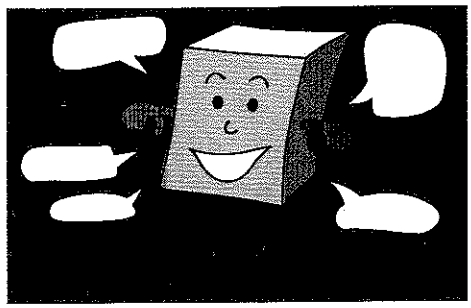
2 CONVERSATION ANALYSIS
Analysing talk-in-interaction

UNIT CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION



Have you ever been in a situation in which one speaker effectively dominated a conversation? Even if you have not, do you recognize any of the following clichés in English which relate to this very scenario?

- He's a right chatterbox.
- She can talk for England.
- He can talk until the cows come home.
- She could talk the hind legs off a donkey.
- He never lets me get a word in edgeways.

Let us suppose that we heard someone make such a remark about someone. How might a linguist begin to verify the legitimacy, and study the implications of, say, 'He never lets me get a word in edgeways'? Among other things, the answer to such a question will involve an understanding of the organization of taking turns at talk, and that is what this unit is designed to provide: an understanding of the organization of turn taking in spontaneous talk-in-interaction.

Although there are exceptions, many syntacticians (linguists interested in **grammar**) would have you believe that the most important aspects of the theory of language are essentially aspects of the theory of sentences. Of course, sentence-sized chunks are an important part of language: they are discrete, very well organized and much fun to model theoretically (➵ Unit 7). But that doesn't mean that sentence-sized chunks are the *only* part of language which is discrete, very well organized and much fun to model theoretically. Let me dispel a myth: talk-in-interaction (henceforth 'talk') is *also* incredibly well structured, and while we are perhaps not able to publish 'grammars of talk', there are many regularities which Conversation Analysis (CA) has uncovered since its birth in the mid-1960s.

This unit therefore offers another view of the linguistic horizon by giving an introduction to some of the techniques and insights provided by CA with the aim of demonstrating 'how talk is organized'. What you should learn from this unit and its related activities is outlined below:

- some conventions for making detailed written records of talk
- talk is organized on a turn-by-turn basis whereby generally one speaker speaks at a time and overlaps (when they occur) are typically resolved quickly
- organization in sequences (sequential organization) is important; we need to give a careful detailed description/analysis of turns, their components and their sequential placement in the ongoing talk
- speakers design their talk for their recipient(s)
- each turn at talk provides the speaker with the opportunity to display to their **interlocutor** what they have made of their interlocutor's preceding turn (this provides a resource for analysts as well as for participants: we can make claims about what participants are doing with their talk by looking to see how it is treated by their interlocutor in next-turn position – i.e. our analysis is warranted by showing participant orientation to the talk/interactional task being analysed)
- everything gets into talk for a reason and conversation analysts ask 'what interactional task is this bit of talk addressed to/trying to accomplish?'
- CA's basic method is to look in detail at what people are doing at a particular point in interaction – what they are saying, what they are not saying, how they are saying something in a particular way, with particular sounds (**phonetics**), particular word order (**syntax**), particular choices of words (**lexical choice**) – in order to work out what this 'doing' might be a solution for (wording based on ten Have, 1999: 15)
- in other words, conversation analysts continually ask of their data: 'WHY THAT NOW?'.

ANALYSING TALK: CONVERSATION ANALYSIS OR DISCOURSE ANALYSIS?

This unit is concerned with the analysis of spoken interaction (talk). Because spoken interaction is often known as *discourse*, you will find a lot of literature under the heading of 'discourse analysis'. The main title of this unit, however, is 'conversation analysis'. So what's the difference between discourse analysis and conversation analysis? Very simply, discourse analysts tend to adopt a deductive methodology (reasoning from the general to the specific), focussing on rules for producing well-formed units of language larger than the sentence. Conversation analysts, on the other hand, tend to adopt an *inductive* methodology (reasoning from the particular to the general), being interested in the sequential organization of talk-in-interaction. Another potential difference stems from the ambiguity of the

word *discourse*. Since 'discourse' can be used to refer to *any* continuous stretch of language use larger than a sentence, it can also be (and often is) used in relation to written language. Conversation analysis (CA), however, only ever applies to the study of spoken language. While the contributions to be made from discourse analysis are not to be denied, only techniques and insights provided by CA are addressed in this particular unit. (➳ For further discussion of discourse analysis, see Unit 7.)

Finally, the subtitle of this unit ('analysing talk-in-interaction') should be explained. While CA was originally concerned solely with *conversational* interaction, more recently non-conversational styles of talk have been analysed using CA principles: for example, courtroom interaction, interviews, medical consultations, political speeches, radio phone-in shows, speech and language therapy sessions, stand-up comedy, task-oriented interaction, and so on. For this reason, many writers and analysts prefer to speak of analysing 'talk-in-interaction', rather than the more specific (and restrictive) term 'conversation'.

Conversation analysis

CA is an academic discipline which was developed by Harvey Sacks, a sociologist working at the University of California, in the mid-1960s. The sociologists who followed Sacks (including Emanuel Schegloff and Gail Jefferson and many, many others since) are often called ethnomethodologists. They believe that the proper object of the study of language use is the set of techniques or methods that actual participants use in constructing and interpreting actual talk. Hence ethno-methodology: the study of 'ethnic' (participants' own) methods. Although 'pure' CA has its home in sociology, in this unit we will be looking at it through the eyes of a linguist.

Followers of CA are firm believers in data-driven theories. They believe that the analyst must not come to the data with pre-defined categories but rather must wait for the data to yield the real categories that the participants themselves orient to in talk. The focus of CA is on the (sometimes very mundane-looking) characteristics of spoken interaction. Just some of the many issues that have been investigated include: turn taking, repair mechanisms, agreements, disagreements, openings, closings, compliments and various issues relating to institutionalized talk. In this unit, however, we can concentrate on only a few aspects. So what should be covered and what left out? Following Sacks (1984: 27), the way that this dilemma will be dealt with will be to pick a bit of data that I just 'happen to have' and use it to demonstrate how talk is an organized phenomenon.

In order to conduct any rigorous study the analyst needs some body of evidence to observe. For the analyst of talk, that means finding instances of talk in order to

make observations. But human ears and brains are not particularly efficient when it comes to accurately remembering all that goes on in the fast flow of speech. If you don't believe this, try Activity 2.1.

Activity 2.1

Without warning, ask someone to repeat what you just said. If it was anything much more complicated than a minimally simple single **clause**, then it is doubtful that they will be able to give you a verbatim repetition. Sure, they may *paraphrase* what you said reasonably enough, but that won't do for analytic purposes. And even if they *are* able to give an accurate repetition of the words you used, they are certainly much less likely to be able to recreate your pauses and **intonation** pattern with much accuracy. (To fully check their (in)ability to do this, you may prefer to play them a bit of TV conversation that you have on video.)

TRANSCRIPTION

So how do linguists avoid relying on their less-than-perfect memories? They enlist the aid of audio (and often video) recordings of the interactions they are interested in. But even recordings have their problems, and at least in the first instance, it is sometimes easier to *see* what is going on in talk than hear it. Thus, in almost all cases, analysts also choose to work from a written record of what is on tape. It is called a **transcript** or transcription of the interaction.

Typically, transcriptions end up looking a bit like a script for a play, with abbreviated character names down the left hand margin and what they say to the right of the names – as in Extract 1, which is a transcript of a telephone conversation (now famous in the CA world) between Ilene (Ile) and Charlie (Cha). It was transcribed by Gail Jefferson. The extract is used here because of its fame: it is therefore just possible that your lecturer(s) may have access to a sound recording for you to listen to.

