
Turn organization: one intersection of grammar and interaction¹

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2.1 Introduction

From early in its development, conversation-analytic work on interaction has declined to accord language any principled primacy as an object of inquiry (e.g., Schegloff and Sacks, 1973: 290). Although not derived from them, this view was in accord with the stances of such intellectual forbears as Garfinkel's ethnomethodology (1967) and Goffman's several approaches to interaction. It may be recalled, for example, that in "The neglected situation" Goffman (1964) injected into the "coming-out party" of the embryonic subfield known as the ethnography of speaking or communication the observation that speaking occurs most proximately in "situations," in which it *need not* occur; speaking, then, had to be understood by reference to exigencies of contexts not designed for speaking in particular (as elaborated, for example, in the earlier Goffman, 1961, 1963, and the later Goffman, 1971). In both of these modalities of work, and in *their* predecessors, language was not a *privileged* object of inquiry, however *interesting* an object of inquiry it might be.

Still, the accessibility of conversation (and talk-in-interaction more generally) to systematic inquiry has brought with it a need to explore the mutual bearing of the various organizations of "language" on the one hand (whatever that notion might turn out to refer to; cf. Schegloff, 1979: 282) and the organizations of interaction and talking-in-interaction on the other. For linguistics, the promise has been to situate language relative to the social/interactional matrix in which it is to be understood as inescapably as it is relative to the organization of the mind/brain. For sociologists, the

prospect has been the satisfaction of needs akin to the needs of a carpenter to understand the properties of different kinds of wood.

From early on it seemed clear that some parts of the enterprise of understanding conversation would rest heavily on the contributions of linguists (Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson, 1974: 703, fn. 12, 721, 722, 723). On the whole, their exploration of this interface has been disappointing, perhaps because the point of articulation between language organization and interaction has been insufficiently explicated on the interactional side. Nothing comparable to the logical substructures of predication and proposition underlying other linguistic projects seemed available to linguistic students of actual talk-in-interaction. This paper is addressed to that possibility, and to its remedy.

Although there are a number of fronts along which the relationship between language and interaction can be fruitfully explored, the relationship between grammar and the organization of the turn-at-talk offers as attractive a prospect as any.² One reason is that, in conversation and many other forms of talk-in-interaction, turns-at-talk are the key proximate organizational niche into which bursts of language are introduced, and to which they may be expected to be adapted. And grammar is one of the key types of organization shaping these bursts. More on this in a moment.

As with other conversation-analytic work, satisfying results should have certain features and payoffs. The account which we develop of turn organization should be adequate to the analysis of single turns-at-talk on the one hand, and to observable features of aggregates of turns on the other; to the particulars of situated instances on the one hand, and to the formal structuring of talk on the other; to the projects both of academic analysts on the one hand, and (more precisely, “by virtue of its adequacy for”) the projects of parties to interaction on the other.

Here, then, I hope to provide resources for parsing single turns (as implicated in larger structures of conversation), both as a post hoc analytic undertaking for professional inquiry and as an account of a real-time undertaking by participants (as well as, necessarily, a resource and constraint on speakers’ construction of the talk). At the same time, we should find here guidelines to the organizational devices for the structuring of talk in turns and especially the units from which turns are constructed (so-called “turn constructional

units” or TCUs, as per Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson, 1974: 702-3, 720-3; henceforth SSJ) – that is, grammatical structuring as language’s counterpart, fitting to the organizational exigencies of turns as the “host space” in which language deposits are accommodated.

I am not unaware of the detailed relevance of contextual particulars – whether of culture, language structures, situation, relationship, immediate interactional contingency and import, and all the other things under the generic rubric of context which one can be found to have disattended. In much of what follows below, I will try to attend to some such contextual detail. Not enough, I am sure. And in some instances, hardly any at all. The underlying project is to explore, to ask: are there general contingencies of talking in interaction – or of conversation in particular – that in a recurrent, orderly way seem to shape the organization of a turn-at-talk and the units of which it is built– either its actual articulation or the relevancies by reference to which it is shaped.

2.2 Points of departure

Let me begin with a point of departure on which I have relied before. In many respects, the fundamental or primordial scene of social life is that of direct interaction between members of a social species, typically ones who are physically co-present. For humans, talking in interaction appears to be a distinctive form of this primary constituent of social life, and ordinary conversation is very likely the basic form of organization for talk-in-interaction. Conversational interaction may be thought of as a form of social organization through which the work of most, if not all, the major institutions of societies – the economy, the polity, the family, socialization, etc. – gets done. And it surely appears to be the basic and primordial environment for the use and development (both ontogenetic and phylogenetic) of natural language.

Therefore, it should hardly surprise us if some of the most fundamental features of natural language are shaped in accordance with their home environment in copresent interaction, as adaptations to it, or as part of its very warp and weft (Schegloff, 1989: 142-4; 1991: 153-5). For example, if the basic natural environment for sentences is in turns-at-talk in conversation, we should take seriously the possibility that aspects of their structure – for example,

their grammatical structure – are to be understood as adaptations to that environment. In view of the thoroughly local and interactional character of the organization of turn-taking in conversation (SSJ, 1974), the grammatical structures of language should in the first instance be understood as at least partially shaped by interactional considerations (Schegloff, 1979). And one locus of those considerations will be the organization of the turn, the organizational unit which “houses” grammatical units.

But what shall we call those units? A moment ago I referred to “the basic natural environment for sentences [being] in turns-at-talk in conversation,” but the grammatical units which occur in turns are not all sentences; and it is not obvious that it is their “sentence-ness” that is criterially relevant for those that are (though it may well be so in particular cases). The same applies to the clause.

The components of which turns-at-talk are composed we have in the past (SSJ, 1974: 702-4) termed “turn constructional units.” By “turn-constructional unit,” it may be recalled, we meant to register that these units *can* constitute possibly complete turns; on their possible completion, transition to a next speaker becomes *relevant* (although not necessarily accomplished).³ So perhaps we can begin by thinking of grammar as the – or one – basic organization for the turn constructional unit. Of course, grammar is not the only way of organizing the materials of language. Poetics – with its metrics, rhyming, sound patterning, tropes, etc., for units such as its lines, stanzas, verses, etc. – is another way of putting linguistic elements together – for poetry. And logic is another – with its propositions, arguments, operations, etc. – for analyses, demonstrations and proofs.

But the (or one) key unit of language organization for talk-in-interaction is the turn constructional unit; its natural habitat is the turn-at-talk; its organization we are calling “grammar.” And we are beginning with the premise that grammar as an organizing device is expectably formed up by reference to the habitat, “the turn.” N.B.: the issue here is not one of terminologies: the aim is not to replace terms like “sentence” or “clause” with “turn constructional unit.” Talking in turns means talking *in real time, subject to real interactional contingencies*. Whether articulated fluently or haltingly, what results is produced piece by piece, incrementally, through a series of “turns-so-far.” These features support the openness of talk-

in-progress to considerations of interactional import and reactivity, recipient design, moment-to-moment recalibration, reorganization and recompletion, and to interactional co-construction (cf., for example, Goodwin, 1979). 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 in a series of turns through which a sequence may develop embodying a course of action, its realization in structured real time for both speaker and recipient(s) is inescapable.⁴ 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.

The central prospect, then, is that grammar stands in a reflexive relationship to the organization of a spate of talk as a turn. On the one hand, the organizational contingencies of talking in a turn (a turn in a *series* of turns, with sequence potential; SSJ, 1974: 722) shape grammar – both grammar as an abstract, formal organization⁵ and the grammar of a particular utterance. On the other hand, the progressive grammatical realization of a spate of talk on a particular occasion can shape the exigencies of the turn as a unit of interactional participation on that occasion, and the grammatical properties of a language may contribute to the organization of turns-at-talk in that language and of the turn-taking device by which they are deployed.

Such a beginning orientation points us in two directions of inquiry: the organization of the turn (i.e., the habitat in which turn constructional units – henceforth TCUs – are housed) and the characteristics of the grammar – or grammars – which organizationally constitute the TCUs for this habitat.

2.3 Some initial payoffs of shifting from sentences to TCUs

One consequence of re-framing the object of our attention as TCUs rather than sentences is that objects which might otherwise be taken as sentence-initial particles, interjections, etc. – that is, virtual appendages pre-positioned to the core unit – now invite treatment as possible TCUs in their own right. And the sentence, for which such an object might otherwise have been seen to be preliminary, can now be re-cast as itself a contingent accomplishment. This

recasting results from the introduction of temporality and structured interactional contingency into the analysis, by way of the implication of TCUs in the practices of *turntaking* in ordinary conversation, specifically the systematic relevance of transition to another speaker at the possible completion of a TCU. Let me pursue this for a bit to see if we can quickly get some payoff from this way of starting, and thereby some encouragement.

It seems to me that some aspects of prosody provide evidence for, and may need to be understood by reference to, just such considerations;⁶ what could be seen in some approaches as a sentence-initial particle has quite different resonances when understood as a possible TCU in its own right. The excerpt below is drawn from a telephone conversation between two young women who had been close friends and attended the same school, but who now attend different colleges and have apparently not talked to one another for quite a while.⁷

(1) TG:4:35 - 5:03

Bee: Eh-yih have anybuddy: thet uh:? (1.2) I would know from the English depar'mint there?
 Ava: Mm-mh. Tch! I don't think so.
 Bee: °Oh,=<Did they geh ridda Kuhleznik yet hhh
 --> Ava: No in fact I know somebuddy who ha:s huh [now.
 Bee: [Oh my got hh[hhh
 Ava: [Yeh...

I do not command the technical language which would nowadays be used to describe the prosody of the target turn here, but I hope it will suffice for present purposes to say that the flat intonation contour and the breath deployment are such as to interdict (literally) the possibility of another – of *the* other, Bee – starting to talk at the possible juncture between “No” and “in fact.” I think that this is best understood by reference to the speaker Ava’s orientation to the status of “No” as a possible TCU, and its end as a possible turn completion, and thus as a place at which Bee would relevantly locate a possible start for a next turn.⁸

Although I wish to minimize the amount of analysis of sequential context and interactional import to be included here in the interest of keeping the size of the paper under control, let me sound the note early, if not often, and exemplify it at least here. The relevance of an intervention by Bee after “No” is informed not only by its status as a possible TCU, but also by the sequence which is in progress, of

which this turn is a next increment, and in which it implements a next action.

I take this to be a topic-proffering sequence. It is a recurrent feature of such sequences that *two* tries or proffers are put forward, each of which can be taken up and embraced or declined by its recipient. Taking up a topic proffer is ordinarily done as a preferred response – i.e., with no delay *of* its turn or *in* its turn, with no qualification, account, etc., and as more than a minimal response (cf. Pomerantz, 1984; Sacks, 1987[1973]); Schegloff, 1988a). Declining a topic proffer is ordinarily done as a *dispreferred* response – delayed, minimal, and if expanded, then expanded with accounts bearing adversely on the topic, etc. Positive terms (“yes”) recur in embracings, negative ones (“no,” “mm mm”) in declines. Most importantly, taking up a proffered topic generally involves *claiming* access to it; declining involves *denying* access.

