns. Collaborative constructions mirror both the syntactic and the prosodic structure of the TCU underway. As such these counterexamples give additional support to our claim that participants monitor the syntactic and prosodic structure of turns underway. Furthermore, they show that these structures are used and exploited as interactionally relevant categories.

A second set of counterexamples occurred in contexts of some sort of repair. Interestingly, in these cases the pragmatic structure of the turn was incomplete (e.g. in the context of story telling), but the speaker change occurred in places where syntactic and prosodic boundaries coincided. This seems to suggest that even in these cases interactants orient to the other structures. Also, from an interactional viewpoint it stands to reason that repair work is done in the proximity of the cause of the misunderstanding. Since the success of the action underway may depend on the repair, interactants will initiate this repair in the proximity of its cause. This means that in the case of pragmatic projection, interactants will organize their repair work in the ongoing scope of this projection. Although it is clear that the larger discourse unit is not complete, this larger project is put on hold until the repair has been done. We also showed that the packaging of these repairs often signals their subordinate nature. After the repair, the participants explicitly link back to the larger project (for example in the form of specific lexical markers).

A third interesting set of counterexamples consists of recipient tokens. The way these recipient tokens are realized resembles the repairs we discussed earlier. Almost all of the recipient tokens in our corpus are placed on the boundaries of prosodic and syntactic structures. Of course, most of these recipient tokens do not constitute counterexamples. However, a subset of these recipient tokens occurs at the boundary of a syntactic and prosodic structure, but within the projection of a larger pragmatic projection. Since these recipient tokens do not claim the floor for an extended period of time, it has been argued that they do not constitute a turn. And

¹² Here every contribution of another speaker was coded as a speaker change.

as such they do not constitute counterexamples for our hypothesis. However, in treating them as counterexamples for the strongest form of our hypothesis, it turns out that they can be described in relation to the same composite structures as complete TCUs as a whole. This is expected for a number of reasons. First, recipient tokens also occur at the boundaries of complete turns. In these places, they signal involvement or they acknowledge the foregoing turn. They also explicitly decline the right to speak. In the context of larger pragmatic projects, these items still have the same function and they are placed in similar places: at the boundaries of the units that constitute this larger discourse unit. They still adhere to the units that are defined by the other levels of structure.

The last set of counterexamples we discussed occurs in the context of competitive turn-taking. Here we also distinguished between overlap and interruptions. Although in both contexts multiple participants speak at the same time, these contexts are very different interactionally. In the last case, interactants treat the situation as problematic, whereas in the first case the situation is resolved quickly. Although both sequential contexts constitute real counterexamples for our hypothesis we showed that participants oriented towards the marked nature of this interaction in both environments. Most notably in the way the turns-at-talk are produced prosodically.

At the end of Part II we argued that although interactional units are best described in terms of three distinct levels of structure (syntax, prosody and pragmatics), turn-taking seems to be governed primarily by the syntactic and prosodic make-up of turns-at-talk. Of course, one set of counterexamples clearly showed that in some contexts the pragmatic structure of an utterance can be determined independent of the syntactic and prosodic structure. But even in these marked cases, the units that are produced in collaboration have very clear and distinguished grammatical and prosodic structures. Furthermore, interactants orient towards these specific structures in the production of these collaborative turns and start these turns at clear syntactic and prosodic breaks. So, even in these cases the possibility of a collaborative structure seems to be licensed by the presence of smaller structural elements that can be defined in terms of prosody and syntax and the placement of these collaborative structures coincides with boundaries on these two structures.

Another drawback of defining turn-taking in terms of the three tiers is the fact that a large set of interactional actions is placed with respect to prosodic and syntactic structure within the larger scope of a pragmatic projection. In these cases, interactants also clearly orient towards smaller structures that constitute these larger pragmatic projects in a systematic way. We claimed that turn-taking is best described in terms of these smaller units. Where and when we speak is determined with respect to these smaller units. What actions can be placed on the boundaries of these smaller units, however, is determined by the sequential context and the pragmatic project underway.

The picture that emerges then is the following. Interactional units can be described in terms of three distinct levels: prosodic, syntactic and pragmatic structure. A complete description of these interactional units cannot be complete if one of these structures is left out. Of these three structures it is clear that the pragmatic tier is the most important level. The description of actions and adjacency

pairs in a conversation is the fundamental organizational principle of interactions. It is the essence of the interaction. However, the packaging of these actions is also very important for a number of reasons. First, the meaning of an interactional unit can be the result of this packaging.¹³ Second, although the pragmatic structure gives the interaction its coherence and global structure, turn-taking seems to be a local phenomenon. Even if there is a larger pragmatic projection, there is still interactional work to be done by all participants. Interactants signal their involvement and understanding. They show empathy, but they also ask for elaborations, repair misunderstandings, etcetera. Even in the absence of contributions by the hearer, it can be shown that interactants orient towards these lower level structures. The absence of a reaction on these boundaries is interactionally relevant.¹⁴ All these observations show that these lower level structures are the real building blocks that make up an interaction. They are the local units that organize a conversation and these local structures are decisive with respect to the question where and when turn-taking becomes relevant.

The role of the various lower level structures, however, is very different. Syntax and prosody behave in very different ways. Although both can signal completion in a negative way, the role of prosody is more local. Apart from the constraint that an intonation contour consists of one accent, the make-up of these units is flexible. However, it is possible to signal incompleteness of the turn underway, by using a specific kind of level accent. Syntax, on the other hand, is capable of the projection of larger structures. Certain verbs or connectives can project the production of well defined syntactic material. As long as these materials are not produced, the turn is not complete. The projection of pragmatic structure has a wider scope. But these larger projects have no implications for the presence of turn-taking. However, they do restrain the sort of actions that can be found within these projections.¹⁵

In this study we formulated two research goals:

1. We wanted to show that turns are indeed best analyzed as complex units that comprise syntactic, prosodic and pragmatic structures
2. We wanted to describe the interplay of these composite structures in the production of turns-at-talk. That is, we wanted to describe how syntax, prosody and pragmatics are used as interactional resources in the organization of interactions.

In Part II, the focus was on the first goal. In Part III, we pursued the second goal.

¹³ As we argued in Part I and III, the syntactic and prosodic packaging of a turn contributes to the interactional meaning of the turn.

¹⁴ For example in the absence of these reactions speakers sometimes reformulate or rephrase parts of their larger project.

¹⁵ The turns are interpreted as being placed within the scope of this larger project. Note however that this is a very general linguistic/interactional principle. As such it does not show that these structures are relevant for turn-taking.