Extract 1: Trip to Syracuse

```
01  Ile:    Hullo:,
                    (0.3)
    Cha:    hHello is eh::m:: (0.2) .hh-.hh Ilene there?
    Ile:    Ya::h, this is Ile:[ne,
05  Cha:                       [.hh Oh hi this's Charlie about th'trip
            teh Syracuse?
```

Ile: Ye:a:h, Hi (k-ch)
Cha: Hi howuh you doin.
Ile: Goo::[d,
Cha: [hhhe:h heh .hhhh I wuz uh:m: (.) .hh I wen' ah:- (0.3)
I spoke teh the gi:r- I spoke tih Karen.
(Cha): (.hhhh)/(0.4)
Cha: And u:m:: (.) ih wz rea:lly ba:d because she decided of a:ll
weekends fuh this one tih go awa:y
(0.6)
Ile: Wha:t¿
(0.4)
Cha: She decidih tih go away this weekend.
Ile: Yea:h,
Cha: .hhhh=
(Ile): =.kh[h
Cha: [So tha:[:t
(Ile): [k-khhh
Cha: Yihknow I really don't have a place tuh sta:y.
Ile: .hh Oh:::::.hh
(0.2)
Ile: .hhh So yih not g'nna go up this weeken'?
( ): (hhh)/(0.2)
Cha: Nu::h I don't think so.
Ile: How about the following weekend.
(0.8)
Cha: .hh Dat's the vacation isn'it?
Ile: .hhhhh Oh:. .hh ALright so:- no ha:ssle,
(.)
Ile: S[o-
Cha: [Ye:h,
Ile: Yihkno:w::
( ): .hhh
Ile: So we'll make it fer another ti:me then.
(0.5)
Ile: Yihknow jis let me know when yer g'nna go:.
Cha: .hh Sure .hh
Ile: yihknow that- that's awl, whenever you have intentions'v
going .hh let me know.
Cha: Ri:ght.

```
    Ile:    Oka::y?
    Cha:    Okay,=
    Ile:    =Thanks inneh- e- than:ks: anyway Charlie,
    Cha:    Ri:ght.
50  Ile:    Oka:y?
    Cha:    Oka[y,
    Ile:       [Ta:ke keyuh
    Cha:    Speak tih you [(    )
    Ile:                  [Bye: bye
55  Cha:    Bye,
```

Of course, this extract has a lot of 'stuff' in it that wouldn't be found in a play script. For example there are stray square brackets (as in lines 4 and 5, 9 and 10), odd punctuation (such as the commas at the ends of lines 1, 4, 9), line numbers in the left hand margin, numbers in parentheses and unconventional spellings. In the next section these conventions will be explained.

Transcription conventions

The transcription conventions used in CA are usually based on the system developed by Gail Jefferson (another good reason for picking the Syracuse data). It is very important to note, however, that not every researcher uses every convention, that some writers use some of the symbols differently, and that some even feel the need to invent their own notation symbols. However, whatever system an author chooses, they should always provide a listing of their conventions so that their readers can interpret the transcripts. Below we will see examples of many of these conventions with (where possible) examples from 'Syracuse'. (Don't worry if there are no examples in 'Syracuse' – there will be plenty in Activity 2.2.)

Overlapping turns

(1) [When there is already someone speaking, a single left bracket [marks the start of overlapped talk. The transcripts are formatted so that when overlaps occur, the overlapping contribution is arranged on the page directly below the relevant part of the already on-going contribution. For example: lines 35–36 and 51–52.

(2)] The offset (end) of all overlapped contributions is shown by a right bracket at the appropriate points in the turns of both participants.

Overlaps are very brief in 'Syracuse' and Jefferson has chosen not to mark the offsets. This highlights a very important point about transcription: while recognized guidelines exist, that is all they are – guidelines. That is why, as mentioned above, you will often find transcriptions using different symbols or possibly even using symbols differently. However, as long as any departures from the norm are explicitly noted, there should be few problems.

A useful convention for *multi*-party talk was developed by Karen Brown, one of our students. She distinguished the offsets of multiple overlaps in a turn by appending the closing brackets with a number in parentheses. For example, when](50) is used in a pair of **utterances** it indicates the 50th offset of simultaneous talk in the transcript. As](50) will appear twice, it clearly shows which utterances finish where.

Turns which start simultaneously

(3) [[When there is no current speaker, onset of simultaneous contributions from both participants is marked using double left brackets.

Latched contributions

(4) = An utterance that immediately follows the preceding utterance without a gap is said to be a latched utterance. It is transcribed with a pair of = signs: one at the end of the preceding stretch of talk and one immediately prior to the onset of the latched utterance. For example: lines 47–48.

Pauses

(5) (.) A micro pause of less than 0.2 seconds. For example: lines 10 and 13.

(6) (0.0) Longer pauses are timed to the nearest tenth of a second and are put within parentheses. (3.1) therefore represents a silence of 3.1 seconds. For example: lines 2, 3 and 10.

Where silences cannot be attributed to a speaker, the pause is marked on its own line. For example: lines 2, 15, 17.

If you are transcribing but don't have access to a stopwatch, it might be useful to know that speaking at a normal speed produces approximately five syllables per second (hence 1 syllable = 0.2 seconds). Hence amateur photographers developing film, sky divers waiting to pull their rip cords and Ross Geller from the sitcom *Friends* (final series where he (mis)times his spray-on tan) often use 'Mississippi' as a counting tool: 'one Mississippi' = 5 syllables = 1 second.

(7) + Pauses may be transcribed with + signs if overlap needs marking (though the need for this is rare). Each + represents a pause of approximately 0.1 seconds in length.

(8) ((pause)) Long, untimed pauses are marked by ((pause)). These are rarely found because if a silence is long enough to be noticeable, it is long enough to be timed.

Characteristics of delivery

(9) >< Talk delivered at a faster rate than surrounding talk is transcribed within angled brackets pointing inwards (or >> << for *much* faster talk).

(10) <> Talk delivered at a slower rate than surrounding talk is transcribed within angled brackets pointing outwards (or << >> for *much* slower talk).

(11) - Indicates the utterance is cut off mid-flow. In terms of phonetics, this often involves **glottal** closure (➳ Unit 8). It is a very powerful device for maintaining a turn. For example: lines 11, 43, 48.

(12) : Elongation of the preceding sound. The more colons, the longer the sound. For example: lines 1, 3, 4 and a really long stretch in L25.

(13) ? Gradual rising intonation. While a ? very often indicates a question (as in lines 3, 32, 46), it is important to note that it doesn't necessarily mean that. For example, the utterance in lines 5 and 6 is clearly a statement, and yet Jefferson has used a ? to indicate that the pitch gradually rises towards the end. This highlights the point that traditional punctuation marks are not used for punctuation, but rather intonation.

Because this non-question, high rising terminal (HRT) intonation is a feature of Australian speech, it is sometimes known as Australian Question Intonation (or AQI).

(14) . Gradual falling intonation. While a . very often indicates a statement (as in lines 11, 18, 24), it is important to note that it doesn't necessarily mean that. For example, the utterance in L8 is clearly a question (marked by the word *how*), and yet Jefferson has used a . to indicate that the pitch gradually falls towards the end. A similar example can be found in L30.

(15) , Fall–rise intonation, often signalling an unfinished turn-in-progress.

For example in L4, the first comma after 'Ya::h' apparently indicates that Ilene has not finished her turn.

(16) ! More animated intonation (often rise–fall).

(17) ... Utterance 'trails off'.

Abnormal volume and pitch

(18) ° ° Text surrounded by degree signs is quieter than the surrounding talk. I distinguish four levels of quietness: °quiet°, °°very quiet°°, °°°exceedingly quiet°°°, and °°°°virtually inaudible°°°°.

(19) CAPITALS Louder than the normal surrounding talk. (This convention is often adopted in e-mails where capitalization can be interpreted as SHOUTING!) For example: L33 where the first syllable of 'alright' is transcribed as being louder. There are several other capital letters throughout 'Syracuse', but they are always isolated and don't represent loudness. For example, some transcribers use initial capital letters at the beginning of utterances – and some don't; some use them for proper names (like *Ilene*, *Charlie*, *Syracuse*, *Karen*) – and some don't; but nearly all transcribers (fickle as they are) tend to maintain a capital letter for the first person **pronoun**, 'I'.