Note then that in Excerpt (1), Ava’s first turn declines the proffered topic (on the delivery of this declining as a *preferred* response, cf. Schegloff, 1988a: 454), and the “No” at the start of her second turn (the arrowed one) is at risk of being taken as a declining of the second try, although (as the sequel in the turn shows) she is actually moving to *embrace* this second topic proffer. The “No” thus is to be understood not only by reference to the TCU in its turn, but by reference to the turn within its sequence. (Below I will return to the theme that some things which occur in turns require analysis by reference to other than turn-organization.) The point is that it is by reference to *Ava’s orientation* to such a systematically grounded *possible orientation by Bee* that the “No” is delivered with a prosody designed to block such a hearing and to interdict such an otherwise projectable possible next turn start, which would respond to such a rejection.⁹

The themes broached in the preceding analysis are generic to conversation, and potentially to much other talk-in-interaction. At every possible completion of a TCU, the turn-so-far will have amounted to – will be analyzable as – some possible action or actions. Management of the production of the turn or TCU – both by the speaker and by recipients (e.g., whether to start or withhold a next turn) – is in substantial measure conducted by reference to the action(s) analyzable out of the turn-so-far. Management of the interface or conjunction of action and imple-

menting utterance is a key task of the parties and a key topic for disciplinary analysis of talk-in-interaction.¹⁰

Parsing a stretch of talk by reference to its TCU properties can lead to analyses distinct from those of sentential grammar not only at apparent utterance beginnings, but at the “other end” of the talk as well. The videotape of a backyard picnic in early 1970s Ohio begins like this:¹¹

(2) Automobile Discussion 1:01-12

Carney: (..`hear the same story),
 --> Pam: `hh Oh yeah you've gotta tell Mike tha:t. Uh-cuz they
 --> [want that on fi:lm.
 Carney: [Oh: no: here we gə ag(h)[(h)ain o(h)o(h)o] `hh=
 Curt: [huh huh huh huh.]
 Gary: =I[don't thin[k it's that funny.
 Carney: [O h : [: ,
 Pam: [I gotta go t'the
 joh{n before I hear that again.
 Carney: [You'll like it, you'll rilly like it.
 Curt: [You do too y[ou laugh like hell you
 huh!
 Phyllis: [`ehheh huh

Leaving aside the turn-initial “Oh yeah,” which can constitute a TCU in its own right, we can note that in *sentence*-structural terms the rest of the turn is composed of a single unit, “You’ve gotta tell Mike that ’cuz they want that on film.” In *turn-constructional unit* terms, the turn is built to come to possible completion – to designed and realized completion – at “...tell Mike that.” It is syntactically possibly complete; it is “pragmatically” complete (i.e., it recognizably implements an action); its intonation contour comes to a full fall, and the stretch or drawl on “tha: t” is common on turn-terminal items. So this utterance is different from a “syntactically identical” sentence that lacked the implementation of a possible completion after “that.”

When Pam moves to extend the talk in this turn, the added talk can be executed in two different relationships to the prior talk – as an increment within the same TCU or as a new TCU.¹² In a while we will turn to the grammar, by reference to which just such distinctions are differentially implemented – i.e., how does one *do* “TCU start?” Or *do* “TCU continuation?” But here we note as a pre-analytic observation that Pam does *this* extension as a continuation. (It seems plausible that she could have done it as a new, separate TCU just by not beginning with “uh-cuz;” the connector

here is not what one might call “anchored” in the objects being connected.)¹³ The continuation is a post-positioned “because-clause,” of the sort (together with other adverbial clauses pre- and post-positioned) described in Ford (1993). Such post-positioned accounts – in this case, grounds or justification – seem oriented to incipient disalignment by recipient(s) from what the speaker has just said, proposed or done. Here a proposal to have someone retell a joke or story to a newcomer to the gathering – a proposal embodying an assessment of its worth as a tellable – is buttressed, when not immediately taken up, by a conversationally extrinsic justification – the taping. (And, indeed, a question is raised in its aftermath – in Gary’s first turn following – about its worth as a “re-tellable.”) Consider the likely construction of the utterance in the first instance if the filming were the primary grounds for the retelling proposal.

If the grammar at issue in our exploration of “grammar and interaction” is the grammar of turn-constructional units in the organization of the turns which they compose, then what I have just been describing have been grammatical alternatives, or even “choices” and “practices” fitted to *interactional contingencies*, which do not enter into the grammar of sentences. The line between the grammar of TCUs and the construction and organization of turns, then, may be permeable, and perilous to draw. And it appears that there are analytic results to be achieved by examining the talk by reference to the unit “TCU” which are not available by reference to “sentences” or “clauses.”

Because the boundaries of the grammar may extend *beyond* those of a single TCU in their contexts of relevance, I propose to begin with a consideration of *multi-unit* turns, even though it might seem more cogent to take those up only after a consideration of the grammar of the single TCU. The grammar of a TCU may be related to its *position in its turn* – as sole TCU or one of several, and if one of several, in various positions. So we entertain first what may characterize TCUs by virtue of their joint incumbency of a turn, and how they may be constructed so as to fit together and complement one another as parts of its construction – or fail to do so.

2.4 Single- and multi-unit turns

Register as an observation – rather than as a presupposition – that it is an organizational and perhaps even a grammatical fact about turns that they can accommodate more than one TCU, although there are interactional contingencies (in conversation) biasing turn size to one, and then few, TCUs (cf. SSJ, 1974: 709). It can take “work,” i.e., praxis, to get more than one TCU into a turn (Schegloff, 1982). That work – that practice – can itself occupy a TCU, e.g., the “story preface” described by Sacks (1974), or the “pre-pre” described by Schegloff (1980).¹⁴

One relevance of the possibility of multi-unit turns is that some TCUs can be designed for their position in the turn. It may well be that many – perhaps most – TCUs are constructed in ways which are *not* indicative of their position in their turn; but some *are*, and it is that possibility which I want to explore for a moment, for it has a bearing on the issue whether it is *one* grammar whose relation to interaction needs to be described, or *multiple* grammars (as does the subsequently discussed issue of position of the turn in a sequence).

For example, a first unit in its turn can be built to project that there will be (a) subsequent one(s). Excerpt (3) is taken from the source of Excerpt (1), at an earlier point in the conversation.

(3) TG:03:01-04

Bee: =[(Mnuh,)]
 --> Ava: =[Oh my] mother wannduh know how's yer grandmother.
 Bee: `hhh Uh:, (0.3) I don'know I guess she's aw- she's
 awright she went to thee uh:: h[ospital again tihda:y,
 Ava: Mm-hm?,
 Bee: `hh t! `hh A:n:: I guess t'day wz d'day she's supposetuh
 find out if she goes in ner not.=
 Ava: =Oh. Oh::.
 Bee: Becuz they're gonna do the operation on the teeuh duct.
 f[fi: rs]t. Before they c'n do t[he cata]ract]s.
 Ava: [Mm-hm,] [Right.]Yeah,]
 Bee: `hhh So I don'know I haven:'t yihknow, she wasn' home
 by the t-yihknow when I lef'fer gschool tihday.=
 Ava: =Mm hm,
 Bee: Tch! .hh So uh I don't kno:w,

Leaving aside for now the initial delay of the arrowed turn by inbreath, and then of the initial TCU by “uh,” and silence, the first unit of Bee’s turn, “I don’know” is designed here to project “more to come.” Although this syntactically possibly complete unit could be deployed in a fashion that fully denies knowledge of the answer to the question which Ava has conveyed (i.e., it could be “I don’t

know: .”, with up-down terminal contour and carrying primary stress, roughly as in the last utterance reproduced in Excerpt 3) and could then invite analysis as the whole of its turn, here it is produced as a kind of prefatory epistemic disclaimer. This is done largely prosodically, by a combination of the primary stress on the “I,” the non-falling (or so-called “continuative”) intonation contour on “know,” and the phrasing (in the musical sense) across the juncture into the next unit of talk.

Non-first TCUs can also be built to project additional unit(s) to follow. For example, Excerpt (4) is taken from a college dormitory room conversation in the mid-1970s. Mark has come by the residence shared by Sherri, Ruthie, and Karen. The excerpt follows a brief exchange about the planning for Sherri’s forthcoming wedding.

(4) SN-4: 02:23-33

Sherri: [Look once a quarter et school is enough.=That's uh:: (·)
 finals.
 (??): (huh-)
 --> Mark: I know whutchu mean. Me t[oo.<that's why I came here d'night.=
 (??): [°(Wha-)°)
 --> Mark: ='hh I came tuh talk tuh Ruthie about borrowing her:-
 notes.fer (·) econ.
 (0.8)
 Ruthie: [Oh.
 Sherri: [You didn't come t' talk t' Kerin?
 (0.4)
 Mark: No, Kerin: (·) Kerin 'n I 'r having a fight.

Here I mean to take note of the third TCU in Mark’s turn, “that’s why I came here d’night,” and specifically the “that.” By use of what I have elsewhere called a “dummy term” (Schegloff, 1982) and what Goodwin (this volume) more felicitously terms a “prospective indexical,” Mark projects that there will be more to follow, which the syntax of the construction shapes toward being a new TCU. Note as well the second TCU in the target turn in Excerpt (3) above, “I guess she’s aw- she’s awright,” whose self-interruption seems directed to a re-doing of the prosody to make this TCU also prefatory rather than conclusory, i.e., to project another (at least) to follow.

Not only can first, and subsequent, TCUs be designed and/or delivered in a fashion which projects additional ones to follow; *non-first* TCUs can be designed and/or delivered as “subsequents.” Looking again at the target turn in Excerpt (1), “No in fact I know somebuddy who ha: s huh [now,] I mean only

to remark that the “in fact” construction here (in common with many “actually” and “as a matter of fact” constructions) serves to relate the TCU which it initiates to its predecessor; this practice can be used to indicate that what follows has a contemporary relevance to the speaker other than that created by the question just asked, and that what it is about has a reality and “facticity” independent of the circumstance prompting the talk which it introduces. Its effect is often to register a so-called “coincidence.”

So one consequence of the organizational possibility of multi-unit turns is the possibility of recognizable differentiation, and potentially of positionally specific grammars, by reference to TCU position within a turn,¹⁵ as I will later suggest ones sensitive to position in a sequence. And indeed there may be structural affinities between “position in a turn” and particular TCU types, employing various “typologies” of TCU. For example, the TCU typology that entered prominently into the formulation of a turn-taking organization for conversation (SSJ, 1974) made reference to “lexical, phrasal, clausal and sentential” units. By reference to these types of units, lexical TCUs occur overwhelmingly (I think) as first – or only – TCU in their turns. Their occurrence elsewhere is, I suspect, limited and marked, i.e., doing something special when they occur.¹⁶ Such a differential distribution can offer one kind of evidence for positionally sensitive grammars.

To note this is not to understand it. We need studies that will examine such lexical TCUs (and perhaps phrasal ones as well) in their sequential and interactional context to see what they are and how they work. Such studies may bring into focus a sense of how sequence-specific and positionally specific grammars might work together, i.e., be organizationally related. For example, many lexical and phrasal TCUs will turn out, I suspect, to be first in *turns following questions*, and will be a way of designing answers to be symbiotic with, and (to use a less pleasant metaphor) parasitic on, their questions. Indeed, by reference to this different “typology,” Sacks observed (1987[1973]: 57-58) that if there is a multi-unit turn with a “question” in it, the question will be likely to occur last (and if there is an “answer,” one place it is likely to be is first in its turn).¹⁷ Although the term “question” can be taken to refer both to grammar and to action (Schegloff, 1984a; Heritage and Roth, 1995),

either way some sort of link between position and grammar seems clearly to be involved.