In Part III, we looked at a new sequential context: same speaker continuations (SSCs). We looked at the following sequential context:

A: _____ <+,+,+>
(pause)
A: _____ <+,+,+>

Here speaker A produces a possibly complete structure. There is no selection of another speaker and none of the other participants take the turn. After a short pause, the same speaker continues. More specifically, we looked at continuations that are *marked* as continuations. That is, we looked at structures that signaled that they were produced as additions to the foregoing turn. The interest in these structures is twofold. First, they show an orientation to the foregoing turn as complete and as such they give additional evidence for our initial hypothesis that indeed a TRP has passed. Second, the packaging of these continuations allows us to look at the respective roles of syntax and prosody in the production of turns-at-talk in a more detailed way. We showed that the prosodic and syntactic make-up of turns-at-talk is used by the participants as an interactional resource. That is, interactants orient towards these linguistic structures in the production and interpretation of turns-at-talk.

In these sequential positions interactants have a number of choices with respect to the prosodic and syntactic packaging of their continuations. These continuations can be packaged as formal continuations of the foregoing clause, or as independent new structures. This gives us a total of four options:

1. prosodically independent & syntactically integrated
2. prosodically independent & syntactically independent
3. prosodically integrated & syntactically integrated
4. prosodically integrated & syntactically independent

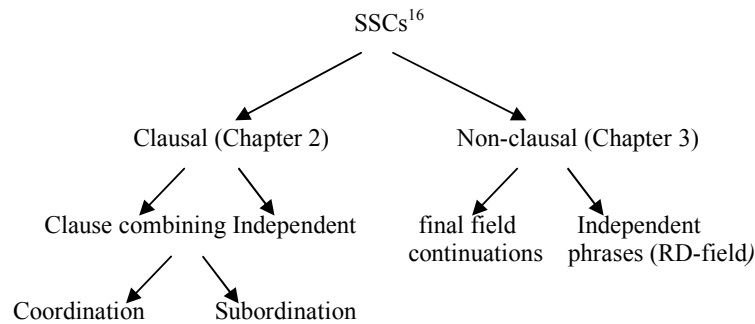
We showed that these different ways to package turn continuations correlates with functional differences. That is, we showed that these structures are used in the production and interpretation of distinct interactional actions.

We looked at two types of syntactic continuations: clausal and non-clausal. In the case of clausal continuations, the dependency was marked by the presence of connectives. In these cases, the relation was marked by specific lexical items and in the case of subordination in Dutch also by specific syntactic structures.

In the case of the non-clausal continuations we distinguished between elements that are analyzable as continuations of the foregoing clause (elements in the final field) and elements that are not interpretable as continuations of the foregoing clause (elements placed in the RD-field).

Part III of this study had the following set up:

Figure 2.



We looked at the interactional status of these continuations with respect to their prosodic make-up and their pragmatic/semantic meaning. Our main focus was still on interactional units. We wanted to show that syntax, prosody and grammar cooperate in the realization and production of interactional units. Furthermore, we wanted to show that part-whole relations on all three levels are interactionally relevant categories. That is, we wanted to show that syntactic constituency and prosodic integration are used in the organization of interaction in real time. We wanted to show that grammar and intonation provide interactants with flexible resources in the organization of their turns-at-talk.

With respect to the clausal continuations, we saw a clear distinction between the prosodic realization of marked and unmarked structures in our data. Unmarked continuations were never prosodically integrated with the foregoing turn, whereas marked continuations are realized in this way. However, not all continuations are also prosodically integrated and there is no one-to-one mapping between clause type and prosodic realization. Our data, however, did show a very clear division between coordination and subordination. Subordinate structures are more likely to be prosodically integrated than coordinate structures.

We also looked at the meaning of these clausal continuations. In Chapter 2, we introduced a categorization of Dutch clause combining. We introduced a subdivision of clause combining based on the coherence relation between the respective clauses. We also argued that this subdivision showed a scale of integration on the level of semantic/pragmatic meaning. Although there is a correlation between connectives (and thus syntactic status) and these different relations, the relationship is not one-to-one. A connective can signal more than one type of relation. This raises the question whether these relation types are marked in

¹⁶ Note that this presentation takes the syntactic make-up of these structures as starting point of our investigation. In part III we argued that it is the semantic/pragmatic status of these elements and their prosodic make-up that sets them apart from each other.

any other way. We showed that in our data prosody was a good predictor of relation type. For example, content relations were more likely to be prosodically integrated than epistemic relations.

We also looked at a specific Dutch construction: *omdat*-clauses realized with the syntax of coordination. These cases are of special interest, because in written language the Dutch connective *omdat* ("because") is always realized with a subordinate clause. In our corpus, however, we found a number of cases where *omdat* introduces a coordinate structure. This raises the question whether this change of syntax is mirrored in a change of meaning. We showed that, although the picture is less clear than with the other connectives, there still is a trend that *omdat*-clauses with main clause word order are used to produce epistemic and speech act relations rather than content relations. We also found a correlation between the prosodic make-up of these clauses and relation type.

So, what is the resulting picture? It is clear that clausal continuations show an orientation to their status as *continuations*. First, they can be realized in the same intonation contour as the foregoing, possibly complete, turn. This sets them apart from clausal continuations that are not marked in such a way. However, we also showed that the prosodic realization cannot be explained solely in terms of the pragmatic status of these clauses. The prosodic realization also shows a strong correlation with the semantic relationship between the clauses. Some relations show a preference for prosodic integration whereas other relation types (epistemic and speech act relations) show a preference for prosodic non-integration. Interestingly, the relationship between prosody and meaning seems to be tighter than the relationship between syntax and meaning. Syntax gives a first trend, but it is the prosodic structure that differentiates between the relation types in one particular syntactic context (subordination and coordination). There seems to be a distinct division of labor between linguistic units in these cases.

With respect to non-clausal continuations we saw a similar picture. We showed that fragments that are marked as continuations are treated as subordinate to the foregoing turn, whereas continuations that are marked as new independent units are taken up as the new focus of the conversation. As such, they show a clear orientation to their status as continuations and lend further support for the assumption that syntactic and prosodic part-whole relations are interactionally meaningful categories. In the case of fragments, however, it is the prosodic and pragmatic status of these fragments that sets them apart as continuations, rather than their syntactic status. Here the syntactic make-up of the fragments is a sufficient condition for a fragment to be treated as a continuation. However, the syntactic integration of a new unit is not a necessary condition. The syntactic make-up of Dutch clauses is such that it allows for the addition of all sorts of materials in the right periphery of the clause. Some of these are readily analyzed as subordinate continuations, whereas others make a reinterpretation of the foregoing necessary because they are not readily integrated in the foregoing structure. We argued that these structures cannot be analyzed as simple additions. We also showed that interactants treat these structures differently.