(20) ↑↑ Notably higher shift in pitch for the text between the upward pointing arrows.

(21) ↓↓ Notably lower shift in pitch from the surrounding talk.

(22) underlining Other emphasis/**stress** (sometimes indicated by *italics*). For example: lines 1, 3, 4, 5 – indeed, virtually every line seems to have some emphasis!

Non-verbal activity

(23) (h) Audible outbreath (number of hs corresponds to length of breath). Some authors don't put the hs in parentheses. For example: lines 3 (before 'Hello'), 23, 28.

(24) (.h) Audible inbreath (number of hs corresponds to length of breath). Again, some authors don't put the hs in parentheses. For example: lines 3, 5, 10. For obvious reasons audible inbreath occurs most often utterance-initially.

(25) (ha)/(heh) Syllable of laughter. (cha) is laughter involving some degree of friction. Again, some authors don't use parentheses. For example: L10 (twice).

(26) ((cough)) Representations of non-verbal behaviour are transcribed within double parentheses.

(27) ((LS)) 'Lip Smack' represents the noise that lips make as they open at the beginning of an utterance (in fact there is often also a flavour of alveolar click ➳ Unit 8). I have never found anyone else who transcribes them like this, though. If you ever find them marked, they are usually noted (rather more ambiguously) as ((tut)).

Transcription doubt

(28) ( ) Parentheses indicate talk that cannot be accurately transcribed. Any transcription within the parentheses indicates merely a *possible* hearing. (An X within the parentheses can be used to represent a syllable. Some authors may use Xs (or some other symbol) for syllables but without parentheses.) For example: in L12 there is doubt as to whether the speaker is Charlie (though he is the most likely) and also doubt as to whether it is an inbreath or a silence of 0.4 seconds. A similar example occurs on L28 with an outbreath (though here, the speaker is completely indeterminable). A final example occurs on L53 where Jefferson hears Charlie saying *something* while Ilene overlaps with 'Bye: bye' but she cannot offer even a best guess as to what.

Other conventions

(29)	odd spelling	Non-conventional spelling is often used to more closely represent the actual pronunciation of words. Examples occur on most lines in 'Syracuse'.
(30)	anonymity	Where appropriate, personal details (such as names, addresses, telephone numbers, bank account details, etc.) are usually anonymized with alternative words of a similar syllable structure.
(31)	line numbers	Transcript lines are numbered (not necessarily individually) in the left hand margin. For example: lines 1, 5, 10, 15 ...
(32)	→	When analysing data, lines of particular interest can be indicated using an arrow in the left margin. We will see examples later in the unit.

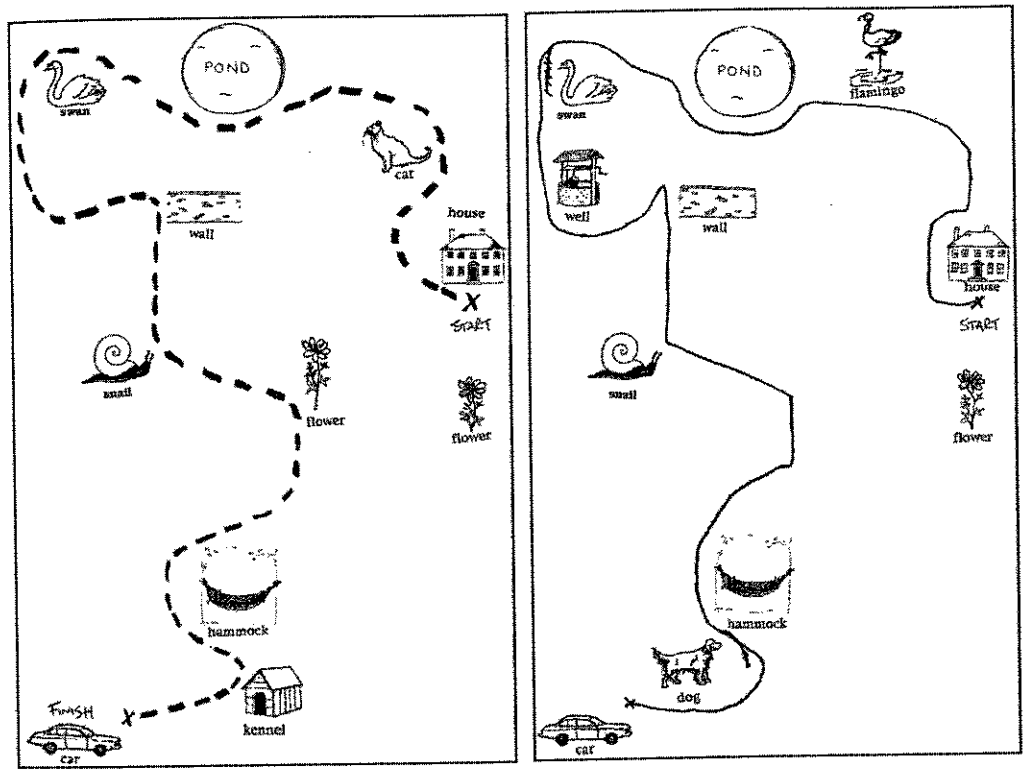
TASK-ORIENTED DATA

Soon, Extract 2 will be used to illustrate what Sacks (1984: 27) calls 'a bunch of observations' about the orderedness of talk. However, because the content of this data might initially seem a little odd, some prior explanation will be useful.

The recording is of a pair of participants (PK and DN) engaged in a task that was designed to elicit natural, yet restricted dialogue. The task in question is known as the 'Map Task' (see Anderson *et al.* 1991). It has been widely used to support the study of spontaneous speech and **communication** of normally developing children, normal adults, sleep-deprived soldiers, dysphasic adults (➳ Unit 11) and children with speech and language disorders.

Two dialogue partners each have a schematic map drawn on a large sheet of paper (see Figure 2.1). The task involves one participant (designated the Information Giver (IG)) describing the pre-drawn route on his map to the other participant (the Information Follower (IF)), whose map has no route. The IG's ultimate aim is to get the IF to successfully draw the route. The participants sit opposite each other at a table constructed so that neither can see the other's map.

Although both IG and IF have copies of the basic map, differences exist between the two – specifically, the IG has three landmarks which are absent from the IF's map, which in turn has three landmarks that are not on the IG's. Thus, in total, there are six 'problem' points to be discovered *en route*. In the pair of maps in Figure 2.1, the three IG-specific landmarks are *cat*, *flower* and *kennel*; the IF-specific features are *flamingo*, *well* and *dog*. The reason for the existence of these landmark mismatches is to set up a genuine information gap between the participants.



PK's map (information giver) DN's map (information follower)

Figure 2.1 Maps for Extract 2

The participants are made aware that there may be discrepancies. They are also told that there is no time constraint. So while the data in Extract 2 is clearly not conversational, it is unscripted, natural and, most certainly, talk-in-interaction.

Activity 2.2

Now you have seen examples of various transcription symbols, see how many of these conventions you can find in Extract 2.

All are present except: (7) +, (8) ((pause)) and (32) →.

Extract 2: Map task data (PK & DN)

You should be able to listen to this interaction at www.routledge.com/textbooks/0415291798

PK ((LS)) First na[me?]

DN [Right.] Okay ((eyebrow flash))

PK First name again?

DN Dale.

PK ↓Dale.↓ (.) Right Dale. (1.0) To the right of your map roughly approximately,

DN °Aha°

PK say seven inches down or eight inches down,

DN [[>°Yeah°<]

PK [[°°have you°°] have you got a ↑starting↑ mark.

DN Yeah I've got a- a starting mark and it's just below a house.

PK It's just <u>below</u> the house=

DN =°Aha°

PK Okay. (1.3) ((cough)) °((LS))° If I was moving from (0.9) to the left o' the house and coming upwards, before you start drawing,

DN °Mm°

PK is there an obstruction above it?