Or, using still another typology of components, we can note that, if the types of TCUs are cast as “agreements” and “disagreements,” then the former come early (first?) in their turns and the latter are delayed (non-first?); that disagreements may be done as “exceptions,” and it turns out that there is “a place” for exceptions, i.e., late (last?) in the turn (Sacks, 1987[1973]: 62). To be sure, here we seem clearly to be talking about the distribution of activities or actions in turns, but activities can have elective affinities with turn constructional unit types in which they are embodied, and these grammatical units can have distributional properties, as has already been noted. So there are several inquiries here: whether and how types of TCUs are positionally sensitive – to being sole TCUs or with distinctive placements in their turns, and in what terms such placements or positions are most aptly understood; whether and how TCUs are built to relate to others – to project further TCUs, to position themselves relative to prior TCUs; whether there is describable orderliness between *types of positions* in a turn and *types of units* occupying those positions.¹⁸

But here programmatic speculation should yield to empirical inquiry. One basic task of analysis in this area is to examine the succession of TCUs that occur in turns and ask whether or not such examination reveals recurrent, oriented to, and interactionally consequential constructional types – what we might come to formulate as recognizable turn formats, with bearings on the production and recipient parsing of component TCUs. Let me suggest just a few, with some exemplary displays. Once such recurrences are empirically registered, we can ask as well how (if at all) they should be characterized as grammatical.

Look first at excerpts 5a–d

(5a) TG:01:26–30

Bee: 'hh You [sound sorta] cheer[ful?]
 Ava: [°(Any way).] ['hh] How'v you bee:n.
 Bee: 'hh Oh:: survi:ving I guess, hh[h!
 --> Ava: [That's good, how's (Bob),
 Bee: He's fine,
 Ava: Tha:t't's goo:d,

(5b) TG:02:30-40

Ava: En, I had- I wz- I couldn't stop laughin it wz the funniest thing b't y'know you get all sweaty up'r en evrything we didn' thing we were gonna play, 'hh en oh I'm knocked out.
 Bee: Nhhkhhhh! 'hhhh
 Ava: Ripped about four nai:ls, 'n okhh!
 Bee: Fantastic.=
 --> Ava: =B't it wz fun-You sound very far away
 (0.7)
 Bee: I do?
 Ava: Nyeahm.
 Bee: mNo? I'm no:t,

(5c) MDE:MTRAC:60-1/2, 01:01-22

Marsha: Hello:?
 Tony: Hi: Marsha?
 Marsha: Ye:ah.
 Tony: How are you.
 Marsha: Fi:ne.
 (0.2)
 Marsha: Did Joey get home yet?
 Tony: Well I wz wondering when 'e left.
 (0.2)
 Marsha: 'hhh Uh:(d) did Oh: .h Yer not in on what ha:ppen'.(hh)(d)
 Tony: No(h)o=
 Marsha: =He's flying.
 (0.2)
 Marsha: En Ilene is going to meet im:.Becuz the to:p wz ripped off'v iz car which is tih say someb'ddy helped th'mselfs.
 Tony: Stolen.
 (0.4)
 Marsha: Stolen.=Right out in front of my house.
 --> Tony: Oh: f'r crying out loud,=en eez not g'nna eez not g'nna bring it ba:ck?
 Marsha: 'hh No so it's parked in the g'rage cz it wz so damn co:ld. An' ez a matter fact snowing on the Ridge Route.

Each of the arrowed turns in 5a-5c is composed of two TCUs. In each, the first TCU completes closure of a preceding sequence, and the second TCU initiates a new sequence. In each case, the first TCU closes the prior sequence with an assessment, but as 5d shows, this need not be criterial (though assessment closures may have distinctive features), for here as well the first TCU moves to close the preceding sequence, and the second moves to initiate a new sequence:

(5d) MDE:MTRAC:60-1/2, 02:22-28

Marsha: 'hhhh So: yer ba:ck.
 Tony: Yah.
 (1.0)
 --> Marsha: I see. So you'll- you'll hear fr'm im,
 (0.2)
 Tony: Okay, well: if there's any prob'm w'l letche know. But I'm sure he'll be here okay.

As it happens, such linkages between the end of one sequence and the start of another can be done in a response turn (or “second position”), following such a response in third position (as in 5a, 5c and 5d, and cf. Schegloff, 1986: 130-33) or in a less clearly defined position in a larger sequence (as in the “story evaluation” exit in 5b).

Or consider the multi-unit turns in 6a-d, which display another recurrent format:

(6a) TG:01:01-23

Ava: H' llo:?
 Bee: hHi:,
 Ava: Hi:?
 Bee: hHowuh you?
 Ava: Qka::y?hh=
 Bee: =Good.=Yihs[ou:nd } hh
 Ava: [<I wan]'dih know if yih got a-uh:m
 wutchimicawllit. A:: pah(hh)khing place °th's mornin'.'hh
 Bee: A pa:rking place,
 Ava: Mm hm,
 (0.4)
 Bee: Whe:re.
 Ava: t! Oh: just anypla(h)ce? I wz jus' kidding yuh.
 Bee: Nno?=
 Ava: =[(°No).]
 --> Bee: =[W h y]whhat'sa mattuh with y-Yih sou[nd HA:PPY,] hh
 Ava: [Nothing.]
 -->> Ava: u- I sound ha:p[py?]
 Bee: [Yee]uh.
 (0.3)
 Ava: No:,
 Bee: Nno:?
 Ava: No.

(6b) SN-4:05:18-32

Carol: =No they [didn' even have any Ta:(h)b.
 ?Ruth: [°hheh
 Carol: This is all I c'd find.
 (°)
 Ruth: Well then there's ez many calories ez that prob'ly in en ice
 cream sa:nw^hich=so yih jis':, yih know.
 (°)
 --> Carol: I know(,) an icecream sanw^hich is better, but I di'n feel like
 --> going down tuh P* an seeing all those wierd people.an have them
 --> st[a:re at me.]
 -->> Ruth: [In yer slipper]s' ((*"P" refers to the "Parking
 (0.2) Level" in a building.)
 Carol: Yes.
 (0.8)
 Carol: I don't want them tih see me when I l(h)ook t(h)his good.

(6c) SN-4:02:19-34 (cf. excerpt 4 above)

- Mark: (Y')haven't been 'n school in five weeks doesn' matter.
 Sherri: hhmh hih hmh=
 Ruthie: =heh he[h heh heh]
 Mark: [mmh heh heh] 'hi:h
 Mark: [hee hee
 Sherri: [Look once a quarter et school is enough.=That's uh:(.)
finals.
 (??): (huh-)
 --> Mark: I know whutcha mean. Me t[oo.<that's why I came here d'night.=
 (??): [°(Wha-)°)
 --> Mark: ='hh I came tih talk tuh Ruthie about borrowing her:-
notes.fer (.) econ.
 (0.8)
 Ruthie: [Oh.
 -->> Sherri: [You didn't come t' talk t' Kerin?
 (0.4)
 Mark: No, Kerin: (.) Kerin 'n I 'r having a fight.

(6d) SN-4:02:10-20

- Mark: W'll (jat'll) jus' be fanta:stic.'hh So what've y'called any
 other hotels ('r) anything?
 (.)
 --> Sherri: Y:eah I called thee Embassader 'n stuff. I've go so much
 --> work that I don't believe it.so I'm j'st not even thinking
 --> about that [°now.
 -->> Mark: [In schoo:l yih mea[:n?
 Sherri: [Ye:ah,
 (0.2)
 Mark: (Y')haven't been 'n school in five weeks doesn' matter.
 Sherri: hhmh hih hmh=

Without undertaking a detailed analysis, let me just note that in each of these single-arrowed multi-unit turns, a step-by-step topic shift is managed. In each, the first turn-constructive unit links back to preceding talk (although the several segments display different types of “back-linking”), and the ensuing TCUs shift the topic step by step, ending the turn with a topical focus different from the beginning, with separate TCUs constituting the “steps” in this shift. That co-participants are oriented to this use of the turn is displayed by the occurrence in each of the segments (at the double-headed arrow) of a next turn, of regular form (a sort of request for confirmation for a candidate understanding), which engages and “co-operates with” the multi-TCU turn by addressing itself to the proposed new topic focus. These four instances are disparate not only in the sorts of connections made to the prior talk, but also in the types of TCUs through which the step-by-step topic shift is implemented, and in the interactional agenda being served by the shift. Each of these may, however, itself be the locus of order.¹⁹

I have displayed several small collections of exemplars of distinctive multi-unit turn formats. But it is not necessary to have collections to begin with; indeed, one *cannot* have collections to begin with. Collections begin with a noticing of an apparent orderliness, sometimes in a single occurrence, sometimes in a second occurrence (“I’ve seen something like that before!”). Consider Excerpt (7):

(7) TG:02:06-11

Ava: [°B't agi]de fr'm that it's a'right.
 Bee: [So what-]
 (0.4)
 Bee: Wha:t?
 --> Ava: I'm so:: ti:yid. I j's played ba:iske'ball t'day since the
 firs' time since I wz a freshm'n in hi:ghsch[ool.]

This develops into a story telling, but it begins with a TCU sequence which readily invites prima facie characterization as “state description + account,” the account here turning out to be realized in a story, which may be quite a contingent outcome (but recall excerpt (3) above, “she’s alright + she went to the hospital again today” + more story).²¹ Indeed, having noticed “state description + account,” one may well become alert to other possibilities, such as “state description + ?” and “? + account” as consecutive TCU types which regularly supply formats of multi-unit turns, and do so via their serving as the vehicles for orderly and significant courses of action.

And here in Excerpt (8) (which incorporates the earlier excerpt 2) is a page of transcript – the very start of the “Automobile Discussion” tape – that I happened to examine with a seminar largely as a matter of convenience, i.e., for reasons incidental to the current topic. Just begin looking at the multi-unit turns (which I have arrowed).

(8) Automobile Discussion:01

Carney: (...hear the same story),
 --> Pam: 'hh Oh yeah you've gotta tell Mike tha:t. Uh-cuz they
 [want that on fi:lm.
 --> Carney: [Oh: no: here we go ag(h)[(h)ain o(h)o(h)o] 'hh=
 Curt: [Huh huh huh huh.]
 Gary: =I[don't thin[k it's that funny.
 Carney: [O h : [:,
 Pam: [I gotta go t'the
 joh[n before I hear tha[t again.
 --> Carney: [You'll like it, you'[ll rilly like it.
 --> Curt: [You do too y[ou laugh like hell you
hhuh! [:
 Phyllis: ['ehheh huh
 Gary: Well I[:,
 Curt: [Y-

Gary: hat'n hadda [b e e r y e: t.]=
Pam: [You don'like it][becuz=
Gary: [=eh-heh-heh-[-huh-hah-huh!
Curt: [ehhh!
Carney: =you didn't think of it!
Curt: [ehh-heh at's ri(h) g h (h) [t nnn 'hh
Phyllis: [°hehhhhuhh [°I:a-n' adda
--> Gary: [I:a-n' adda
--> bee[r ye:t.I:c'n laugh ['t anything gi[t a bee:r,
Curt: [nh huh huh. huh, [huh-huh [°hnnn n-hn-hn
Phyllis: [°ehhu::n [°hnnn n-hn-hn
Curt: [eh-heh
Ryan: °BQ[::
Gary: [heh-heh-[-heh-heh-[-heh-ha-ha-ha-ah! ah! ah! ah!=
Curt: [That's ri[(h) : g ht.[(huh!],
Mike: [hah:hah:hah[hah huh huh,
huh huh [hah huh [°hnnn n-hn-hn
Phyllis: [°hnnn n-hn-hn
Curt: [= (h)You wan'ano[ther beer y[ou better[(keep laughing)=
Carney: [°ahhhah [°hnnn n-hn-hn
Gary: [e h h i h[ha ha
Carney: ['hahh!