With respect to the interactional packaging of units, fragments and clausal continuations thus seem to behave in a similar way. The analysis of these structures shows that interactants orient to the foregoing unit as possibly complete. Both

structures can be used to produce additions to the foregoing structure, which are interactionally treated as subordinate to the foregoing turn. This lends additional support to our initial hypothesis. These structures show that the interactants orient towards the foregoing turn as possibly complete. From a functional perspective these structures offer participants a new transition relevant place. They do so in a very specific way, without the addition of new material. This means that participants can only orient to the action in the initial turn. One can look at these units as formal devices to create new transition relevant places.

The addition of non-integrated fragments, on the other hand, shows that these places need not be recycled without the addition of new materials. These structures not only create a new transition relevant place, but they also add a new interactional move. As such these units constitute new action. This is also relevant for our initial hypothesis because this shows how syntax, prosody and pragmatics cooperate in the production of turns-at-talk. Participants can be shown to orient to these new turns because they take these new materials up as the (new) focus of the interaction. Interestingly, we showed that although syntax is a sufficient condition for the creation of fragments that function as independent turns-at-talk, it is not a necessary condition. The prosodic make-up of the fragment and the semantic and interactional meaning of the fragment are better indicators of the status of the fragment as an independent unit. This seems to suggest that syntax only puts constraints on the possible interpretations of a stretch of talk (we saw the same phenomenon when we discussed the clausal continuations). The actual interpretation of this stretch of talk is based on the pragmatic function and the prosodic realization.

In this study, we looked at the ways in which syntactic, prosodic and pragmatic structures are used to create units in Dutch conversations. We showed that interactional units are best analyzed as complex units comprised of units on three linguistic levels: syntax, prosody and pragmatic. We also showed that these units are independent and that they provide interactants with flexible organization schemata that are used in the organization of turns-at-talk. In this study, we tried to contribute to the ongoing study of interactional units in the following ways.

1. We wanted to show that the integration of linguistics and conversation analysis in the study of language use is both fruitful and necessary. Conversation analysis provides us with a methodology that enables us to analyze natural data in a detailed way. This allows us to make fine grained distinctions that can be shown to be oriented to by the participants. However, one can only observe what is coded in the data and here linguistic theory can make a contribution. The transcription practices of conversation analysis lack the fine grained distinction found in linguistic theory. This means that many linguistic distinctions (that have been shown to be real in the language system) cannot be observed in Conversation Analysis. However, we could use linguistic theory as a lens to make these phenomena visible in our data. However, the coding and description of different structures in our corpora can never be the whole story. We also have to show that participants orient to these structures as interactional

resources. This is where conversation analysis can make a contribution to linguistic theory.

2. We also wanted to show that in the study of pragmatic theory quantitative and qualitative research methodologies should be combined. Most pragmatic research leaves the quantitative aspects of their reasoning implicit. However, statistical reasoning often plays a crucial role in pragmatic argumentation. As a consequence research results are often formulated using vague terms like *most*, *almost all*, *a clear tendency*, etcetera. This is undesirable because it clouds the reasoning and leaves important arguments implicit. On the other hand, it is important to introduce caveats in the quantitative analysis of pragmatic theory. Pragmatic theories formulate principles that guide the construction of interactional actions. The pragmatic guidelines can be broken in actual conversations. However, in these cases participants are expected to orient to these units as marked. That is, we expect that we can show that participants treat these units in a specific way. Here a qualitative deviant case analysis can contribute to the understanding of the phenomenon under investigation.
3. Our main goal was a definition of turns-at-talk in informal Dutch conversations. Here we showed that different linguistic units play an important role in the construction of turns-at-talk. This has two consequences. First, it shows that linguistic theory can help us to better understand conversation and second it shows that the study of interactional phenomena can help us to better understand language.

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**SAMENVATTING IN HET NEDERLANDS
(SUMMARY IN DUTCH)**

De rol van de clause voor beurtwisseling in Nederlandse gesprekken.

Introductie

Gespreksdeelnemers zijn in staat om hun gespreksbijdragen zeer nauwkeurig te plannen en te produceren. De start van de beurt van een nieuwe spreker volgt meestal op de voorgaande beurt zonder noemenswaardige pauze of overlap:

Fragment 1.

1. A: en hij heeft dat dus uiteindelijk niet gedaan.=
2. B: = ook niet nadat je het hem nog eens had gevraagd.
3. A: nee

In Fragment 1 vertelt A een anekdote over een voorval op zijn werk. Een collega had, ondanks herhaald aandringen van A, niet gedaan wat van hem werd gevraagd. In regel 1 geeft A een conclusie: de collega heeft uiteindelijk de taak niet uitgevoerd. In regel 2 reageert B met *ook niet nadat je het hem nog eens had gevraagd*. Deze beurt wordt naadloos aan de voorgaande beurt van A gekoppeld zonder pauze of overlap.

Fragment 1 is in dit opzicht niet bijzonder: overlap en pauzes zijn uitzonderingen en niet de norm. Blijkbaar zijn gespreksdeelnemers in staat om het einde van de voorgaande beurt vrij exact te voorspellen in een specifieke sequentiële context. Dit roept de vraag op hoe deelnemers in staat zijn om hun beurten zo precies te plaatsen. Welke kenmerken van lopende beurten maken deze voorspelling mogelijk? Zijn er specifieke signalen die aangeven dat de lopende beurt bijna ten einde is, of stelt de interne opbouw van een beurt hoorders in staat om een inschatting te maken welke elementen nog moeten komen om de beurt compleet te maken?

In dit onderzoek kijken we naar de wijze waarop linguïstische structuren door gespreksdeelnemers worden gebruikt om hun gesprekken te organiseren. In het bijzonder staat de rol van *de clause* voor beurtwisseling in Nederlandse gesprekken centraal. Het flexibele schema van de clause geeft in potentie een helder en duidelijk referentiekader, dat gespreksdeelnemers zouden kunnen gebruiken bij de organisatie van beurtwisseling. Daarnaast komt uit verschillende studies naar voren, dat de clause binnen het taalsysteem een bijzondere functie vervult (Verhagen 2001, Chafe 1994, Langacker 1990). Een vluchtige blik op een willekeurige conversatie maakt echter al snel duidelijk, dat de clause op zichzelf niet voldoende houvast biedt voor het voorspellen van beurteindes:

Fragment 2.

1. A: ik stond daar beneden

2. (0.5)
3. A: ik houd mijn pasje ervoor
4. (1.0)
5. B: [mooi niet
6. C: [maar nee
7. A: [maar er gebeurde niets

Fragment 3.