DN (1.2) Er (.) right at the top of the map there's a flamingo,

PK At the very top?=

DN =Yeah

PK Is there anything below that=

DN =>There's nothing< directly below it °at all.°=

PK =°((LS))°=There's nothing below it.

DN [[°°No.°°]

PK [[Okay] So (.) imagine r:oughly about (.) <an inch and a half above the house.>

DN °°°((LS))°°°=Yeah=

PK =You know the the the the the the left hand chimney

DN °°°((LS))°°°Aha.

PK And I want you take a (1.3) ((cough)) roughly (3.2) a route from the 'X' right?

DN °°°((LS))°°°=°Yeah°

PK just past - just passing the lower edge of the house - left hand side o' the house,=

DN =°Yeah°

PK Bring it round in a circle,

DN °°°((LS))°°°=°Yeah°

PK Okay? Until you stop roughly above the w- does it say ↑house above↑ your house.

DN (.) °↑Yeah↑°

PK Well okay bring it round in a circle and you stop just
about an inch which above the letter 'h' okay?
DN (0.8) >Oh d'you say there's another house.<
PK °Hmm?°
DN >Did you say there was another house<
PK >No no it's just the one hou- [no X] - =
DN [°Right°]
PK =is< is er has it has it got the word 'house'
on it?
DN °°((LS))°°=Yeah
PK ↓°Well°↓ (.) just above the 'h' you should - come from
your start and draw your route,
DN Yeah
PK round in a circle. Come round i- out by about (.) an inch
from the end of the ↑house↑
DN Yeah
PK nice circle round (.) until you stop (.) roughly about-
a- about an inch above (.) the letter 'house' - the
letter 'h' (1.1) °where it says 'house'. Okay?°
DN Okay yeah.
PK Now [you stop there.]
DN [Right >what by the left<] chimney (X)
PK Hmm?
DN Near the left chimney
PK °°((LS))°°=(.hh) No jus: above the left chimney
[>but it's above<] the left chimney=
DN [°°Yeah°°]
PK =you'd be stopping somewhere roughly about an inch and a
half °°off. Okay?°°
DN °Okay°
PK °Okay?° So you stop there. (0.9) Now (.) bring your route
approximately up about another ↑inch↑ in a- er roughly an
inch an' a half in from the edge o' yer map, going north.
DN °Yeah.° Straight up
PK °Straight ↑up↑ Ok[ay?°]
DN [Okay]
PK Right. (0.8) Now (1.3) you should be approximately
roughly (0.9) what say three and a half inches from the
top o' your (.) map?

DN °Aha yeah° °°I'm [a bit more maybe°°]
PK [°Okay?] That's good.° (1.2)
Now °°°((LS))°°° before we start circling down- round to your left,
DN °°Mmm.°°
PK is there any other obstructions: say roughly about the middle of <your map(h)?> °°°((LS))°°°=Er near the head.
DN Er °°°((LS))°°° (1.9) on the left of the flamingo, (.) I've got a pond.=
PK =°That's it that's what we're looking for.°
DN °°Yeah°°
PK ((LS))=Okay? (.) Right. (0.9) Now where you've stopped (.) on your route,
DN °((LS))=Aha°
PK Right?
DN ((small nod))
PK I want you to circl:e up and round to your left, °(.h)° until you c- is there a small mark (.) a- underneath where it says 'pond'.=
DN °°((LS))°° (.) Er no.
PK There's not.=
DN =°°Er no°°=
PK =You know underneath - underneath the word 'pond' there's not a- a wee mark=
DN =>>Oh is like a<< wa:ve.
PK Like a wee wave.=
DN =°Yeah°=
PK =↑°Yes°↑=
DN =>So there's thr[ee-<] there's THREE waves altogether.
PK [Three]
DN [[<There's the one wave.°>]
PK [[There's three waves aye] it's it's like (.) it's like the moon [you know two eye- two eyebrows and a … ((nod)) Okay!]
DN [°Yeah ((nod)) yeah. Got it. Yeah. (.) Aha° ((no]ds))
PK °(.h)° Right (1.0) now with you coming from >the< right hand side o' your map,
DN °Yeah°=

PK =Okay? °(.h)° I want you to go up in your circle very gently and start moving to the left (.hhh) and the the head o' your circle should be equal w- with (.) that small wave which is approximately say (0.8) three eighths
(0.9) from the bottom o' the pond upwards?
DN ((LS))=Aha yeah.=
PK =Okay. So: (.) whe- where you left off (.) above the word house
DN Yeah
PK (0.7) circle up, okay?
DN Yeah
PK And round [to your le]ft (.) very gently
DN [>°relative to°<]
DN °Yeah.°
PK Okay? [[°And-°]
DN [[>Under the] flamingo<
PK (1.0) ((cough)) Well you're below the you'll be f- [below] the falingo [you're] er flamingo. Okay?
DN [>°Below it°<] [°Yeah°]
PK And head towards the word (.) towards 'pond' the the pond. Okay?=
DN =°Yeah°
PK °((LS))° And the the head o' your circle should be equal: (.) with the wave. Okay?
DN °°°((LS))°°°=°Okay yeah°
PK °Okay?° °°°((LS))°°°=And start to dip down, (.) under the pond and pass it by quarter of an inch.
DN °Yeah°
PK (.) Okay? Come right round under the pond
[>until you're about<]=
DN [°°Yeah?°°]
PK =(.) quarter o' an inch (.) circling under the pond. Okay?
DN °↑Yeah↑°=
PK =°°°((LS))°°°=And when you get to the - as you start (.) to the er the: to get parallel with the circle wi' the pond on the left hand side o' the pond,
DN °Yeah°=
PK =S'like to move up, (.) stop there. Okay?
DN °Okay.°

SO HOW *IS* TALK ORGANIZED?

Remember that the aim of this unit is to demonstrate *how talk is organized* and so the question is where to start. CA's rightful answer is always 'the data', and now that you have some appreciation of the tools for transcribing spoken interaction, we can begin to consider the dialogue between PK and DN. However, before starting to investigate the transcription of the data an all too obvious, but nonetheless importantly vital point must be made: Extract 2 is a transcription *of* the data – it is not the data itself. The data is the talk that was produced in the original interaction. The transcript is merely a *representation* (= re-presentation) of that data. While transcribers should always endeavour to represent the data as faithfully as possible (for readers may never have access to the original recordings – hence the level of detail put into transcriptions), it is important to recognize the limitations of translating one medium (talk) into another (the written record of that talk). Thus, while Extract 2 is often referred to as 'the data', that should always be read as shorthand for 'the transcript of the data'.

Turns

Even the very briefest glance at conversational data will uncover some basic observable facts and in their seminal paper on 'A simplest systematics for the organization of turn-taking for conversation', Sacks *et al.* (1974: 700f.) noted that the following observations seem to be worth trying to explain:

- speaker change occurs (people take turns)
- generally only one participant speaks at a time
- when overlap occurs it is usually brief
- the order and distribution of turns is not fixed in advance but varies within and between conversations
- the size or length of speaker turns varies from one turn to the next
- turns (or **turn constructional units**) can be composed of: a single lexical item (**word**); **phrases**; clauses; full sentences
- what participants say in their turns, or what actions they perform with their turns, is not restricted or specified in advance.

In order to account for these observable facts, Sacks *et al.* (1974) proposed a set of rules which operate on a *turn by turn basis*. It is assumed that a speaker initially gets just one unit of talk (turn-constructional unit or TCU). At the end of a TCU is what is called a **transition relevance place** or TRP and it is at these predictable (*projectable*) TRPs that speaker change can occur.

Sacks *et al.*'s rules operate at TRPs. In these rules (wording here is based on Levinson 1983: 298), C stands for 'current speaker' and N for 'next speaker':

Rule 1

(a) If C selects N in current turn, then at the first TRP after N-selection, C must stop speaking, and N must speak next. C may select N by a number of means, for example by using N's name, by looking at N or by asking N a question.

(b) If C does not select N, then any other party may self-select, with the first to speak gaining rights to the next turn (though *rights* are not the same as a *guarantee*).