Look for instance at the first of these turns (as this is where the tape and transcript begin, we lack the just preceding context of talk). We may initially dismiss the “Oh yeah” as “just” backlinking to the (or to some) prior turn. But what is the range of ways by which backlinking is done? It appears to be the initial job of a turn, but is it done differently in a one unit turn than it is if there is a separate TCU dedicated to doing it? Ought we then to collect and examine “turn starts” as a distinct object (i.e., distinct from TCU starts)? Perhaps some aspects of turn constructional *units*' starts may “belong” to the TCU, whereas others “belong” to the turn?

2.4.1 *Excursus*

I have spent a bit of time on the parsing of turns into TCUs and on a few of the organizational themes which such parsing may bring into view. The components of the turn formats examined here present themselves as having a “natural” fit to one another, as composing a coherent joint incumbency of a turn, with parts constructed so as to fit together and complement one another as parts of its construction: the end of one sequence and the start of a next; the succession of elements in a “train of thought” which leads from one topic to another. Before leaving this initial consideration of the multi-unit turn, I want to register a cross-cutting theme, one which can usefully inform the analytic parsing of a multi-unit turn. It is that some things, including some whole TCUs, which occur in a turn “belong” not so much to the turn as to a sequence; they are “housed” in the turn, but are made to cohere with its other incumbents only super-

ficially. That is, some components of turns are initially, and differentially, to be understood by reference to extra-turn considerations such as sequence, interactional juncture, and the like.

To be sure, virtually everything that is said occurs in a turn; and much of what is said in turns will occur at the same time in a sequence, although not everything will constitute an organizationally relevant “move” at some other level. “Cuz they want that on film” in Excerpt (2) above is at one and the same time an increment to the turn and a response to a potential rejection of a proposal, and thereby a pointed component in the trajectory of the sequence. But the particular grammatical practice adopted for adding to *the turn* may or may not have import for what the increment is doing to *the developing sequence* (just as the grammatical practice may not be properly understandable without reference to what that component of the talk is doing in a “larger” structure, such as a sequence or a story-telling).

But let me linger for a moment with an excerpt in which the “belonging” of a TCU to a different level of interactional organization is of a more distinctive character.

In Excerpt (5c), reproduced below as Excerpt (9), Marsha and Tony are the separated/divorced parents of the teen-aged Joey, who lives with his father but has just spent the holidays with his mother, some 500 miles away. The father calls on the day on which Joey is scheduled to return to him.

(9) MDE:MTRAC:60-1/2, 01:01-19

Marsha: Hello?
 Tony: Hi: Marsha?
 Marsha: Ye:ah.
 Tony: How are you.
 Marsha: Fi:ne.
 (0.2)
 Marsha: Did Joey get home yet?
 Tony: Well I wz wondering when 'e left.
 (0.2)
 Marsha: 'hhh Uh:(d) did Oh: .h Yer not in on what ha:ppen'.(hh)(d)
 Tony: No(h)o=
 --> Marsha: =He's flying.
 (0.2)
 --> Marsha: En Ilene is going to meet im: .Becuz the to:p wz ripped off'v iz car which is tih gay someb'ddy helped th'mselfs.
 Tony: Stolen.
 (0.4)
 Marsha: Stolen.=Right out in front of my house.
 Tony: Oh: f'r crying out loud,...

There is an issue here about Joey's return and its timing. As is apparent even from this much of the conversation (and it is taken

up in what follows), there has been trouble “on Marsha’s watch,” in the first instance with the car (Joey’s car? Tony’s car?), but as a consequence also with Joey’s trip home. Marsha’s pre-announcement/pre-telling – “Oh, Yer not in on what happened” – suggests yet another trouble; no one has informed Tony about the “news,” the change in travel plans, and the possible consequences for *him*.

Note then the composition and construction of Marsha’s turn at the arrows. “He’s flying” is the telling which the pre-announcement had projected. It is built to be complete, syntactically, prosodically, and pragmatically.²² It receives no uptake whatsoever – no registering of it as indeed *news*, no assessment of it for the *kind of news* that it is, these being the two recurrent, virtually canonical types of response to announcements.

Note that Marsha then adds to her turn two sorts of continuations. One of these is an account for Joey’s mode of travel, an account which extends beyond the fragment which I have reproduced here, and includes an account of the weather (which would forbid driving without a car top) and of the contingencies of getting a ticket or standby status at the airport. This continuation is linked to the initial part of the turn with “Becuz.”

To note that “becuz” links the account to “He’s flying” is also to note that it does not link it to what immediately precedes it. Indeed, “En Ilene is going to meet him” appears in various respects oddly placed in the developing course of this turn. The turn has been projected as being about “what happened,” and most of it is indeed in the past tense, but the “Ilene” segment is in the future. There is no further reference to Ilene (Joey’s girl friend) elsewhere in this sequence, which is otherwise concerned with Joey, Marsha, the car, the airport, etc. “En Ilene is going to meet him” is an island (if I may put it that way without generativist echoes) in this sequence (the “telling sequence”) and in this turn, as is shown by the “becuz” linking around it to “He’s flying.”

I take it that Marsha has introduced this TCU at the first sign of a negative interactional stance being taken up by Tony to her news (displayed here in the 0.2 seconds of silence following “He’s flying”) – and before pursuing the rest of her account – for the work it does in addressing the consequences of the change of travel plans for Tony’s own circumstances. The work it does is reassurance; Tony need do nothing; Ilene will meet Joey at the airport.

So this TCUs occurrence here is to be understood not as a “natural” way in which this turn can develop, as is the case with other continuations we have examined, including the “becuz...” which follows here. Quite the contrary; it is topically disparate from what surrounds it; it is virtually designed as out-of-place. It is initially to be understood by reference to the larger sequence in progress (“where’s Joey?”), and to the interactional and practical concerns which that sequence engenders and carries, and not by reference to its proximate predecessor in the turn. That it is out-of-place is a way of making it high priority; it is not merely out of place, it is made to be “as early as possible.” In this sense, it is *in* the turn, but not *of* the turn.²³

Nonetheless, it is incorporated into the turn into which it is interpolated. Even if the conjunction is pro forma, it is linked to the preceding TCU with an “En.” And at its ending, it is phonologically run right into what will follow it. Note that the “m” of “(h)im” is stretched, that there is no break at all as the intonation contour falls to terminal level, and that the lips still closed for the “m” immediately move without opening into the “b” of “becuz.” Although this strategically inserted TCU is thus incorporated (virtually “stitched”) into the developing turn organization, the work which this has taken is marked and set off by specially registerable turntaking practices (“noticeables”) at either end (the gap at its start and the boundary blur at its end). There are practices, then, for managing a unit being *in* the turn whose major locus of relevance is elsewhere.

Still most components of most multi-unit turns are produced in a more felicitous relationship to one another. The preceding discussion of the potentially diverse “organizational roots” or loci of components of turns was introduced as an alert worth bearing in mind in the parsing of turns into TCUs.

So much for now on the turn as an environment for turn constructional units. In some respects I have proceeded backwards, taking up first what might have followed the unit whose organization grammar provides for – the turn constructional unit. Perhaps there were payoffs from beginning with the turn as habitat, not least of which I hope to have been a suggestion about how analysts might proceed in examining turns-at-talk – namely, by locating TCUs *within* the turn. That is, one way to begin to parse a turn is to size up what is in it. What is in it will be (in one respect) one

TCU or several, perhaps with increments – increments added following possible completion of a TCU. But to come to the grammar of the TCU in this fashion is to come to it with the analytic operating field prepared, so to speak – prepared by having laid bare the organizational matrix of the turn and the interactional engines driving the talk. In any case, it is time to turn attention to the TCU itself.

2.5 Turn constructional units

Recognizing some spate of talk as a TCU is itself an accomplishment. That is, some stretches of talk by a speaker are taken (by us as analysts and by co-participants in the setting) not as TCUs, but, for example, as increments of talk to some other, prior talk – either by that same speaker or by another.²⁴ Here are some cases in point.

(10) TG:08:19 – 09:02

- Bee: I'nna tell you on:e course.
(0.5)
- Ava: [()].
- Bee: [The mah-] the mah:dern art. The twunnieth century a:rt there's about eight books,
- Ava: Mm(hm,
- Bee: [En I wentuh buy a book the other day I [went] 'hh went=
Ava: [(mm)]
- Bee: =downtuh N.Y.U. tuh get it becuz it's the only place thet car[ries the book.
Ava: [Mmm
- Ava: Mmh
- Bee: Tch! En it wz twun::ty do::lliz.
- Ava: Oh my god.
(0.4)
- XX Bee: Yeuh he- ez he wz handing me the book en 'e tol' me twunny
XX dolliz I almos' dro(h)pped i(h)[t 'hh 'hh
Ava: [hhunh.
- XX Bee: 'hhh I said but fer twunny dollars I bettuh hh 'hh yihknow,
(0.2)
- Bee: 'hhh h[hold o:nto i(h)hh] huhh huh] 'hh!
- > Ava: [not drop it.] huhh huh]
(0.2)
- Bee: Ih wz, (0.2) y'know (fun).=...

In Excerpt (10) Ava's "not drop it" appears to be designed as a potential continuation – a collaborative completion (Sacks, 1992: I: 144-7, 321-3, 651-5; II: 57-60 et passim; Lerner, 1991, this volume) – of Bee's ongoing turn, one which, as it happens, gets produced in overlap with Bee's own completion of it. In Excerpt (11), Bee's talk at the arrows is built as an apparent continuation of her own prior talk at the lines marked XX, talk which may indeed be understood *not* to have come to possible completion. (For dis-

cussion of this segment, cf. Schegloff, 1987a[1973].) The talk at the three arrows in Excerpts (12)²⁵ and (13) is in each case built as a continuation of the same speaker's prior talk, talk which *had* otherwise apparently been brought to possible completion.

(11) TG:18:14-27

XX Bee: t! We:ll, uhd-yihknow I-I don' wanna make any- thing
 XX definite because I-yihknow I jis:: I jis::t thinkin:g
 XX tihday all day riding on th'trai:ns hhuh-uh
 'hh[h!]

Ava: [Well there's nothing else t'do.<I wz
 thingin[g of taking the car anyway.] 'hh

--> Bee: [that I would go into the ss-uh-]=I would go into
 --> the city but I don't know,

Ava: Well if I do take it, this way if- uh-if- y'know uh::
 there's no pa:rking right away I c'n give you the car
 en you c'n look around a li'l bit.

Bee: Mye::[m ,]

Ava: [y'know] en see what happens.
 (0.4)

(12) MDE:MTRAC:60-1/2, 02:11-17

XX Marsha: 'hhh Bu:t u-hu:ghh his frend Steve en Brian er driving up.
 --> Right after:: (0.2) school is out.En then hi'll drive do:wn
 here with the:m.

Tony: Oh I see.

Marsha: So: in the long run, 'hhh it (·) probly's gonna save a
 liddle time 'n: energy.

Tony: Okay,

(13) MDE:MTRAC:60-1/2, 02:32-03:15

Marsha: Bu:t it wasn't too crowded when we go:t there, so,
 (0.9)

XX Tony: Yeh he'll probly get uhp uh one of the planes (too:)
 (0.3)

Marsha: ['tch

a-> Tony: [before too long otherwise y'll be hearing from im et the
 airport y'd probly'd'v heard fr'm im already.
 (0.7)

Marsha: Wha:t?