1. A: omdat hij ook nog naar poelier moest in de stad
2. B: oh ja tuurlijk

In Fragment 2 vertelt A een verhaal aan twee van haar collega's. Er zijn nieuwe elektronische deuren geïnstalleerd in hun kantoorgebouw. Dit geeft aanleiding tot allerhande frustratie, omdat daardoor de oude sleutelkaarten niet meer werken. A vertelt haar verhaal in drie afzonderlijke clauses in regels 1 tot en met 7. Deze afzonderlijke clauses worden door de gespreksdeelnemers echter niet als afzonderlijke eenheden behandeld. Pas nadat de clou van de anekdote in zijn geheel helder is, reageren B en C op het verhaal. Dit gebeurt op een zeer boeiende wijze: ze produceren beiden de clou van het verhaal in overlap met de beurt van A. Dit toont aan dat gespreksdeelnemers niet alleen naar de syntactische status van de beurt kijken: B en C oriënteren zich in dit geval evident op de pragmatische structuur van de beurt. Ze reageren niet op losse clauses, maar op een anekdote. Om beurtwisseling te begrijpen moeten we dus in ieder geval ook pragmatische structuur in het onderzoek betrekken.

Fragment 3 toont aan, dat ook syntaxis en pragmatiek samen nog niet voldoende zijn om alle beurtwisselingen te verklaren. In regel 1 geeft A een reden waarom een vriend niet op tijd bij een afspraak kon komen. Hij doet dit in de vorm van een omdat-clause. Aan het einde van deze clause neemt B de beurt. Een nauwkeurigere analyse van A's beurt toont echter dat deze twee mogelijke clauses bevat: *omdat hij ook nog naar de poelier moest* en *omdat hij ook nog naar de poelier moest in de stad*. Hoe kan een hoorder voorspellen welke van deze twee mogelijke clauses door de spreker wordt geproduceerd? De pragmatische structuur geeft hier geen uitsluitsel: het is onwaarschijnlijk dat de aanvulling *in de stad* een noodzakelijke aanvulling is om de pragmatische status van de voorgaande beurt te begrijpen. Hier kan de intonatie van de uiting echter uitsluitsel geven: *in de stad* is opgenomen in dezelfde intonatiecontour als *omdat hij ook nog naar de stad moest*. Hier geeft de intonatie dus de relevante informatie.

De bovenstaande voorbeelden suggereren dat we tenminste drie niveaus nodig hebben om beurtwisseling te begrijpen: syntaxis, prosodie en pragmatiek. In deze opvatting is een beurt pas compleet als de structuren op elk van deze niveaus compleet zijn. Schematisch kunnen we dat als volgt weergeven:

De relatie tussen de verschillende structuren, met betrekking tot beurtwisseling en de wijze waarop deze structuren door de participanten worden gebruikt om hun conversatie te organiseren, staan in de rest van deze studie centraal. We onderzoeken deze fenomenen aan de hand van een aantal corpus studies op basis van een corpus dat bestaat uit transcripties van spontane Nederlandse gesprekken.

Het corpus: opbouw en eerste verkenning

Voor deze studie is een corpus aangelegd van transcripten van spontane Nederlandse gesprekken. Deze gesprekken zijn opgenomen tijdens informele bijeenkomsten tussen familie en vrienden. Ook zijn er een aantal telefoongesprekken opgenomen om de rol van non verbale communicatie uit te sluiten. Mensen kregen een mini disc recorder mee naar huis met het verzoek om zoveel mogelijk gesprekken op te nemen. Gespreksdeelnemers beslisten uiteindelijk zelf welke opnames ze beschikbaar wilden stellen. Het corpus bevat tweegesprekken, maar ook gesprekken tussen meer dan twee deelnemers. Tabel 1 geeft de opbouw van het corpus weer.

Tabel 1. Opbouw van het corpus (uren: minuten)

Telefoon gesprekken	Face-to-face gesprekken		Totaal
	Dialogoog	Multiloog	
0:58	2:54	2:34	6:26

De gesprekken zijn orthografisch getranscribeerd en vervolgens gecodeerd op basis van een syntactische en prosodische analyse. Voor elke sprekerwissel is aangegeven of de lopende beurt op dat moment pragmatisch mogelijk compleet is. Deze coderingen zijn vervolgens opgeslagen in een relationele database. Dit stelt ons in staat om de relaties tussen de verschillende structuren en hun relatie tot beurtwisseling te bevragen.

Een eerste beschrijving van het corpus bevestigt onze verwachting, dat de clause een bijzondere status heeft in Nederlandse gesprekken. De meeste beurten bestaan uit enkelvoudige clauses, die worden gerealiseerd in een enkele intonatie contour. Dit geeft extra evidentie voor de claim dat de enkelvoudige clause gezien kan worden als de elementaire bouwsteen van *discourse* (Verhagen 2001, Chafe 1994).

Echter, niet alle beurten zijn op deze wijze opgebouwd. Het corpus bevat ook een groot aantal beurten die bestaan uit woorden, zinsdelen en complexe zinnen. Nevenschikking is frequenter dan onderschikking. De relatie tussen syntaxis en prosodie is voor een belangrijk deel vrij en kan dus eventueel ook functioneel in gesprekken worden ingezet. Complexe zinnen kunnen worden gerealiseerd in een enkele intonatiecontour, maar kunnen ook worden opgedeeld in meerdere contouren. Daarnaast is het ook mogelijk om een enkelvoudige clause op te delen in meerdere intonatiecontouren.

Veruit de meeste prosodisch complete structuren zijn ook syntactisch compleet. Het omgekeerde is echter niet het geval. Dit is een direct gevolg van het feit dat daadwerkelijk gerealiseerde zinnen vaak meerdere mogelijk complete zinnen bevatten. De distributie van eenheden op de drie verschillende niveaus blijkt echter

voor een belangrijk deel vrij. De syntactische structuur van een uiting beperkt de mogelijkheden voor de prosodische realisatie, maar daarbinnen is er ruimte voor variatie en dus keuzes. Dit betekent dat gespreksdeelnemers verschillende opties hebben voor de realisatie van een beurt en dat deze mogelijkheden dus ook ingezet kunnen worden om verschillende interactionele doelen te verwezenlijken. De wisselwerking tussen deze structuren en de wijze waarop deze worden ingezet om gesprekken te organiseren staan in deze studie centraal.

Het onderzoek: opzet en resultaten

In het corpusonderzoek beantwoorden we de volgende twee onderzoeksvragen:

1. Zijn beurten inderdaad complexe eenheden met structuur op drie verschillende niveaus: syntaxis, prosodie en pragmatiek?
2. Hoe gebruiken gespreksdeelnemers de structuren op deze drie niveaus om hun gesprekken te organiseren?