(c) If C has not selected N, and no other party self-selects (under option (b)), then C may (but need not) continue speaking (i.e. claim rights to a further TCU).

Rule 2 – applies at all subsequent TRPs

When Rule (1c) has been applied by C, at the next TRP Rules 1 (a)–(c) apply again until speaker change is achieved.

These rules predict that:

(1) only one speaker will generally be speaking at any time (because each speaker will wait either until they are selected or until a legitimate opportunity arises where they may select themselves).

(2) overlaps may occur where there are competing next speakers (as allowed by 1b).

(3) overlaps may occur at misprojected TRPs. In other words N starts to speak where they (wrongly) anticipated a TRP but where C had not actually yet completed their current TCU.

Activity 2.3

Find examples of evidence for each of these three predictions in the data (Extract 2).

Overlap or interruption?

Thus far, **overlap** has simply been seen as a case of where more than one speaker speaks simultaneously. For some purposes, however (for example when analysing issues such as agreement, conflict, control, dominance or power), it can be useful to distinguish two specific types of simultaneous talk.

A very basic distinction can be made as follows: overlap does not violate the current speaker's turn – often because it occurs near a possible TRP; **interruption**, on the other hand, does violate the current speaker's turn – it is an attempt to take the floor from the current speaker while they are still producing their TCU. (For a finer distinction, see Hutchby and Wooffitt 1998: 54ff.)

Activity 2.4

Find more examples of simultaneous talk in the data and decide whether they count as overlap or interruption.

The sounds of silence

Inter-turn silence

In addition to accounting for the brevity of simultaneous talk, Sacks *et al.*'s (1974) rules allow three different types of inter-turn silence (silence between turns) to be distinguished:

- lapses (due to the non-application of Rule 1)
- gaps (before the application of 1b or 1c)
- attributable silences (after the application of Rule 1a).

Activity 2.5

Find examples of different types of silence in the data.

Intra-turn silence

Silence is not only found between turns. It also occurs *within* them.

Activity 2.6

Find examples of intra-turn (within-turn) silence in the data. When you have found an example, consider (a) why it is allowed to exist (in other words, why the other speaker doesn't start talking) and (b) what it might exist for (in other words, think about 'what interactional task it is trying to accomplish').

Sequences of turns

Having dealt briefly with how talk is organized into turn-sized chunks, in this section we turn our attention to larger chunks of organization – in other words, *sequences* of turns.

Adjacency pairs

When anyone says anything (so long as they are not the very first person to talk in the interaction), it will be assumed that their utterance is pertinent, relevant, fitted and somehow *related* to the immediately prior utterance. Or, as Sacks (1971) puts it:

> There is one generic place where you need not include information as to which utterance you're intending to relate an utterance to … and that is if you are in Next Position to an utterance. Which is to say that for adjacently placed utterances, where a next intends to relate to a first, no other means than positioning are necessary in order to locate which utterance you're intending to deal with.
>
> (cited by Schiffrin 1988: 269)

This notion of immediate relevance (cf. Grice's third maxim ➳ Unit 3) leads onto the idea that utterances can be tied to one another in pairs by what Sacks (1995, vol. 1: 150) called 'tying rules'. Later these utterance pairs became known as **adjacency pairs**. Adjacency pairs are sequences of two communicative actions (usually, though not exclusively, performed by utterances) that are:

- (usually) produced by different speakers
- (usually) adjacent to one another

Table 2.1 Examples of possible adjacency pairs

	Part 1	*Part 2*
01	**Greeting** Hello!	**Greeting** Hi!
02	**Check** What's your name again?	**Clarification** John Doe
03	**Question** So why were you late today?	**Answer** I've already told you!
04	**Apology** I do apologize.	**Acceptance** Please – don't mention it.
05	**Compliment** That shirt really suits you!	**Thanks** Thank you.
06	**Opinion** Beethoven's fifth symphony is a masterpiece.	**Agreement** Yes – it's absolutely perfect!
07	**Accusation** It's all your fault we were late!	**Denial** No it isn't!
08	**Offer** Can I help you?	**Acceptance** Thank you very much!
09	**Assertion** I would like to do a linguistics degree here.	**Acknowledgement** Oh would you?
10	**Request** Can you lend me £5?	**Acceptance** Certainly – not a problem!
11	**Instruction** Say the password!	**Compliance** I only have postage stamps left.

- ordered as a first part and a second part
- categorized (or *typed*) so that any given first part requires a particular type of second (from a limited range).

In Table 2.1 there are some examples of paired utterance types.

While each time only one instance of a second part has been given, other types are, of course, quite possible and reasonable (e.g. we can ignore greetings, refuse to answer questions, disagree with opinions, decline offers and so on).

Activity 2.7

1 With a friend, say the pairs in Table 2.1 out loud. How do they sound?

2 Now try them again starting from 1 but with your friend starting from 2. So the pairs go 1–2, 2–3, 3–4 etc. Stop when your friend has done number 11. How do they sound?

3 Now try once more but while you start at 1, your friend should start at 3 (so 1–3, 2–4, 3–5 …). Stop when your friend has done number 11. How do they sound?

Activity 2.8

Find examples of pairs in Extract 2 that are adjacent.

Insertion sequences

Of course, adjacency pairs need not be strictly adjacent as several sub-goals might first have to be initiated and resolved in order to get the top level task done.

Activity 2.9

In Example 2 there are four question–response pairs. In the right hand margin, mark the questions (Q1–Q4) and their respective responses (R1–R4) to see which pairs are actually *adjacent*.

Example 2: Mair's Deli

Archie: Can I have a sandwich to take away please?
Eric: What would you like?
Archie: What would you recommend?
Eric: Are you a vegetarian?
Archie: Yes.
Eric: Well the pea and walnut pâté is good.
Archie: Okay I'll have one of those then!
Eric: Right, that'll be £2.20 please.

You should read the commentary on this activity at the end of the unit before continuing.

Activity 2.10

Find examples of pairs which are not adjacent because of insertion sequences in Extract 2.

What is needed is a weakening of the criterion of strict adjacency to a notion known as conditional relevance: on the production of a first part, some second part becomes both relevant and expectable. Furthermore, if a second part is not produced it will be seen to be absent, and anything that is not a second part in next position will be seen to be some preliminary to doing the second part. In short, the first part of an adjacency pair sets up specific expectations which have to be attended to. This helps explain why the very first turns at talk in Extract 2 are neither a simple adjacency pair, nor a pair with an insertion sequence. For convenience those lines are repeated below:

Extract 2a

```
1   PK      ((LS)) First na[me?]
2   DN                     [Right.] Okay ((eyebrow flash))
3   PK      First name again?
4   DN      Dale.
5   PK      ↓Dale.↓ (.) Right Dale. (1.0)
```

In L1, PK begins the dialogue with the first part of a pair: he asks his partner his name. According to our story so far, what should then follow is a fitting second part to that query. Instead, DN does something which seems to function as a signal that he is ready to begin the task. But whatever L2 is, it is clearly possible to claim that it *isn't* a response to L1: 'Okay' is not Dale's first name! ('Right' has not been analysed as part of a possible response to L1 as it is quite unlikely that a reply could have been produced by DN *before* PK had finished his query). It seems, then, that DN has simply not heard PK's utterance (and hence, going back to the promise of commentary in Activity 2.3, it makes very little sense to class it as interruptive).

From this very small piece of analysis you should see that it is very important to consider not only the words spoken, but also their precise sequential placement with respect to other words spoken.

At the beginning of this unit it was noted that each turn at talk provides the speaker with the opportunity to display to their interlocutor what they have made of their interlocutor's preceding turn. Because of this, claims can be made about what participants are doing with their talk by looking to see how it is treated by their interlocutor in next-turn position – i.e. the analysis is warranted by showing participant orientation to the talk being analysed. It is therefore (initially) PK's third turn response to DN that justifies the analytic claim that L2 isn't a response to L1 *because that is the way PK treats it*. From L3 it is clear that PK takes DN's utterance as not offering his first name – because if it was, that would make asking for it again in L3 irrelevant and inappropriate. (Of course in L4 there is also the subsequent evidence from DN himself that his name is not 'Okay'.)