XX Tony: Y'd of probly heard fr'm im already.
 (0.9)

Marsha: i-Ya:h.
 (0.4)

b-> Tony: If 'e hadn' gotten a li:ft
 (0.2)

Marsha: Ri:ght.

Tony: Yeah.

The talk indicated at each of these arrows is parsable as not a new turn constructional unit, but as an increment to prior talk by same or other speaker, at least in part because it *does not start with a recognizable beginning*. Spates of talk then (like other organized interactional units, such as whole single conversations) can be

recognized as having *starting places* which may or may not have *beginnings* in them (SSJ, 1974: 719 ff.). Turn constructional units – and turns – can start with a “beginning” or with something which is hearably *not* a beginning.²⁶ And, as was noted concerning Excerpt (11), spates of talk can apparently end not only with recognizable possible completions, but with something which is *not* a recognizable possible completion (indeed, there is a distinct recognizable type of turn closure built around this feature – the “trail off”). An exploration of the organization of turn constructional units – as with many other units of sequential and interactional organization – aptly begins, then, with attention to their beginnings and endings. And I will try to say a few things about what comes in between as well.

There is nothing intrinsic to the arrowed talk in the preceding segments which marks them as continuations and not beginnings. In each case, it is in their relationship to the preceding talk – in the way their relationship to the preceding talk is designed and constructed by their speaker – that (if so heard by recipient) they achieve being a continuation. And so it is with recognizable beginnings as well. Recall Excerpt (9) above, partially reproduced as (14) below:

(14) MDE:MTRAC:60-1/2, 01:10-19

Marsha: 'hhh Uh:(d) did Oh: .h Yer not in on what ha:ppen'.(hh)(d)

Tony: No(h)o=

Marsha: =He's flying.

(0.2)

Marsha: En Ilene is going to meet im:.Becuz the to:p wz ripped off'v iz car which is tih gay someb'ddy helped th'mselves.

--> Tony: Stolen.

(0.4)

--> Marsha: Stolen.=Right out in front of my house.

Tony: Oh: f'r crying out loud,...

Although both of these “stolen”s are TCUs, neither of these arrowed utterances, or parts of them, is *intrinsically* a TCU, or “a beginning.” Each is designed for the sequential and interactional juncture in which it is positioned.

Indeed, designing a spate of talk as a continuation is itself not necessarily incompatible with its being a TCU in its own right. Consider, for example, Excerpts (15a) and (15b), each taken from talk in therapy sessions. Excerpt (15a) is taken from a group therapy session with teenagers, in which the “dropping out” of the sole female patient has been under discussion.²⁷

(15a) GTS 4:3

Roger: She's workin?
(0.4)
Ther: (Yeah. She just started a job.)
Roger: So we lack feminine attendance.
Ther: ((clears throat)) Does seem so. (Unless) we
can get some more in.
Ken: But the girls- any girl that comes in hasta
take all those tests and stuff don't they?
(0.6)
Ther: (Won't be for several weeks now)
Roger: They make miserable coffee.
Ken: hhhh hhh
--> Ther: Across the street?
Roger: Yeh
Ken: Miserable food hhhh
(0.4)
Ken: hhhh So what 'djudo East-er-over Easter Vacation?

Here, the arrowed utterance is specifically built as a continuation of the prior – indeed, that is key to the job the utterance is doing; but it clearly constitutes a turn-constructional unit – and a turn – in its own right.²⁸ So, starting with a non-beginning can be a way of starting a TCU as well – depending on the form of that non-beginning and what it starts, and its relationship to its context. This is underscored by Excerpt (15b), taken from a family therapy setting (Jones and Beach, 1994, in press).

(15b) Jones and Beach, 1994 (FAM:A2, simplified)

Ther: What kind of work do you do?
Mother: Ah food service
--> Ther: At?
Mother: (A)/(uh) post office cafeteria downtown main post office on
Redwood
Ther: °Okay° so if you...

Here the TCU at the arrowed turn – which does accomplish an action and is recognized as possibly complete – is designed specifically to have neither a beginning nor an ending in the usual syntactic sense. Implementing the practice of “prompting,” it is designed to be grammatically continuous with what preceded and to provide for its recipient to provide in next turn a contribution which will be grammatically continuous with it, and will bring the (now expanded) whole to possible completion.

Here is part of one sense of the grammar(s) of TCUs being *positionally sensitive*. If an early organizational issue for an incipient speaker is whether to begin a next installment of talk with a beginning or a non-beginning, and if each of these requires design by reference to the immediate sequential context, then the selection of a

grammar for turn-construction is context-sensitive in the sense of positionally specified at the praxeological point of departure.

2.5.1 TCU beginnings

Once we have registered that a speaker's contribution of talk in a possible turn position can be designed from its outset to be a separate TCU or not, and that this can turn (if I may put it that way) on whether it starts with a beginning(-in-context) or not, then we are afforded a starting point for analysis. One direction for inquiry into grammar and interaction, into the organization of turn constructional units and turns, concerns beginnings. Here are some practical queries for analysis:

(A) Beginnings. For any TCU, or – given the preceding considerations – for any initial talk in what could be a turn position, we can ask:

- (1) Does it start with a beginning?
- (2) Is there more than one beginning?
- (3) By reference to what is/are the beginning(s) constituted as beginning? What form does the beginning take?
- (4) If there is more than one beginning, are they the same or different?
- (5) If the same, how are we to understand the redoing? (cf. Goodwin, 1980, 1981; Schegloff, 1987a[1973].)
- (6) If different, are the several beginnings different beginnings for a “recognizably same” TCU, or for different TCUs?
- (7) If for a “recognizably same” TCU, what does the new beginning do relative to the prior beginning?
- (8) If a new beginning is for a “new” TCU, is there a recognizable shift target, i.e., a recognizable (or conjectural) basis for shifting from the prior to the new TCU?

Here I can offer only a rough indication of how some of these inquiries might be pursued. Consider a few instances of different beginnings for a “recognizably same” TCU:

(16) SN-4:01:05-30

Mark: Hi Sherry, hi Ruthie,
 Ruthie: Hi Ma:rk.
 Sherri: Hi Ma:rk.=
 Mark: =[How're you guys.
 =[(door slams)]
 (0.2)

Ruthie: Jis' fi:ne.
(0.2)

Sherri: Uh:: tired.

Mark: Tired, I hear yih gettin' married.
(0.6)

(??): °((sniff))
(0.3)

Sherri: Uh:: you hear right.
(0.2)

Mark: (Ih) shah-I hear ri:gh[t].

?Shrri: [mmhh [(heh hh)]

--> Mark: [Didja e-] by the way didja ever
call up uh: Century City Hotel 'n
(1.0)

Sherri: Y'know h'much they want fer a wedding? It's incredible.
(0.5)

Sherri: We'd 'aftuh sell our house 'n car 'n evryt(h)hing e(h)l(h)se
[tuh pay fer the wedding .]

Mark: [Shhh'er house 'n yer car.]
(17) Wong:TJ:4:4

Tang: Yeah, for the temple you know then the children grow up, you
know
(0.4)

--> Tang: Oh d- by the way did you get the tapes?
Jim: Oh yeah I did.

(18) Auto Discussion:03:26-40

Carney: Thanks hon,
(0.1)

Carney: W'make a good=

Gary: ME::=

X Phyllis: =°Go sit by [Curt.

Carney: = [couple.

Gary: Yer the one thet did it!
(0.5)

X--> Curt: C'mmere Bo,kih-jus' kick im Phyllis,
Curt: hhOh m[y G o:d.hh]=

X Curt: [C'mon! Hey!]=

Gary: =hh I've got m[y, sacroilliac twisted all the way arou[:n

X Curt: ['pw! Comon, [

X Curt: [Comon

Bo, =

X Mike: =°G'wan.=

At the arrowed turn in each of these instances, a TCU is started with a candidate beginning, is cut off, and some new element is inserted before the first beginning is re-employed. It is the re-employment of the initial beginning which allows recognition of the new element as an "insertion," allows the insertion to be recognized as what the cut-off was designed to permit, and provides for the whole configuration to be recognized as a re-beginning of the "same" TCU with a new turn-initial element.

In (16), what invites retro-construction as "Didja ever call up..." is self-interrupted for the insertion of "By the way," a usage which

in other contexts appears to be used as a “misplacement marker” (Schegloff and Sacks, 1973: 319-20; also in Baugh and Sherzer, 1984: 92-3). In the present context (roughly), Sherry has discouraged Mark’s move to initiate topic talk on her forthcoming wedding; Mark’s question appears to be pursuing the topic nonetheless, and the misplacement marker appears to register his orientation to the question’s apparent out-of-order-ness. As well, it can be taken as marking the question as disjunctive with what preceded, rather than in line with it.

A similar usage seems to figure in (17), but here the initial start of the TCU “Oh d-” already incorporates a change-of-state token (Heritage, 1984), a touch-off marker which can signal disjunction (Jefferson, 1978a). But in this context, the speaker finds misplacement marking enough in order as to warrant self-interruption in order to insert “by the way” (I take “by the way” to be inserted, not to replace the “oh”). In both these instances, the turn’s beginning is redone ostensibly to secure inclusion of a revised indication of the turn’s relationship to prior talk, and of the propriety of its placement.

In Excerpt (18), a backyard picnic gathering has schismed (Egbert, 1993) into two participation frameworks – Carney and her husband Gary engaging in assessing responsibility for Carney’s fall from Gary’s lap, and – in the exchange of interest here (marked by Xs) – Phyllis and Mike trying to get host Curt’s dog Bo to move closer to his master and farther from them. In the arrowed turn, Curt responds to Phyllis’ directive to the dog first by issuing one of his own (“C’mmere Bo”), and then by inviting Phyllis to “get physical” rather than issuing instructions. The shift from the reconstructible “Kih[ck him Phyllis]” to “Just kick him Phyllis” appears designed first to relieve her of a burden of restraint (“just” marking in this regard a “lesser” course of action, i.e., less self-disciplined), but also (perhaps by virtue of the comparative tenor which “just” introduces) to relate the directive (or the permission) he is giving her to the preceding course of action. It thus has an effect related to, but different from, the “by the way”s of the preceding excerpts.

These three excerpts permit another feature to be noted. Earlier it was useful to remark that some things which occur in turns have their organizational locus or origin not in the turn but in the sequence. Here a related observation may be in order. The “By

the way”s in (16) and (17) *belong to the turn*; they relate the turn – given what is incipiently being said/done in it – to the talk which came before and that is the job they seem introduced to do. By contrast, the “just” in (18) *belongs not so much to its turn as to its TCU*; it marks the nature of the action Curt is doing; if not directing Phyllis to kick the dog then permitting her to do so. That it marks a relationship to earlier elements of the course of action (and that they were addressed to the dog, though Curt is now responding) is a by-product, rather than central.

In contrast to multiple beginnings for a “recognizably same” TCU, consider a candidate instance of a new beginning for a “new” TCU, and the issue it may be seen to pose concerning the grounds for the shift. It is drawn from the earlier examined Excerpt (9), reproduced below.

(9) MDE:MTRAC:60-1/2, 01:01-19

Marsha: Hello_i?

Tony: Hi: Marsha?

Marsha: Ye:ah.

Tony: How are you.

Marsha: Fi:ne.

(0.2)

Marsha: Did Joey get home yet?

Tony: Well I wz wondering when 'e left.

(0.2)

--> Marsha: 'hhh Uh:(d) did Oh: .h Yer not in on what ha:p pen'.(hh)(d)

Tony: No(h)o=

Marsha: =He's flying.