De eerste vraag beantwoorden we, door te kijken naar beurtwisseling. Het beurtwisselingsmodel (Sacks, Schegloff en Jefferson, 1974) stelt ons in staat om een oriëntatie van deelnemers op de verschillende structuren aan te tonen. Het beurtwisselingsmodel bevat twee componenten: de beurtopbouwcomponent en de beurttoewijzingscomponent. De beurtopbouwcomponent definieert de bouwstenen van conversaties: de eenheden waaruit beurten zijn opgebouwd. De beurttoewijzingscomponent beschrijft wat er gebeurt aan de grenzen van deze beurteenheden. Het beschrijft de geordende procedures die gespreksdeelnemers doorlopen om de volgende spreker te selecteren. In de termen van het beurtwisselingsmodel kunnen we de huidige studie omschrijven als een bijdrage aan het begrip van de beurtopbouwcomponent. We willen beschrijven hoe syntactische, prosodische en pragmatische structuren samenwerken in het produceren van beurten.

Het is echter de beurttoewijzingscomponent die ons in staat stelt om empirische uitspraken te doen over beurteenheden. Volgens het model wordt beurtwisseling interactioneel relevant op de grenzen van beurteenheden. Dit betekent dat het model voorspelt dat er een duidelijke relatie bestaat tussen beurtwisseling en complete beurteenheden. Beurtwisseling kan worden opgevat als een aanwijzing, dat de nieuwe spreker de voorgaande beurt interpreteert als mogelijk compleet. Beurtwisseling geeft zo, zonder verdere aanwijzingen dat we te maken hebben met een gemarkeerd geval, positieve evidentie voor de oriëntatie van gespreksdeelnemers op de voorgaande structuur. In termen van ons model voor beurteenheden kunnen we dat als volgt weergeven:

Beurtwisseling \longrightarrow <+,+,+>

Op basis van het beurtwisselingsmodel voorspellen we, dat beurtwisseling plaatsvindt op punten waar de structuren op alle drie niveaus mogelijk compleet zijn.

Omgekeerd kunnen we echter niet stellen dat het uitblijven van beurtwisseling aantoont dat de lopende beurt niet compleet is. Het beurtwisselingsmodel biedt expliciet de mogelijkheid dat de huidige spreker de beurt

behoudt nadat hij een mogelijk complete beurtopbouweenheid heeft geproduceerd. Beurtwisseling is niet deterministisch en in dat opzicht is beurtwisseling dus a-symmetrisch. Dit heeft belangrijke consequenties voor de te volgen methodologie.

We toetsen onze claim dat beurtwisseling plaats vindt op punten waarop de structuren op alle drie de niveaus mogelijk compleet zijn, op twee manieren. Allereerst geven we een kwantitatieve analyse van de data. Vervolgens geven we een kwalitatieve beschrijving van de uitzonderingen op onze claim. Alleen door deze combinatie van kwalitatieve en kwantitatieve benaderingen kunnen we een goed beeld krijgen van de rol van deze structuren voor beurtwisseling in Nederlandse gesprekken.

Allereerst moet kwantitatief worden aangetoond dat gespreksdeelnemers zich daadwerkelijk oriënteren op deze structuren. Het specifieke karakter van pragmatische modellen maakt echter ook een kwalitatieve beschrijving noodzakelijk. Pragmatische modellen formuleren geen noodzakelijke voorwaarden voor communicatie. Pragmatische modellen geven richtlijnen en principes aan, met behulp waarvan betekenis wordt toegekend aan uitingen. Schending van pragmatische principes leidt niet tot onbegrijpelijke of niet interpreteerbare uitingen. Integendeel, het schenden van een pragmatisch principe geeft een uiting een extra betekenis in het licht van datzelfde principe. Dit betekent, dat we bij het toetsen van claims op basis van deze modellen verwachten ook de nodige tegenvoorbeelden te zullen vinden. Aan de hand van een kwalitatieve analyse kunnen we echter in sommige gevallen ook hier een oriëntatie op deze principes aantonen. We verwachten dat in dergelijke gevallen deze uitingen binnen de interactie als gemarkeerd zullen worden behandeld. Dat wil zeggen, dat we verwachten dat we in de interactie een oriëntatie van de gespreksdeelnemers op het gemarkeerde karakter van deze beurten kunnen aanwijzen. Op deze wijze levert een kwalitatieve analyse een belangrijke aanvulling op de kwantitatieve gegevens.

Uit onze kwantitatieve analyse komt naar voren dat 63 procent van de beurtwisselingen plaatsvindt op punten waar de drie structuren mogelijk compleet zijn. Verder komen er uit een analyse van de data een aantal specifieke sets van tegenvoorbeelden naar voren.

De eerste set van tegenvoorbeelden bestaat uit gespreksfragmenten waar beurtwisseling plaatsvindt op een punt waar de huidige beurt prosodisch en/of syntactisch niet mogelijk compleet is. De nieuwe uitingen vertonen in deze voorbeelden echter wel een duidelijke oriëntatie op de semantische en pragmatische inhoud van de uiting. Dit suggereert dat de voorgaande beurt door de gespreksdeelnemers wel als pragmatisch compleet wordt behandeld. Fragment 4 geeft een voorbeeld van een dergelijke sequentiële context.

Fragment 4.

1. A: ja maar ik heb het gewoon gehad
2. A: want e:h noue:h
3. (.)
4. A: het is nu gewoon mooi gewee[st
5. B: [ja
6. A: we blij- we kunnen wel blijven klagen,

7. A: maar als het niet verandert
8. A: [dan moet ie eruit
9. B: [dan houdt 't [op
10. A: [ja nou precies ja

In Fragment 4 bespreken A en B het problematische gedrag van een huisgenoot. A geeft in regel 1 tot en met 6 aan dat haar geduld op is. In regel 7 en 8 formuleert ze een ultimatum: als het gedrag niet verandert, moet de huisgenoot het huis verlaten. Dit ultimatum wordt geformuleerd in de vorm van een complexe zin met een vooropgeplaatste conditionele bijzin (*als het niet verandert*). De hele constructie wordt ingeleid door *maar*. In regel 9 is sprake van beurtwisseling: B selecteert zichzelf als volgende spreker, terwijl de voorgaande beurt syntactisch niet compleet is. Uit haar beurt komt echter naar voren dat de pragmatische strekking van de voorgaande beurt wel duidelijk is. Ze reageert duidelijk op een volledige interpretatie van de pragmatische structuur. We kunnen dus stellen dat de beurt pragmatisch wel mogelijk compleet is. Dit toont aan dat pragmatische compleetheid en syntactische compleetheid niet samenvallen.