This is noteworthy, not because it is remarkable that PK recognizes that 'Okay' is not his partner's first name, but rather because he does not interpret it as *some preliminary to doing an appropriate second part*. In other words, PK treats L2 as in no way relevant to his first pair part query in L1: he apparently realizes that DN isn't shunning him – he just didn't hear the question!

What is yet more interesting in this sequence is that it provides us with evidence that the adjacency pair is indeed a strong organizing principle in talk-in-interaction. Because PK recognizes that an appropriate second part is truly and *totally* absent and because the organizational power of the adjacency pair is so strong, PK goes in

pursuit of a fitting second pair part by redoing his query. (For further discussions of response pursuit see Pomerantz 1984.)

Chaining

Before this unit ends, another reason why it was important to mention adjacency pairs should be discussed – namely that adjacency pairs are linked into the system of turn taking by the following rule:

> **Adjacency pair rule**
> On the finished production of a first part of some pair, Current speaker must subsequently stop speaking to give Next an opportunity to produce some second part to the same pair.

Because of this rule, adjacency pairs are an extremely useful device for selecting potential next speakers. It is not just through the more obvious question–response pair type that Current speaker can select Next, but rather by using any first pair part of any type. And that – using one of Sacks' favourite words – is neat (in all senses of the word). What's even neater is that combined with this, the 'tying' strength of the adjacency pair (as we saw briefly in PK's pursuit of DN's name) can be responsible for preventing talk from grinding to a halt (even when in some cases we might like it to).

All utterances can potentially be analysed as belonging to some type of adjacency pair and so even the very first utterance in an interaction will demand some appropriate second part. If the second speaker on dutiful completion of their second part then appends a new first pair part, that will generate the need for further talk. If the first speaker responds in a similar way we no longer have just a pair of utterances, nor even just two pairs of utterances but rather the beginnings of a conversation.

This process is known as 'chaining' and a very simple example of this happened when Angelo (who lives at number 3) popped out to the shops to buy some milk. On the way, he noticed a neighbour (who lives at number 25) coming towards him. They know each other just sufficiently to say hello. Despite their lack of intimacy, however, politeness demanded a greeting, so Angelo tried to get away with a perfunctory 'Hi'. But his neighbour wasn't joining in doing perfunctory indifference – he was doing being friendly:

Example 4: Neighbours passing in the street

Angelo	Hi.	*Part 1: Greeting*
Neighbour	Hello, (.)	*Part 2: Greeting*
	How are you.=	*Part 1: Health enquiry*

Angelo	=I'm fine thanks,=	*Part 2: Response*
	=Are you?=	*Part 1: Health enquiry*
Neighbour	=Yes thank you!	*Part 2: Response*

Ironically, because of the neighbour's friendly appendage of 'How are you', Angelo was coerced (after an initial response of 'I'm fine thanks') into returning the friendly social enquiry. But by this time they had already passed each other, so although they were doing the business of organized talk-in-interaction, it was hardly very *social* interaction – each of them was delivering their final utterance into mid air rather than face-to-face!

Activity 2.11

Find examples of chained utterances in the data. (Hint: you have already seen some.) You should note that separate first and second pair parts are not always needed. Sometimes a second pair part will simultaneously act as the first pair of a new sequence.

SUMMARY

This unit has done at least two things. It has introduced you to many of the conventions needed for detailed transcription and it has given you a flavour of some of the fundamental aspects relating to turn taking, namely: TCUs, TRPs, overlap, interruption, speaker selection, types of silence, adjacency pairs, insertion sequences and chaining. And this has been achieved by providing you with an extract of data in order for you to uncover for yourself part of the highly organized nature of talk-in-interaction.

FURTHER READING

For a brief but detailed introduction to CA see *Pragmatics* (Levinson 1983: Chapter 6). For fairly gentle introductions see *Analysing Talk: Investigating Verbal Interaction in English* (Langford 1994), *Everyday Conversation* (Nofsinger 1991), *The Language of Conversation* (Pridham 2001) or *Conversation Analysis: The Study of Talk-in-Interaction* (Psathas 1995). In class I use *Conversation Analysis: Principles, Practices and Applications* (Hutchby and Wooffitt 1998) which is very readable. I also use *Doing Conversation Analysis: A Practical Guide* (ten Have 1999) which, while slightly harder to read, does deliver exactly what it promises in its title. If you read only one journal article, it really should be Sacks *et al.*'s classic

(1974) paper on 'A simplest systematics for the organization of turn-taking for conversation' (a 1978 version of this paper can be found in Schenkein 1978).

Two really excellent websites must be mentioned. The first, maintained by Paul ten Have (2004), is accessible at <http://www2.fmg.uva.nl/emca/> (where 'nl' stands for 'Netherlands' so the l is an L not a one). The second which is accessible at <http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/soc/faculty/schegloff/> is the home page of Schegloff (2004).

Finally, if the analysis of talk really excites you and you want to take things further still, then you should pick up a copy of Sacks' (1995) *Lectures on Conversation* – if only to feel the weight!

FURTHER ACTIVITY

Activity 2.12

Return to the 'Syracuse' data. Rummage around in it and see what you can come up with. While you're rooting around in the data you might like to think about some of the following specific questions:

1. What displays of understanding are done (and *how* are they done)?
2. What's the difference between 'Hi' and 'Hello'?
3. What evidence is there of talk which is specifically designed with the recipient in mind?
4. What does 'Oh' do in lines 5, 25 and 33.
5. What does 'What¿' do in L16? (The ¿ represents a rise in intonation.)
6. How does Charlie treat (interpret) this 'What¿' in L16?
7. What are the consequences of Charlie's choice of interpretation?
8. What's the purpose (upshot) of the call?
9. Who formulates the upshot?
10. How does the upshot get formulated?
11. What other options were possible for formulating the upshot?
12. What differences are there between Charlie's positive responses and his negative responses?
13. What's going on in lines 34–38?
14. Why might Charlie change from 'girl' to 'Karen' in L11?
15. How is the call terminated?
16. What else is interesting?

Activity 2.13

Consider the following set of PK's silences in Extract 2. What interactional task (or tasks) are they designed to accomplish? In thinking about this, you might like to consider the close proximity of the words: 'right', 'okay' and 'now' and their placement within the overall task.

```
5    PK   (.) Right Dale. (1.0)
15   PK   Okay. (1.3)
74   PK   (0.9) Now (.)
80   PK   Right. (0.8) Now (1.3)
94   PK   (.) Right. (0.9)
118  PK   Right (1.0)
```

COMMENTARY ON ACTIVITIES

Activity 2.3

Prediction (1)

This happens most of the time, so almost any line will count as evidence.

Prediction (2)

Fragment 1

```
     24      PK   Is there anything below that=
             DN   =>There's nothing< directly below it °at all.°=
     26      PK   =°((LS))°=There's nothing below it.
→            DN   [[°°No.°°]
→    28      PK   [[Okay] So (.) imagine r:oughly about (.) <an inch and a
                  half above the house.>
```

In L26, with the falling intonation marked by the full stop, PK comes to the end of a TCU. DN can therefore legitimately self-select and he does so in L27. However, it appears that PK has also chosen to re-select himself and this therefore results in a very brief (if not fierce – cf. DN's quietness) period of competing speakership.

Fragment 2

```
    105      PK   =You know underneath - underneath the word 'pond' there's
                  not a- a wee mark=
             DN   =>>Oh is like a<< wa:ve.
             PK   Like a wee wave.=
             DN   =°Yeah°=
    110      PK   =↑°Yes°↑=
```

```
                DN    =>So there's thr[ee-<] there's THREE waves altogether.
                PK                     [Three]
→               DN    [[<°There's the one wave.°>]
→               PK    [[There's three waves aye] it's it's like
    115               (.) it's like the moon
```

In L111, with the falling intonation marked by the full stop, DN comes to the end of a TCU. PK can therefore legitimately self-select and he does so in L114. However, it appears that DN has also chosen to re-select himself (L113) and this results in a very brief (again, if not fierce – cf. DN's quietness) period of competing speakership.