(0.2)

Marsha: En Ilene is going to meet im: Becuz the to:p wz ripped off'v iz car which is tih gay someb'ddy helped th'mselfs.

Tony: Stolen.

(0.4)

Marsha: Stolen. =Right out in front of my house.

Tony: Oh: f'r crying out loud,...

Marsha's turn at the arrow is begun “tentatively,” i.e., after multiple “delays” by an inter-turn gap of silence, then a hearable in-breath, then an “uh:” which ends in a possible allusion to the initial sound of the first word – “d”, and finally a beginning to the TCU, “Did.”²⁹ The initial projection which this beginning adumbrates is, minimally, that a question may be being initiated, and very likely a “yes/no”-type question. But the “did” is followed not by a possible next component of the just-launched TCU but by “Oh,” which serves here both as a self-interruption marker and initiator, as a change-of-state token (here, specifically, what one might call a “realization” marker), and as a disjunction marker, alerting recipi-

ent that what follows might be not more of what preceded, but something disjunctive with what preceded (compare Jefferson, 1974), including potentially a new start, and potentially a new start of a new “product.” And indeed what follows (unlike the self-interruptions in the three excerpts previously examined) does not include the re-appearance of the first beginning.

The new beginning offers at least one immediate contrast with the prior one: it projects a possibly declarative construction (only “possibly” because it can be prosodically shaped to end by being “released” as an interrogative). With such new beginnings which offer an immediate contrast with a prior beginning, one issue they may pose (for recipients as well as professional analysts) is whether something “entirely disjunct” is being done, or whether some type of systematic alternative is being done – i.e., some TCU which stands in an orderly relationship to the one which had been initiated and incipiently projected – for example, a re-ordering with a shift to something which should be said “first,” or an alternative tack to what the turn was beginning to take. And often this can be conjecturally retro-constructed from a juxtaposition of the abandoned beginning and the finally realized replacement.

Here in Excerpt (9), for example, one can conjecture that Marsha was beginning to ask “Did Joey call you?” (or even “*Didn’t* Joey call you?”) but “realizes” that Tony’s question belies the relevance of such an inquiry, and delivers the product of that realization instead, in what amounts to an *epistemic upgrade* from an *inquiry* about the current distribution of knowledge about Joey’s itinerary to an *assertion* about it. Here then the “new” TCU may not be very remote from the initially begun one, but that clearly can vary.

These few observations can be but the barest indication of two strategic orders of relevance of the starts of spates of talk, and of (initial) TCUs as the predominant form of such talk: the relationship of the talk being launched to what has *preceded* (whether talk, or other conduct, or features of the context) and a *projection* of aspects of what is being launched.

With respect to the former, there are virtually always generic jobs to be done with regard, for example, to prior turn – e.g., showing that it was heard, understood, that its selection of next speaker was registered either in the observance or in the breach. But there can also be particular types of jobs precipitated or made relevant by

particular prior turns or actions, or particular *types* of prior turn or action, e.g., stance-taking of various sorts (aligning with or against, registering surprise or familiarity), laughing, doing sequentially appropriate nexts, etc. or disengaging from the sequential projection of prior turn. Such jobs may on occasion be best done in a TCU dedicated to something else (like “just kick him”), on occasion in a TCU-initial component dedicated to back-linking (like “by the way”), or sometimes by a full turn-initial TCU dedicated to back linking, like the pro forma agreement token or expression which may precede a disagreement or account.³⁰

With respect to projection by the beginning of a TCU of aspects of what is being launched, we need to consider the “internal” organization of TCUs themselves. (By “internal” I mean the organization that relates the parts of a TCU to one another, however we conceive and formulate those parts.) This is at least one traditional sense of the term “grammar.” But before doing so, I want to focus for a short while on TCU *possible completions* and *achieved turn closure*, because TCUs are not symmetrical, are not balanced on some grammatical midpoint, but – and this is one import of temporality and sequential structure – are directional. And what they are directional toward is possible completion.

Recall again that this structural, grammatical asymmetry is – in conversation – *interactionally enforced*. Co-participants will properly be oriented to possible completions as places where they may have rights or obligations to talk, and speakers accordingly will be oriented to them as resources for drawing others in and exiting the turn themselves, or holding others off so as to extend what is being said. We must always keep in mind that, although as post-hoc students of talk-in-interaction it is possible for us (however analytically ill-considered it may be) to look for possible completion by working backwards from where a turn actually ended, *for the participants* possible completion is always oriented to, reckoned and encountered from the start of the turn or the TCU, *forward* in real time. And so it will be useful to have directionality toward possible completion, and the transition-relevance of possible completion, on the table before turning directly to the internal – grammatical – organization of the TCU.³¹ As quickly becomes obvious, however, it is not so simple; we can hardly talk about possible completion

and achieved closure without invoking the internal grammar of the TCU – and, it turns out, without consideration of beginnings.

2.5.2 TCU endings

Recall how we got here. It was via the observation that we come to construct and to recognize a spate of talk as a TCU, at least in part, by having it start with a beginning (which it need not do) and finish with an ending. These then are significant loci of organization in the production of talk in interaction, and we have just addressed ourselves partially to the “starts with beginnings.”³² What I want to focus on next are possible completion and turn-constructural-unit endings as a locus of organization. In particular, I want to offer some reflections not only on possible completion itself, but also on “pre-possible completion” as one strategic place in the organization (the *grammatical* organization?) of a TCU, and on “post-possible completion” as an underexplored terrain that is still within the boundaries of the turn, and potentially of the preceding TCU. I will have to be brief and compressed; I will rely to a greater extent on past work and less on the examination of data fragments. Let me begin by offering a series of analytic themes which can be brought to the parsing of any TCU in any turn, much as I did for beginnings, and then explore just a few of the issues which these themes reflect.

(B) Endings. For any TCU, we can ask:

(1) Does it end with an ending, i.e., does it come to a recognizable possible completion, on the several dimensions which together constitute possible completion – syntactic, prosodic, and action/pragmatic (cf. Ford and Thompson, this volume)?

(2) Does it come to more than one recognizable possible completion? If so, what are they, and how are they to be understood?

(3) How are some (projectable) possible completions circumvented? For example, (a) how are they marked as “not-designed-to-be-ending”? (b) How are they by-passed (e.g., cut-off, trail-off, restructuring, etc.) or (c) overridden (e.g., rush-through)?

(4) How are non-uptakes of projected-possible-completions/ designed-endings dealt with? By an increment to the same TCU? By addition of a new TCU?

(5) If by an increment to the same TCU, how does the prior talk shape the new increment? How does the increment display orienta-

tion to the sequential and interactional import of the non-uptake?
Of the talk preceding the non-uptake?

(6) If by the addition of a new TCU, what orderliness obtains between the new TCU and the unresponded one? Here, the set of issues raised earlier about multi-unit turns becomes relevant.

One product of focusing on the intersection of grammar and interaction is the specification of loci of strategic organizational import possibly not otherwise analytically accessible. One such locus I want to take notice of is “pre-possible completion.” One way my own concern with it arose was with the query, where does the transition space begin? It is clear that sometimes next turns begin in so-called terminal overlap with prior turns which are (it appears to the participants) coming to an end. But how far back into an “expiring” turn can a next speaker go in getting an early start while still not, in effect, doing an interruption? And *how* does it appear that an ongoing turn is coming to an end? A number of *syntactically* possible completions may have passed without being targeted as possible turn completions; how is some incipient next one made the occasion for an early start? Recall that for the parties, these syntactically possible completions are encountered forward in real time; it is not given in advance (as it is to post-hoc analysts looking at or listening to a tape, or looking at a transcript) which possible completions will be passed and which acted upon.

I am sure that there are various resources, and that we know relatively few of them (for one account, cf. Jefferson, 1984b). One usage that I have noticed and examined a bit is a pitch peak in grammatical environments which remain to be characterized. But when the syntactic and pragmatic conditions have been met (e.g., some recognizable action has been projected), a pitch peak can adumbrate “designed possible completion at next grammatically possible completion.” Just after such a pitch peak is the locus for various orderly phenomena: it is where early-starting next turns regularly come in; it is where speakers initiate a “rush-through” (Schegloff, 1982) if they mean to extend their talk through the transition-space into a new turn-constructional unit; it is where continuers and other forms of interpolation into otherwise projectably extended spates of talk are placed if they overlap with the otherwise ongoing talk (cf. Goodwin, 1986). Consider, for exam-

ple, the earlier Excerpt (7), reproduced below with the ensuing turns:

(7) TG:02:06-21

Ava: [°B't agi]de fr'm that it's a'right.
 Bee: [So what-]
 (0.4)
 Bee: What?
 --> Ava: I'm so:: ti:yid. I j's played ba:ske'ball t'day since the
 -->> firs' time since I wz a freshm'n in hi:ghsch[ool.] [Ba::]sk(h)et=
 Bee: b(h)a(h)ll? (h)[(°Whe(h)re
 Ava: [Y_eah fuh like an hour enna ha:[lf.]
 Bee: [°hh] Where
 --> Bee: didju play ba:sk[etbaw.]
 -->> Ava: [(The) gy]:m.
 Bee: In the gy:m? [(hh)
 Ava: [Yea:h. Like grou(h)p therapy.Yuh know
 [half the grou]p that we had la:s' term wz there en we=
 Bee: [O h i : : .]°hh

Directly after the pitch peaks marked by the underlinings on the single-arrowheaded lines (“hi:ghsch[ool” and “ba:sk[etbaw”]) come the “responses” of the double-arrowheaded lines.

But aside from marking where next turns by others might “prematurely” start and where pre-emptions of them must therefore be initiated, this location of “pre-possible completion” can be organizationally strategic in other respects.

For example, within the organization of repair, there is a key positioning principle for the initiation of repair, and that is by reference to its target – the repairable or trouble-source. The familiar position typology of “same turn initiation, next turn initiation, third position,” etc. (Schegloff, Jefferson, and Sacks, 1977 – henceforth SJS) are all positions of repair-*initiation* relative to the trouble-source. Within same turn, the general principle appears to be, “as close to the repairable (i.e., as early) as possible,” although the work of Levelt (1983) – if applicable to ordinary conversation – suggests that grammatical structure may in some respects qualify this principle (see also Fox and Jasperson, frth; Fox, Hayashi, and Jasperson, this volume). But there appears to be at least one other conditioning environment for same turn repair initiation and it is *not* relative to the trouble-source – and that is “pre-possible completion.” Thus, a few years ago I examined the utterance reproduced in Excerpt (19) below in some detail (Schegloff, 1987b, also 1988b).

(19) Auto Discussion 5:35-36

Curt: [He- he's about the only regular <he's about the
only good regular out there'z, Keegan still go out?

The point relevant in the present context concerns the self-repair which inserts the word “good” into an utterance otherwise constructed as “He’s about the only regular out there.” If we ask where the repair is initiated, then one account would locate it just before possible completion of the TCU, for we see that what follows “regular” in the final delivery of the TCU is “out,” which is the carrier of the pitch peak which adumbrates upcoming possible completion. Any later and the TCU is vulnerable to incipient talk by a next speaker; before that position, i.e., before “pre-possible completion,” seems to be a strategic place for same turn repair initiation.