Verder valt op dat de beurt van B een bijzondere vorm heeft. Syntactisch is haar bijdrage hoorbaar als een voortzetting van de beurt van A. B's beurt begint met *dan*, en wijst hiermee expliciet terug naar het eerste deel van de beurt van A. A produceert een als zodanig herkenbare voortzetting van de beurt van B. Dit maakt het aannemelijk dat er ook in dit geval een duidelijke oriëntatie is op de beurt als een complexe structuur. De syntactische opmaak van B's beurt maakt duidelijk, dat de voorgaande beurt ook door B als incompleet wordt gezien. In deze gevallen gebruiken gespreksdeelnemers de syntactische structuur van de uiting om de interactionele status van de beurt te contextualiseren.

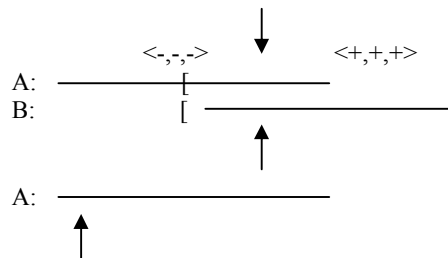
Een tweede interessante set van tegenvoorbeelden bestaat uit hoordersignalen. De meeste hoordersignalen worden geplaatst op plaatsen waar de huidige beurt prosodisch en syntactisch compleet is. Soms gebeurt dit op punten waar duidelijk sprake is van een pragmatische projectie. Aangezien deze hoordersignalen geen langdurige aanspraak maken op het spreekrecht, worden ze in veel studies buiten beschouwing gelaten. Als ze echter als tegenvoorbeelden in de analyse worden betrokken, komen daarbij een aantal opmerkelijke regulariteiten aan het licht. Uit onze data blijkt, dat hoordersignalen een duidelijke oriëntatie vertonen op de wijze waarop uitingen binnen een conversatie worden geproduceerd. Dit komt het duidelijkst naar voren bij opsommingen. Sprekers kunnen opsommingen op verschillende manieren vormgeven. Ze kunnen alle onderdelen van een opsomming in een enkele intonatiecontour presenteren, maar de afzonderlijke onderdelen ook in een aparte intonatiecontour realiseren. Uit onze data blijkt dat gespreksdeelnemers zich in deze gevallen duidelijk op de realisatie van de opsomming richten en niet op de pragmatische projectie van de opsomming in zijn geheel. Dit betekent dat hoordersignalen niet per definitie wachten met het geven van hoordersignalen of een reactie, tot de hele lijst is geproduceerd. Als de onderdelen worden geproduceerd in afzonderlijke intonatiecontouren, worden er ook hoordersignalen geplaatst na de onderdelen van de lijst. Het is dus niet zozeer de pragmatische status van de uiting, maar de syntactische en prosodische realisatie van

de opsomming die doorslaggevend is. Ook hier blijkt een duidelijke oriëntatie op de complexe structuur van beurten in Nederlandse gesprekken. Onderdelen van een opsomming worden niet als afzonderlijke interactionele zetten gezien op basis van hun pragmatische status. Door een specifieke linguïstische vormgeving kunnen deze onderdelen door de spreker echter wel als afzonderlijke onderdelen gecontextualiseerd worden. In dat geval worden ze door de linguïstische vorm elk afzonderlijk interactioneel gethematiseerd.

Een ander punt waarop blijkt dat de syntactische en prosodische realisatie van onderdelen een belangrijk richtpunt is voor gespreksdeelnemers, is in het geval van *repair*. Herstelwerk wordt in gesprekken bij voorkeur zo dicht mogelijk bij de aanleiding voor het herstel gerealiseerd. Bij de plaatsing van dit herstelwerk, lijken gespreksdeelnemers zich in de eerste plaats te richten op de syntactische en de prosodische opbouw van een beurt. Herstelwerk wordt geïnitieerd op het eerste punt waar deze structuren samenvallen. Deze tegenvoorbeelden geven inzicht in de status van de verschillende structuren met betrekking tot beurtwisseling. Beurtwisseling lijkt zich in eerste instantie te richten op de syntactische en prosodische realisatie van beurten. Pragmatische structuren beperken het soort acties dat op dergelijke punten gerealiseerd kan worden, maar leggen geen restricties op aan de beurtwisseling op zich.

De laatste set van tegenvoorbeelden bestaat uit beurtwisselingen op punten waar alle drie de structuren incompleet zijn. Ook hier kunnen we in sommige gevallen laten zien dat de gespreksdeelnemers zich oriënteren op het feit dat de lopende beurt niet compleet is. In sommige gevallen wordt de lopende beurt afgebroken en wordt de beurtwisseling niet geproblematiseerd. In een groot aantal van deze tegenvoorbeelden zijn er echter duidelijke aanwijzingen dat de gespreksdeelnemers de beurtwisseling als gemarkeerd behandelen. We beschrijven deze voorbeelden aan de hand van het volgende schema waarin drie sequentiële posities worden aangegeven:

Figuur 3.



Op elk van deze sequentiële posities vinden we aanwijzingen voor onze interpretatie dat gespreksdeelnemers dergelijke beurtwisselingen als gemarkeerd kunnen contextualiseren:

1. de lopende beurt wordt voortgezet met een luider volume en een wijziging in spreesnelheid. Ook kunnen er lexicale elementen worden herhaald,
2. de nieuwe beurt bevat herhalingen van lexicale elementen en een gemarkeerd volume,
3. als de lopende beurt wordt afgebroken wordt deze bij de eerstvolgende mogelijkheid gerecycled.

Ook in deze gevallen maakt een kwalitatieve analyse aannemelijk, dat gespreksdeelnemers zich in deze sequentiële contexten op de beurt als complexe eenheid oriënteren.

Deze eerste corpusstudie toont aan dat beurten in Nederlandse gesprekken uit structuren op drie verschillende niveaus bestaan en dat gespreksdeelnemers deze verschillende structuren inzetten bij de organisatie van beurtwisseling. Verder blijkt dat de rol die de verschillende structuren spelen verschilt. Beurtwisseling blijkt in eerste instantie een lokaal fenomeen. Bij het vaststellen van mogelijke momenten om de beurt over te nemen, lijken gespreksdeelnemers zich vooral te richten op de prosodische en syntactische opmaak van de lopende beurt. De pragmatiek lijkt vooral een rol te spelen bij de selectie van de mogelijke interactionele acties die op een bepaald punt kunnen worden uitgevoerd. In het tweede deel van het onderzoek proberen we meer inzicht te krijgen in de wijze waarop deze drie structuren samenwerken bij de productie van specifieke interactionele eenheden.

Uit de voorgaande bespreking blijkt dat beurten opgevat kunnen worden als complexe eenheden en dat de prosodische, de syntactische en de pragmatische structuur van gesprekeenheden een rol spelen bij beurtwisseling in Nederlandse gesprekken. Uit onze analyses kwam echter ook naar voren dat deze structuren verschillende rollen spelen. In een tweede corpusstudie proberen we de interactie tussen deze structuren helder te krijgen, door te kijken naar de rol van de afzonderlijke eenheden in de volgende specifieke sequentiële context.