Prediction (3)

Fragment 3

```
    149         PK    (.) Okay? Come right round under the pond
                      [>until you're about<]=
→   151         DN    [°°Yeah?°°]
                PK    =(.) quarter o' an inch (.) circling under the pond. Okay?
```

In L149, 'Come right round under the pond' (because of its apparent syntactic, semantic and intonational completeness) represents a possible TRP. Projecting this possible TRP, DN therefore operates under Rule 1b and self-selects. However DN's projection of the end of the TCU was misguided as PK has yet more to add (PK clearly building the addition as a mere continuation of the ongoing TCU). Hence the brief overlap.

Activity 2.4

Here are some examples:

Fragment 4

```
    05          PK    ↓Dale.↓ (.) Right Dale. (1.0) To the right of your map
                      roughly approximately,
                DN    °Aha°
                PK    say seven inches down or eight inches down,
→               DN    [[>°Yeah°<]
→   10          PK    [[°°have you°°] have you got a ↑starting↑ mark.
```

Overlap? Yes. Because of Prediction (2) above? No.

Initially you may have assumed that because of the double brackets, this was just another case covered by Prediction (2) above. That would have been reasonable – if it had not been for the comma at the end of L8! Because this comma indicates continuing intonation, both parties know that PK has not finished his turn. Thus, because PK has not reached a TRP, this simultaneous talk is not covered by the turn taking rules. Sometimes complex TCUs are delivered in smaller non-TCU-sized instalments with continuing intonation inviting

confirmation of the receipt of each instalment so that the speaker can continue – just think of getting telephone numbers from directory enquiries as in this example:

Example 1:

Switchboard:	What name please?
Caller:	York St John College fax number.
Switchboard:	That's zero one, (.)
Caller:	Aha?
Switchboard:	nine zero four, (.)
Caller:	Mhm?
Switchboard:	nine one two, (.)
Caller:	Yeah?
Switchboard:	five one two.
Caller:	Thanks.

Surely, this is what is going on in fragment 4: DN's '>°Yeah°<' in L9 confirms receipt of PK's instalment in the prior line. It is not an attempt to take the floor, but rather acts as a **backchannel** acknowledgement token (or continuer) – in essence, a 'please continue' signal. Although there is no TRP, there *is* an expectation (set up by the similar sequential organization of lines 5–7) that DN might select himself to speak. The simultaneous talk is therefore not interruptive, but rather overlap, and the choice of [[rather than [was an attempt to signal this complex case of expectation of DN self-selecting despite there being no apparent TRP in PK's turn.

Fragment 5

	60	PK	nice circle round (.) until you stop (.) roughly about-
			a- about an inch above (.) the letter 'house' - the
	62		letter 'h' (1.1) °where it says 'house'. Okay?°
		DN	Okay yeah.
→	64	PK	Now [you stop there.]
→		DN	[Right >what by the left<] chimney (X)
	66	PK	Hmm?
		DN	Near the left chimney
	68	PK	°°((LS))°°=(.hh) No jus: above the left chimney
→			[>but it's above<] the left chimney=
→	70	DN	[°°Yeah°°]
		PK	=you'd be stopping somewhere roughly about an inch and a
			half °°off. Okay?°°

Lines 64–65: interruption. In L64, PK cannot have finished his turn after 'Now' – as Schiffrin (1987: 266) says, the function that *now* has is 'displaying attention to what is

coming next … [focussing] on the speaker, and on upcoming talk'. Thus, DN's turn in L65 is an attempt to take the turn from his partner. Here he is successful: PK stops talking and DN gets a complete TCU.

Lines 69–70: overlap. The reasons are similar to those in fragment 4. In L70, DN is not attempting to take the floor. He is just saying 'please continue'. The reason that this fragment uses a single [is that here there is not such a strong expectation that DN might take a turn.

Fragment 6

	127	PK	=Okay. So: (.) whe- where you left off (.) above the word house
	129	DN	Yeah
		PK	(0.7) circle up, okay?
	131	DN	Yeah
→		PK	And round [to your le]ft (.) very gently
→	133	DN	[>relative to<]
		DN	°Yeah.°

Interruption. In L132, PK says 'And round', but that clearly doesn't constitute a complete TCU and so, as there is no TRP, DN's '`relative to`' counts as an interruption even though it is not a particularly strong one (in that DN quickly drops out and apparently does not pursue his turn to completion).

You may have found a couple of cases where it is hard to determine whether the simultaneity counts as overlap or interruption:

Fragment 7

	80	PK	Right. (0.8) Now (1.3) you should be approximately roughly (0.9) what say three and a half inches from the
	82		top o' your (.) map?
→		DN	°Aha yeah° °°I'm [a bit more maybe°°]
→	84	PK	[°Okay?] That's good.° (1.2)
			Now °°°((LS))°°° before we start circling down- round to
	86		your left,
		DN	°°Mmm.°°

Interruption? Yes and no. PK is trying to take the floor while DN is in mid TCU – so yes, it appears to be interruption. That said, DN is uttering this TCU very quietly. It is therefore possible that PK hasn't heard it in which case as far as he is concerned it isn't even simultaneous talk. If this is the case, then we might prefer to analyse the simultaneity as a case not of violative interruption, but of innocent overlap.

An alternative analysis (which also yields an overlap conclusion) is that the simultaneous talk occurs very close to a TRP (the one after '°Aha yeah°'). It is therefore possible that PK believes he is entitled to self-select non-interruptively – it's just that he starts a little bit too slowly and in this way DN's extension to his turn has the effect of making PK *appear* to be in violation of the one speaker at a time convention when he probably had no such intention. In other words, this could just be a case of a slightly mistimed Prediction (2) overlap.

Fragment 8

→	01	PK	((LS)) First na[me?]
⇒		DN	[Right.] Okay ((eyebrow flash))
⇒	03	PK	First name again?

This is an interesting one. Is DN trying to take the floor in L2? Yes. Is he interrupting PK? No. Justification for this claim will be provided in the section on insertion sequences.

Activity 2.5

Lapses

Lapses occur due to the non-application of Rule 1 – in other words when talk is suspended.

There are no lapses in this data.

A typical place to hear a lapse in Britain is in front of the fire after a large Christmas dinner. Often the effort to interact will seem just so overwhelming that everyone will temporarily suspend all talk. Elsewhere, Fasold (1990: 40f.) reports that lapses are common in a Lapp community (no pun intended) in northern Sweden as well as among some Native American groups.

Gaps

Gaps occur before the application of 1b – in other words before someone else self-selects:

Fragment 9

	146	PK	°Okay?° °°°((LS))°°°=And start to dip down, (.) under the pond and pass it by quarter of an inch.
	148	DN	°Yeah°
→		PK	(.) Okay?

Gaps can also occur before the application of 1c – in other words before self-reselection:

Fragment 10

	3	PK	First name again?
		DN	Dale.
→	5	PK	↓Dale.↓ (.) Right Dale. (1.0) To the right of your map roughly approximately,

Attributable Silences

Attributable silences occur after the application of Rule 1a – in other words, it is the silence between the end of the turn where current speaker selects next speaker and the turn where Next speaker starts speaking.

Fragment 11

	19	PK	is there an obstruction above it?
→		DN	(1.2) Er (.) right at the top of the map there's a flamingo,

Here, the (1.2) second silence in L20 is attributable to DN because PK has selected him to be the next speaker by asking him a question. The silences at the beginnings of lines 43 and 46 in Fragment 12 can be analysed in a similar way.