Here is another evidence of the relevance of “pre-possible completion.” When two speakers find themselves talking at the same time, one or both of them may begin to speak “competitively,” i.e., to produce their talk in ways designed to “drive the other out,” or alternatively to outlast the other’s competing production. One of these devices is the “sound stretch,” that is, the prolongation of a component sound of the speaker’s ongoing TCU (cf. Jefferson and Schegloff, 1975 for an early version). If we ask where in the talk of an overlap this competitive practice is deployed, then one of the most prominent loci is pre-possible completion in the competing (the *other* party’s) turn. I offer but a single exemplar here, taken from Excerpt (11), reproduced below.

(11) TG:18:14-27

Bee: t! We:ll, uhd-yihknow I-I don' wanna make any- thing
definite because I-yihknow I jis:: I jis::t thinkin:g
tihday all day riding on th'traiins hhuh-uh
'hh[h!]

Ava: [Well there's nothing else t'do.<I wz
thingin[g of taking the car anyway.] 'hh

--> Bee: [that I would go into the ss-uh-]=I would go into
the city but I don't know,

Ava: Well if I do ta:ke it, this way if- uh-if- y'know uh::
there's no pa:rking right away I c'n give you the car
en you c'n look aroun a li'l bit.

Bee: Mye::[:m ,]

Ava: [y'know] en see what happens.

At the arrows Bee and Ava are talking in overlap. Note that Bee abandons the saying of “that I would go into the city,” only to resume it and bring it to completion before continuing “but I

don't know." Note as well that, just before abandoning the first saying, she begins the word "city" (it appears in the transcript excerpt as "ss-uh-") and holds its first sound, before starting the resaying. Note finally that she begins this sound stretch just as Ava is beginning the word "anyway," projectably the designed ending of her TCU. It is at pre-possible completion of Ava's TCU that Bee initiates the sound stretch which "absorbs" the remainder of her overlapping talk. (For a further account of this episode, cf. Schegloff, 1987 [1973].)

There are other forms of talk whose organization and placement must be understood, it seems to me, by reference to what seems to be a *grammatical position in the turn constructional unit – pre-possible completion*, among them trail-offs, some of the collaborative completions described by Lerner (1987, 1991), the "pregnant pause" adopted by some speakers during which "planning" for a next TCU and preparation of a rush-through to get there can appear to be prepared, etc.³³

"Pre-possible completion" is but one of several loci of organizational relevance arrayed around endings of TCUs and turns. Another, obviously key, one is the possible completion point itself. *From the point of view of the organization of talk-in-interaction, one of the main jobs grammar or syntax does is to provide potential construction- and recognition-guides for the realization of the possible completion points of TCUs, and potentially of turns.* And here, therefore, is another major contribution (of the many) which students of grammar can make to our understanding of talk-in-interaction. The grammatical constitution of possible completion is what is "played with" or flouted by trail offs: in the trail off, just what is needed to arrive at a possible completion point is projected, and then left unarticulated. It is worth registering the converse possibility as well – that is, that a point of grammatical possible completion can be reached (including prosody), but the turn not yet be possibly finished – if its "activity" or pragmatic constraints are not met (cf. also Ford and Thompson, this volume). In Excerpt (20) (from which the earlier Excerpt (1) was taken), Bee is proffering as a topic talk about the college which she and Ava had attended together before Bee transferred to another school.

(20) TG 04:35-06:01

- Bee: Eh-yih have anybuddy: thet uh:? (1.2) I would know from the English depar'mint there?
- Ava: Mm-mh. Tch! I don't think so.
- Bee: °Oh,=<Did they geh ridda Kuhleznik yet hhh
- Ava: No in fact I know somebuddy who ha:s huh [now.
- Bee: [Oh my got hh[hhh
- Ava: [Yeh=
- c--> =en s' he siz yihknow he remi:nds me of d-hih-ih- tshe reminds me, 'hhh of you, meaning me:. (0.4)
- Bee: Uh-ho that's [a- that's a s[wee:t co:mplimint,] 'hh-
- Ava: [Kuhleznik.= [=I said gee:, tha:n]ks a lo:[t honeh,
- Bee: [hhhhhuh huh=
- Ava: ='hh [Said] yih all gonna gitch' mouth shuddup fih you=
- Bee: ['hhhh!]
- Ava: =yih don't sto:p i[t.]
- Bee: [°M]myeh,
- Bee: I think evrybuddy's had her hm[hhh!
- Ava: [Ohh, [she's the biggest=]
- b--> Bee: [-fih something,]
- Ava: =pain in the a:ss. (0.3)
- Bee: °Yeh,
- Ava: .T She's teaching uh English lit too, no more composition,
- Bee: Oh:::, She's moved up in the wor[ld]
- Ava: [She] must know somebuddy because all those other teachers they got rid of.hhhh (0.3)
- Bee: Yeh I bet they got rid of all the one::Well one I had, t! 'hhh in the firs' term there, fer the firs'term of English, she die::d hhuh-uhh ['hhh
- Ava: [Oh:.
- Bee: She died in the middle of the te:rm?mhhh!=
- Ava: =Oh that's too ba:d hha ha!=
- Bee: =Eh-yeh, ih-a, She wz rea:lly awful, ghe ha-duh, ('hh) ghe's the wuh- She ha:duh southern accent too.
- Ava: Oh:.
- Bee: A:nd, ghe wz very difficul'tuh unduhstand.
- a--> Ava: No, ghe ain't there anymoh,
- Bee: No I know I mean she, ghe's gone a long t(h)ime (h)a'rea(h)[dy? hh
- Ava: [Mm, [hhmh!
- Bee: ['hhh (0.2)
- Bee: nYeeah, 'hh This feller I have-(nn) "felluh"; ((etc.))

Note here that at the “a”-arrowed turn, “No” taken by itself cannot constitute the full turn. And because by “turn constructional unit” we mean units of talk which *can* constitute the whole turn, “No” here is not only not the possible completion point of a TCU; it may not be a TCU at all – not in this environment, even though elsewhere it is. Indeed, in the very next turn it is. I must limit myself to a brief explication.

In the immediately preceding talk, Bee has been providing an account of a teacher she “had” whom they did *not* “get rid of,” because she had died in the middle of the term – this as an installment in the ongoing topic of a search for mutual acquaintances (including instructors) from the past, a search which Ava has been discouraging. In the turn just preceding the “a”-arrowed one, Bee is bringing her characterization of this teacher to a close in a common way – with a summary assessment. This was (apparently) not an instructor whom Ava had shared with Bee, and she (Ava) is in no position to agree or disagree with this assessment. The turn-initial “No” is then potentially anomalous; it cannot be all of what Ava is going to say (and, indeed, she goes on to provide a linkage back to *that* prior talk to which her talk is addressed). By contrast, in the following turn, after Ava has remarked (presumably ironically, given the reported death) that this teacher is no longer at the college, a turn-initial “no” *can* be all of the turn – the negative being a form of agreement token with a preceding negative assertion.

As it happens, this “no” is not all of its turn either. But note that in the arrowed turn, where the “no” *cannot* be the possible completion, the speaker has the luxury of pausal prosody, being little vulnerable to a start up of a next turn by the other; whereas in the following turn, where the “no” *is* a possible completion, there is no prosodic juncture marked, but the talk is pressed through to a next TCU (as in Excerpt (1), which reappears here in (20) as the second turn by Ava).

The more general point here (whose relevance extends beyond turn closure to the form of the grammar more generally, and to the positional variability of grammar) is this. Because what it will take for a turn’s work to be possibly done can vary with its position in a sequence (e.g., the question vs. the answer turn, the first assessment or the response to it, etc.), the grammar can also vary, and with it, *what can constitute possible completion*. In composing a turn, then, a speaker can – perhaps, must – consult “place in sequence” – indeed, must consult “place in the set of organizational frameworks in which the moment is lodged” – and the composition of the immediately preceding talk as a resource for constructing the present turn, including its grammatical form. And recipients will then

have to do the same in parsing and grasping it. I will return to this theme.

If “pre-possible closing” and “possible completion point” are loci of organizational import for TCU closure and thereby potentially for turn ending, so is “*post-possible completion.*” And here I want to discriminate two different *sorts* of things which can occupy post-possible completion position. One sort is composed of elements of talk added to the TCU and the turn which re-occasion possible completion; that is, which constitute extensions to the TCU or the turn (the two are different) and which themselves come to another possible completion of the TCU or turn.³⁴ The other sort is composed of elements which are positioned post-possible completion, but do not represent extensions of the prior talk, but rather retrospective or retroactive alignments *toward* it, or consequences *of* it – what I will term below “post-completion stance markers.”

First, grammatically structured extensions of, or increments to, the talk. Various sorts of elements can follow possible completion. Some of these appear to add a new grammatical unit (often a phrase or a clause) to what preceded and thereby to extend it in some fashion, often “specifying” it, as in Excerpt (3) (“Stolen. Right out in front of my house.”). or Excerpt (21) below:

(21) TG 16:22-31

Ava: Yeh w'l I'll give you a call then tomorrow.when I get in
'r summ.
(0.5)
Bee: Wha:t,
Ava: <I'll give yih call tomo[rrow.]
Bee: [Yeh:] 'n [I'll be ho:me t'mor]row.
--> Ava: [When I-I get home.] I
Ava: don't kno-w- I could be home by-'hh three, I c'd be home
by two [I don't] know.]
Bee: [Well] when]ever. ((etc.))

Here “when I get home” is a clause added post-possible completion of Ava’s prior TCU (and turn), a possible completion testified to by Bee’s taking it as the occasion for initiating a next turn.

But the post-possible completion element can be an “add-on” which does not add a new grammatical construction but complements a grammatical construction with which the prior TCU had apparently come to closure, as in Excerpt (20), above at the “b-” arrowed turn (where “fih something” appears to complement “...everybody’s had her,”) or Excerpts (22) and (23) below.

(22) TG 11:01-09

Bee: Mm, tch! I wz gonnuh call you. last week someti(h)me
 `hhh[hh]

Ava: [Yeh my mother a:sked mih I siz I don'know I haven't
 hea:rd from her.I didn' know what day:s you had.`h[hh]

Bee: [Yeh
 en I[: didn' know w-]

--> Ava: [cla:sses 'r] a[nything,
 Bee: [I didn'know when you were hh[ome=
 Ava: [Tch

(23) TG 14:02-11

Bee: [Dihyuh have any-cl- You have a class with
 Billy this te:rm?

Ava: Yeh he's in my abnormal class.

Bee: mnYeh [how-]

Ava: [Abnor]mal psy[ch.
 Bee: [Still not gettin married,
 --> Ava: `hhh Oh no. De:finately not.[married.]
 Bee: [No he's] dicided[defin[itely?]
 Ava: [`hhh [O h]
 no.

In both (22) and (23) Ava appears (syntactically, prosodically, and pragmatically) to have brought a TCU (and with it the turn) to possible completion (i.e., “appears” to her interlocutor Bee, whose next turn beginnings display such an analysis), but Ava then produces an add-on to that talk, which grammatically complements what had otherwise appeared to be possibly complete – “...what days you had” being complemented by “classes or anything” in (22), and “definitely not” being complemented by “married” in (23).³⁵

Post-possible completion is also one of the structurally provided and recurrently exploited positions for initiating repair, i.e., “transition-space repair” (cf. SJS, 1977: 366, 374 et passim), as, for example, in Excerpt (20) above at the “c”-arrow (“...meaning me.”). Indeed, as a distinctive locus of repair initiation it is defined/constituted by its placement “post-possible completion.” As with the previously mentioned additions, it re-engenders a possible completion at its end.