A: _____ <+,+,+>
(pause)

A: _____ <+,+,+>

In deze context produceert een spreker een mogelijk complete beurt. Geen van de overige gespreksdeelnemers selecteert zichzelf echter als de volgende spreker en de huidige spreker spreekt door.

Deze context is interessant om een aantal redenen. Allereerst is er een punt voorbij gegaan waarop een andere spreker de beurt had kunnen overnemen. Als de huidige spreker vervolgens doorspreekt verwachten we dat, in ieder geval in sommige gevallen, er in de interactie een duidelijke oriëntatie zichtbaar is op deze specifieke sequentiële context. Een analyse van deze specifieke context geeft verdere evidentie voor onze definitie van beurten in Nederlandse gesprekken. Ten tweede kan de wijze waarop deze vervolgen door dezelfde spreker talig worden vormgegeven, inzicht geven in de rol van prosodie en syntaxis bij het realiseren van beurten in Nederlandse gesprekken.

De huidige spreker kan zijn beurt op een aantal manieren voortzetten. Syntactisch kan het vervolg worden gemarkeerd als een voortzetting van de voorgaande constructie, maar het vervolg kan ook als een nieuwe syntactische structuur worden gerealiseerd. Prosodisch heeft de spreker dezelfde mogelijkheden: het vervolg kan prosodisch worden geïntegreerd in de voorgaande contour, maar het vervolg kan ook in een aparte intonatiecontour worden geproduceerd. Gecombineerd geeft dat vier logische mogelijkheden.

Deze mogelijkheden roepen de vraag op of deze verschillende continueringen ook een verschillende interactionele status hebben. Hebben continueringen die expliciet linguïstisch worden gemarkeerd als voortzettingen van de voorgaande structuur, een andere interactionele status dan continueringen die worden gecontextualiseerd als nieuwe linguïstische structuren?

In deze studie nemen we de syntactische status van de continueringen als uitgangspunt. We concentreren ons hierbij op de gevallen waar de huidige spreker zijn vervolg expliciet syntactisch markeert in relatie tot de voorgaande structuur. Dat kan in de vorm van een nieuwe clause die door middel van onderschikking aan de voorgaande clause wordt gerelateerd, maar dit kan ook door de productie van een zinsdeel of een fragment dat alleen geïnterpreteerd kan worden in relatie tot de voorgaande clause. De sequentiële context van continueringen die de vorm aannemen van een onderschikkende clause, kan als volgt grafisch worden weergegeven:

A: [matrix clause]_{<+,+,+>} (pause) [onderschikkende clause]

Fragment 5 geeft een voorbeeld.

Fragment 5.

1. A: hij kon dat zelf op dat moment ook niet_{<+,+,+>}
2. (0.3)
- 3. A: omdat hij met die boot zat_{<+,+,+>}

In regel 1 produceert A een mogelijk complete beurt. Na een korte pauze produceert ze een continuering. Deze continuering heeft de vorm van een onderschikkende zin. Syntactisch is de continuering dus gemarkeerd als een voortzetting van de voorgaande structuur.

Het merendeel van de clauses dat in deze sequentiële positie wordt gerealiseerd is adverbiaal (94%). De meerderheid van deze adverbiale clauses is causaal (67%). Temporele adverbiale clauses zijn echter ook relatief frequent (19%). Bij de prosodische realisatie van deze adverbiale clauses is er geen duidelijke trend.

Functioneel lijken deze continueringen vooral voor te komen in situaties waar een gewenste respons op de voorgaande beurt uitblijft. De continueringen geven de hoorder een gelegenheid om deze gewenste respons alsnog te produceren. Door de vormgeving als voortzettingen van de voorgaande structuur, vervullen deze continueringen twee interactionele functies. Allereerst creëren ze een nieuw punt van compleetheit waarop de gewenste reactie alsnog geproduceerd kan worden. Ten tweede doen ze dat op een manier, die het vorige punt waarop de beurt had kunnen

worden overgenomen als het ware wegpoetst. In retrospectief is er slechts één constructie geproduceerd. Op deze wijze heeft de syntactische opmaak van de continuering een duidelijk interactionele functie.

Als kijken naar prosodische realisering van deze continueringen, zien we een interessant beeld met betrekking tot de discourse-relaties die deze continueringen uitdrukken. We beschrijven de relatie tussen de prosodische realisering en de pragmatisch/semantische functie voor één specifieke soort continuering: *omdat*-clauses. *Omdat*-clauses kunnen verschillende discourse-relaties uitdrukken. Er kan sprake zijn van een causale relatie in de werkelijkheid, maar *omdat* kan ook epistemische of speech act relaties uitdrukken. *Omdat*-clauses die het eerste type relatie uitdrukken, worden in ons corpus significant vaker prosodisch geïntegreerd in de voorgaande intonatiecontour. *Omdat*-clauses die een epistemische relatie uitdrukken, worden daarentegen significant vaker gerealiseerd in een aparte intonatiecontour.

De *omdat*-clauses in ons corpus vertonen ook nog een andere bijzondere eigenschap. *Omdat*-clauses hebben in de Nederlandse schrijftaal altijd bijzinvolgorde. Ons corpus bevat echter ook een groot aantal *omdat*-clauses met hoofdzinvolgorde. Deze *omdat*-clauses zijn syntactisch minder geïntegreerd dan de tegenhangers met bijzinvolgorde. De relatie met de hoofdzin is in dit geval minder hecht. Het is interessant dat dit syntactische verschil wordt gespiegeld in de semantische relaties die door deze clauses worden uitgedrukt. *Omdat*-clauses met hoofdzinvolgorde drukken vaker epistemische relaties uit dan content relaties. Voor de prosodische realisering van deze clauses vonden we geen duidelijk beeld.

Continueringen die de vorm aannemen van een onderschikkende clause vertonen zowel prosodisch als syntactisch dus een duidelijk verband met de voorgaande structuur. Daarnaast is er een duidelijke relatie tussen de prosodische realisering van deze clauses en de semantische relatie die deze clauses uitdrukken. Hoewel de syntactische vorm hier een eerste trend aangeeft, lijkt het toch vooral de prosodie die in deze gevallen differentieert tussen de verschillende relaties.

Als we kijken naar continueringen die de vorm hebben van zinsdelen of fragmenten, zien we een vergelijkbaar beeld. Ook hier kunnen we een onderscheid maken tussen fragmenten die geanalyseerd kunnen worden als een vervolg van de voorgaande syntactische structuur en fragmenten waarvoor dat niet het geval is. Fragmenten 6 en 7 illustreren dit onderscheid.

Fragment 6.