Fragment 12

	41	PK	Okay? Until you stop roughly above the w- does it say ↑house above↑ your house.
→	43	DN	(.) °↑Yeah↑°
		PK	Well okay bring it round in a circle and you stop just
	45		about an inch which above the letter 'h' okay?
→		DN	(0.8) >Oh d'you say there's another house.<

Activity 2.6

There are many examples of silence within a turn. Here are just the first few of them:

Fragment Collection 13:

15	PK	((cough)) °((LS))° If I was moving from (0.9) to the left o' the house and coming upwards, before you start drawing,
20	DN	Er (.) right at the top of the map there's a flamingo,
28	PK	[[Okay] So (.) imagine r:oughly about (.) <an inch and a half above the house.>
33	PK	And I want you take a (1.3) ((cough)) roughly (3.2) a route from the 'X' right?

(a) Why are these silences allowed to exist: why doesn't the other speaker start talking? In fragment collection 13, the silences occur at a point where the utterance is clearly

incomplete: syntactically, semantically and intonationally. If the TCU is still on-going, a TRP cannot have been reached and thus it is not a place where it is relevant for there to be a transition of speakers.

(b) What might these silences exist for: what interactional tasks are they trying to accomplish?

This is actually a much harder question to answer than at first it may appear, depending on which silences you have found. For example it is tempting to initially claim that silences occur to allow the speaker some thinking time. While that is likely to be one task silences can serve (as in lines 20 and 28 – take away just the silences in these turns and you are left with something that is perfectly well-formed), that might be only part of the answer.

Silences might also allow the speaker to somehow signal a 'repair' of their utterance (as in lines 15 and 33 where the ongoing TCU has been altered after the silence – take away the silences in these turns and you are left with something that is ungrammatical).

Other silences might indicate emphasis, or grammatical punctuation (for example in delivering lists, telephone numbers, or even larger chunks of talk). They might even perhaps indicate that the speaker has just been distracted mid-utterance. In short, silence can be multi-functional.

What is remarkable about the various functions of silence (including inter-turn silence) is that, as Levinson (1983: 329) notes:

> silence has no features of its own: all the different significances attributed to it must have their sources in the structural expectations engendered by the surrounding talk. So sequential expectations are not only capable of making something out of nothing, but also of constructing many different kinds of significance out of the sheer absence of talk. If conversational organization can map 'meaning' onto silence, it can also map situated significance onto utterances – and in fact it can be shown to regularly do so.

In other words, it is not just *what* happens (or, in the case of silence, *doesn't* happen) in talk that is important, but also *where* it happens in the wider sequential organization of talk.

Activity 2.7

1 1–1, 2–2, 3–3 … should all naturally 'fit' together quite happily.

2 With just some occasional tweaking, 1–2, 2–3, 3–4 … should also seem to 'fit'. This shows that first pair parts have possible alternative second pair parts.

In the first pair (1–2), your friend should offer a business-like formal handshake. If others don't seem to work you might need to experiment with different intonations: annoyed, condescending, excited, fearful, grateful, incredulous, imploring, mysterious, neutral, sarcastic, and so on.

NB: while the words from the second column 'fit', they don't necessarily belong to

ly

the same type as before. For example, while 10–11 fit together, 'I only have postage stamps left' is clearly not an example of compliance here.

3 1–3, 2–4, 3–5 … should all sound very odd.

This shows that while there are always possible alternative second pair parts, the possibilities are limited – it is *not* a case of 'anything goes'.

Activity 2.8

Adjacency pairs are such a common occurrence in spontaneous talk that they should be easy to find. Here are just a few. You may have uncovered more.

3	PK	First name again?	*Part 1: Question*
4	DN	Dale.	*Part 2: Response*
4	DN	Dale.	*Part 1: Response*
5	PK	↓Dale.↓	*Part 2: Acknowledgement*
10	PK	have you got a ↑starting↑ mark.	*Part 1: Question*
11	DN	Yeah I've got a- a starting mark	*Part 2: Response*
13	PK	It's just <u>below</u> the house=	*Part 1: Check*
14	DN	=°Aha°	*Part 2: Clarification*
14	DN	=°Aha°	*Part 1: Response*
15	PK	Okay.	*Part 2: Acknowledgement*
146	PK	And start to dip down, (.) under the pond	
147		and pass it by quarter of an inch.	*Part 1: Instruction*
148	DN	°Yeah°	*Part 2: Compliance*

Activity 2.9

Although there are four questions and four responses in Example 2, only the fourth pair (Q4–R4) displays strict adjacency, as can be seen in Example 3:

Example 3: Mair's Deli

Archie:	Can I have a sandwich to take away please?	Q1
Eric:	What would you like?	Q2
Archie:	What would you recommend?	Q3
Eric:	Are you a vegetarian?	Q4
Archie:	Yes.	R4
Eric:	Well the pea and walnut pâté is good.	R3
Archie:	Okay I'll have one of those then!	R2
Eric:	Right, that'll be £2.20 please.	R1

Each time a new pair is started before the previous first pair part has received its second pair part we say that the new pair is embedded or inserted within the first pair. This type of sequence is thus known as an insertion sequence. In the Mair's Deli example there are three insertion sequences inside the Q1–R1 pair, two insertion sequences within the Q2–R2 pair and one within Q3–R3.

Activity 2.10

While they are not as common as adjacent pairs, there are also insertion sequences in Extract 2. Here is one I found (with Pair B inside Pair A):

11	DN	I've got a- a starting mark	
12		and it's just below a house.	*A Part 1: Explanation*
13	PK	It's just below the house=	*B Part 1: Check*
14	DN	=°Aha°	*B Part 2: Clarification*
15	PK	Okay.	*A Part 2: Acknowledgement*

And just to show that even within real talk there are insertion sequences within insertion sequences:

45	PK	okay?	*A Part 1: Question*
46	DN	(0.8) >Oh d'you say there's another house.<	*B Part 1: Question*
47	PK	°Hmm?°	*C Part 1: Hearing Check*
48	DN	>Did you say there was another house<	*C Part 2: Clarification*
49	PK	>No no it's just the one hou- [no X]	*B Part 2: Response*
50	DN	[°Right°]	*A Part 2: Response*

There are other embedded sequences, but they are more complex than necessary for current purposes.

Activity 2.11

Here are a couple of examples of chaining which were first seen (in their component parts) in the commentary to Activity 2.8. Again, you may have uncovered more.

3	PK	First name again?	*A Part 1: Question*
4	DN	Dale.	*A Part 2: Response = B Part 1*
5	PK	↓Dale.↓	*B Part 2: Acknowledgement*
13	PK	It's just <u>below</u> the house=	*A Part 1: Check*
14	DN	=°Aha°	*A Part 2: Clarification = B Part 1*
15	PK	Okay.	*B Part 2: Acknowledgement*

Chaining and insertion sequences can work in conjunction to generate really quite tightly organized and often very complex sequences of talk. Below you can see the structures of a couple of examples:

10	PK	have you got a ↑starting↑ mark.	*A Part 1: Question*
11	DN	Yeah I've got a- a starting mark	*A Part 2: Response*
12		and it's just below a house.	*B Part 1: Explanation*
13	PK	It's just <u>below</u> the house=	*C Part 1: Check*
14	DN	=°Aha°	*C Part 2: Clarification =*
			D Part 1: Clarification
15	PK	Okay	*D Part 2:Acknowledgement =*
			B Part 2: Acknowledgement

This fragment is very interesting because it demonstrates that just as it is possible for a second pair part to simultaneously act as the first pair part of a new *inserted* sequence (as in L14, where C2=D1), it is also possible for a second pair part to simultaneously act as the second pair part to a *prior* previous first (as in L15, where D2=B2). A similar case can be seen in L79 in the fragment below:

74	PK	Now (.) bring your route	
75		approximately up about another	
		↑inch↑ in a- er roughly an	
76		inch an' a half in from the	
		edge o' yer map, going north.	*A Part 1: Instruction*
77	DN	°Yeah.°	*A Part 2: Acknowledgement*
		Straight up	*B Part 1: Check*
78	PK	°Straight ↑up↑	*B Part 2: Clarification*
		Ok[ay?°]	*C Part 1: Alignment*
79	DN	[Okay]	*C Part 2: Agreement =*
			A Part 2: Acknowledgement ctd.

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