1. D: kunnen we ook fijn homo's gaan kijken
2. D: [lachen]
3. D: ranzige bezigheid

Fragment 7.

4. A: Toen ik daarna weer wegliep van e:h
5. A: van de dierenwinkel met mijn penning

6. A: ware paar jongetjes achter me
7. A: echt jongetjes van tien ellef jaar
8. A: die ware=
9. A: aan het prate over waar de beste dealer wohonde
10. A: (lachen) (1.0)
11. A: in de rivierenwijk

Aan het einde van regel 1 in fragment 6 is D's beurt mogelijk compleet. Na een korte pauze, waarin geen van de overige gespreksdeelnemers de beurt neemt, produceert ze de continuering *ranzige bezigheid*. Deze continuering kan niet geanalyseerd worden als een vervolg van de voorgaande syntactische structuur. Syntactisch moeten we deze uiting dus opvatten als een op zichzelf staand fragment. Het fragment onderhoudt natuurlijk wel een relatie met de voorgaande clause en ook is het fragment voor zijn interpretatie afhankelijk van de voorgaande clause, maar in strikte zin maken deze dislocatiestructuren geen deel uit van de zin op zich.

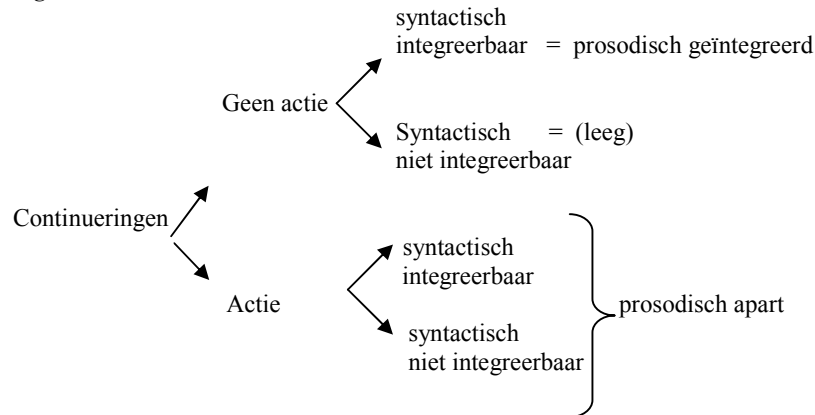
Fragment 7 vertoont eenzelfde sequentiële structuur, maar hier produceert A in regel 8 een continuering die wel gehoord kan worden als een vervolg van de voorgaande syntactische structuur. In retrospectief is hier op incrementele wijze één syntactische structuur geproduceerd. Dit laatste type continuering is in ons corpus het meest frequent.

Het is interessant dat de functionele status en de prosodische realisering van deze continueringen echter niet direct samen lijken te hangen met de syntactische status. Als we kijken naar continueringen die syntactisch niet als vervolg van de voorgaande clause geanalyseerd kunnen worden, zien we dat deze altijd in een aparte intonatiecontour worden gerealiseerd. Kijken we naar de interactionele status van deze elementen, dan zien we dat deze uitingen vaak worden geïnterpreteerd als zelfstandige acties. Zo leveren ze vaak een nieuw thema dat door de andere gesprekspartners wordt overgenomen als onderwerp van gesprek. In deze gevallen lijkt de interactionele status dus duidelijk gespiegeld in de syntactische en prosodische realisatie.

Dit geldt echter niet voor continueringen die geanalyseerd kunnen worden als voortzettingen van de voorgaande syntactische structuur. Deze continueringen kunnen prosodisch worden geïntegreerd met de voorgaande contour, maar ze worden soms ook gerealiseerd in een eigen contour. Als we kijken naar de interactionele status van deze continueringen is het beeld diffuus. Een deel van deze continueringen lijkt te functioneren als een zelfstandige interactionele zet, terwijl het andere deel ondergeschikt lijkt te zijn aan de voorgaande uiting.

Nemen we echter de prosodische realisatie van de continueringen als uitgangspunt, dan ontstaat er een duidelijk beeld. Continueringen die prosodisch geïntegreerd zijn in de vorige contour, worden significant minder vaak opgenomen als onderwerp voor gesprek in het vervolg van de conversatie. Prosodie blijkt in dit opzicht dus een betere voorspeller van de interactionele status van een continuering dan de syntactische integreerbaarheid van deze continuering. Grafisch kunnen we dat als volgt weergeven:

Figuur 4.



Als we de syntactische status van deze continueringen als uitgangspunt nemen ontstaat er een gemengd beeld. De syntactische status lijkt dus maar zeer beperkt samen te hangen met de interactionele status van de continuering. Als een continuering syntactisch niet integreerbaar is in de voorgaande structuur, is dat een voldoende voorwaarde voor de interpretatie van deze continuering als zelfstandige actie. Het is echter geen noodzakelijke voorwaarde. Ook syntactisch integreerbare continueringen komen als zelfstandige acties voor. Nemen we echter de prosodische realisatie van de fragmenten als uitgangspunt, dan ontstaat er een duidelijk beeld. Fragmenten die prosodisch als aparte eenheid worden gecontextualiseerd, worden significant vaker als zelfstandige interactionele eenheid geïnterpreteerd door de gespreksdeelnemers. Deze fragmenten introduceren vaak een nieuw aspect binnen het gespreksthema dat wordt overgenomen door de andere participanten.

Conclusies

In deze studie betogen we dat beurten in Nederlandse gesprekken het best opgevat kunnen worden als complexe eenheden met structuur op drie verschillende niveaus. Een combinatie van kwalitatieve en kwantitatieve analyses van onze data toont aan, dat gespreksdeelnemers zich op alle drie de niveaus oriënteren bij de organisatie van beurtwisseling. Ook kwam naar voren dat deze structuren verschillende rollen spelen binnen interacties. De rol van de prosodische en syntactische opmaak van beurten speelt alleen op lokaal niveau een rol. De pragmatische structuur van een interactie stelt deelnemers in staat om grotere eenheden te projecteren. De organisatie van beurtwisseling blijkt een lokaal fenomeen. Beurtwisseling vindt plaats op punten waar de grenzen van prosodische en syntactische structuren samenvallen. De pragmatische projectie legt slechts een restrictie op aan de soorten interactionele zinnen die in een specifieke sequentiële positie kunnen worden gedaan.

De analyse van continueringen door dezelfde spreker na een mogelijk complete beurt toont een duidelijke relatie tussen de syntactische en prosodische realisering van een beurt aan de ene kant en de interactionele status en semantisch/pragmatische interpretatie van deze beurt aan de andere kant. Hierbij

blijkt vooral een duidelijke correlatie tussen de prosodische opmaak van een uiting en de pragmatische interpretatie en/of interactionele status van de uiting.

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Mike Huiskes, Utrecht 2010

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