And there is a variety of usages which have post-possible completion as one of their environments of possible occurrence – such as address terms, courtesy terms, and the like (cf. Jefferson, 1973; SSJ, 1974: 707-8), and at least one designed specifically for post-possible completion position – the tag question.³⁶ The last has as one of its signal jobs (though not necessarily the only one on any

particular occasion of use) the decisive completion of the turn to which it is appended (SSJ, 1974: 718). (More generally, many of these elements appear to be extensions of a turn, not a TCU; they are attached to a TCU by virtue of the TCU's completion being the turn's completion. In this regard they are not unlike "uh" as the first element of a turn, which is best understood as beginning a turn without beginning a TCU – cf. above, pp. 61, 79-80 and note 29.)

We have already had occasion to remark (in examining Excerpt (2) early on) that when a TCU has come to possible completion and its speaker moves to add to it (whether by reference to non-uptake by another or – as Excerpts (21)-(23) show – independent of non-uptake), the two major grammatical and sequential alternatives are the initiation of a new TCU or a grammatical extension of the prior, and this is perhaps one of the most common exploitations of post-possible completion by the addition of further talk.

But I want to register as well the occurrence of a second sort of element following the possible completion of a TCU or a turn, one which does not appear to constitute, or be taken as, an extension of it nor another possible completion of it, but is *specifically after* its completion. I have in mind a variety of what can be called "post-completion stance markers." They take such forms as post-completion nodding, facial expressions (e.g., smiles or grimaces), shrugs, posture shifts, disclaimers ("I dunno"), laugh tokens, coughs, exhalations and sighs, in-breaths, and I know not what else.³⁷ They occupy the same space occupied by other post-possible completion possibilities, and may serve as alternates to them (as delays of them?) – in any case, they are elements in the configuration by which TCUs (and, with them, turns) get brought to closure with endings.

2.5.3 *A reprise on TCU beginnings*

It is striking that among the "inventory" of possible post-completion elements are bits of conduct that can serve as *beginning* elements. Or, more precisely, now that we have registered sorts of occurrences which are *post-possible completion*, we need to return to our treatment of beginnings, and add to them what we should call "*pre-beginning*" elements – elements which project the onset of talk, or the beginning of a (next) TCU or a turn, but are not yet proper recognizable beginnings. They occupy a position just outside the beginning, much as there is a position just outside the possible end-

ing. I have in mind such elements of conduct as turning the head toward (or redirecting gaze at) a potential recipient, the onset of gesture deployment and often its full realization (Streeck and Hartge, 1992 – one of several citations in the present paper suggesting the relevance of its themes to languages and grammars other than English), incipient facial expression (e.g., smile), lip parting, cough or throat clear, (hearable) in-breath (sometimes exaggerated), as well as “uh(m),” which can serve to initiate a turn, while not yet initiating a TCU within it. I will return in a moment to the observation that some of the same bits of conduct appear as elements which occur post-possible completion and pre-beginning of a TCU.

But having been prompted (by post-possible completion) to register the pre-beginning position, it turns out that there is a position just *inside* the beginning boundary as well, which is the structural locus for determinate activities – what might be termed “post-beginning” position. I will mention only a few such activities.

One is the phenomenon described by C. Goodwin (1980, 1981) as a “phrasal break.” Goodwin noted that the basic organization of gaze orientation around turns involved an orientation by beginning speakers to find recipient’s gaze already on them as they brought their gaze to recipient. Should they not find that, then one practice which they adopt introduces a break in their talk – a “phrasal break” – which regularly serves to attract the gaze of recipient. Although the locus of this practice can vary, for readily apparent reasons its most likely occurrence is just after turn beginning – where the talk can already have attracted recipient’s eyes so that speaker can turn to recipient expecting to find them, and can introduce the practice of the phrasal break if they are not there. Just post beginning. (Note that this would be a structured location for initial TCUs in a turn, or sole TCUs, but not in other TCUs, except as a resource for retrieving recipient’s wandering attention; cf. Goodwin, 1987.)

Another is related to a phenomenon I have described previously (Schegloff, 1982) as a rush-through. A speaker approaching possible completion of a TCU can speed up the talk, shape the prosody not to come to even temporary closure at the grammatical possible completion point and proceed immediately into the start of new TCU. Then it is common for the speaker to allow the break which might otherwise have occurred at possible completion to develop just after the start of the new TCU, at a place which could be characterized as one of “maximum grammatical control,”

e.g., after a preposition but before its object, after the infinitive marker but before the verb, etc., but at such a place just after the start of the new TCU. (Note that this would be a structured location in specifically *non*-initial or sole TCUs!)

Yet another activity whose locus is just inside the beginning boundary of the TCU or turn is the phenomenon of the “post-failed-joke hitch.” Although the failed joke is its most common (or perhaps its most obtrusive) site, other “performance” infelicities can induce this perturbation in the talk. Speakers may essay a variety of “special productions” – jokes, cute sayings, wisecracks, self-deprecations, special bits of physical performance (pirouettes, etc.), unusual stories – in short, productions designed to elicit determinate, *marked* receptions from interlocutors – of which laughter for a joke is only the most familiar exemplar. If they have done the “special production” and fail to achieve the marked response or appreciation it makes relevant, then just after the start of a next turn or TCU they may register a noticing of the failure by a hitch or perturbation in their talk.

Thus in Excerpt (24) (which is an expansion of Excerpt (12) above), drawn from the conversation between Marsha and Tony about the changed travel plans of their son Joey because of the damage to his car, Marsha responds to Tony’s expression of anger at the stealing of the convertible top from Joey’s car by recounting her reaction with the adolescent drug users whom she counsels at a local agency:

(24) MDE-MTRAC 60-1/2, 01:35 - 02:13

- Tony: W't's 'e g'nna do go down en pick it up later? er
 somethin like () [well that's aw]:ful
- Marsha: [H i s friend]
- Marsha: Yeh h[is friend Stee-]
- Tony: [That really makes] me ma:ɪd,
 (0.2)
- Marsha: 'hhh Oh it's disgusti[ng ez a matter a'f]a:ct.
- Tony: [Po o r J o e y ,]
- Marsha: I- I, I told my ki:ds. who do this: down et the Drug
 Coalition ah want th'to:p back.h 'hhhhhhhh ((1.0 breath))
- a-> SEND OUT the WQ:RD.hhh hnh
 a-> (0.2)
- Tony: Yeah.
- b-> Marsha: 'hhh By:t u-hu:ghh his friend Steve en Brian er driving
 up. Right after:: (0.2) school is out.En then hi'll
 drive do:wn here with the:m.

Marsha, who is an outgoing and dramatic speaker at her most restrained, here gives full vent to her enacted emotion. The empha-

tic delivery of “I want the top back” (at the “a” arrow) is brought to crescendo by its dramatically delayed follow up. She follows with a post-completion stance marker (the laugh tokens), but Tony initially withholds any response, and when he does register uptake, it is only that, with a highly restrained “yeah,” in dramatic contrast with the preceding context. Just into the start of her ensuing turn, this failed uptake is registered (though hardly adequately reproduced in the transcript here) by Marsha’s “u-hū: gh.” “Just post beginning” is here again the locus of relevance for a distinctive type of activity.

In fact, this is also the locus for a variety of repair initiations (cf. Fox and Jaspersen, *frth.*), as well as a kind of “delayed” or “last check” position by a speaker on prior turn by other, and its adequacy as a response to *its* predecessor (cf. Whalen, 1995, 206-7, and see note 51 below).

2.5.4 TCU beginnings and endings and complications

Having reflected on the organization of the beginnings of TCUs and turns, and on the endings of TCUs and turns, which has led to the noticing of pre- and post- phases for each, it is in point now to connect the two. For they are, of course, inextricably connected...and in a variety of ways. For example,

(a) if a speaker has brought a TCU to possible completion and there is no uptake, should that speaker choose to deal with the incipient silence, TCU beginning organization and TCU ending organization provide alternative sets of resources – either resume with an increment to the possible completion of the prior TCU or begin a new TCU;

(b) most generally, beginning a turn with the beginning of a TCU is occasioned by the recognizable ending of a prior TCU/turn by another;

(c) indeed, generally the starts of turns are designed to connect to their prior turns, and their ends are designed to provide projections and connections for their following turns (SSJ, 1974: 722-3);

(d) there is often a semantic, lexical and/or phonological connection between the terminal elements of one turn and the initial elements of the next (i.e., there is a direct, achieved linkage between beginnings and preceding endings);

(e) in some instances, beginnings deal with the ending of the prior turn *by same speakers* – across, or by reference to, the intervening talk by another, as in the post-failed joke hitch, or the practice which Sacks termed (1992: II: 349-51, 356-7, et passim in volume I) “skip-tying,” in which a speaker links a next utterance to their own prior, skipping over the intervening talk by another;

(f) on the possible completion of a turn, a next speaker may begin a next turn with “uh” or some other element to delay the actual start of the first TCU in the new turn, and this can occasion a resumption by prior speaker of preceding turn, realized through a continuation of the otherwise complete prior turn and TCU.

Let me note, then, that I have so far been taking up these beginnings and endings from the perspective of the turn, or the turn-constructural unit. That seems natural enough: they are after all the beginnings and ending of TCUs and turns. The beginnings regularly project aspects of what it will take for the TCU’s endings to be achieved. And we have been working our way towards a focus on the grammar which organizes the talk between the beginning and the endings (though we have unavoidably already been discussing it). And we have (until points a–f just above) taken it that we were dealing with beginnings and endings of *same TCUs*.

But we have also seen that the endings of TCUs live under the shadow of the incipient beginnings of next turns, and that beginnings of turns can be thoroughly preoccupied with the ends of their preceding turns. Which is to say that the entire picture as we have been conceiving it can be inverted: for, taken together, the two sets of practices – of turn and TCU beginnings and turn and TCU endings constitute the major factors shaping *the social and interactional organization of the transition space*.

While from the point of view of the “talk itself” the turns themselves are the key elements and the transition spaces merely their boundaries, from the point of view of the organization of the interaction as an event realized *in situ* in real time, it is at the transition spaces that the determination of next chunks is accomplished, amid dense interactional considerations. Transition spaces are objects too – with their own shape, duration, import and limits – starting somewhere in a prior turn or TCU and lasting until somewhere in a next turn or TCU.³⁸ Taking the turns-at-talk as focal (as is the usual stance), the transition spaces are “negative space,” – what comes in

between instances of the units. Taking the transition spaces as focal, the *turns* become negative space – mere respites between episodes of determination of when the action shall pass to another, to whom, and for what.

The “beginnings” and “endings” can then be seen as boundaries not only of turns, but of transition spaces – another exemplar, perhaps, of the aphorism about chickens being seen as the device by which eggs reproduce themselves. But this is not only a joke; it is clear that transition spaces are as organizationally strategic as turns are in the organization of talk in interaction. One should not dismiss on grounds of plausibility (or implausibility) the degree to which the talk in the turns (which we are prepared to treat as central) is shaped by the organization of their interstices (which we sometimes are not prepared to so treat).

Having just sprung a “gestalt switch”³⁹ on our consideration of grammar and interaction, let me now project the whole matter onto a three-dimensional grid. Any utterance in conversation may be understood to go through three phases: as (incipient) next, as current, and as prior. That is, as a current-recipient-of-some-talk/potential-next-speaker parses it in the course of its progressive articulation, potential response types and lines are engendered, subject to revision and replacement as the current talk is further produced bit by bit. This is the first phase of an utterance’s development;⁴⁰ it may be the *only* phase, should someone else get next turn and use it in a fashion which permanently supersedes the relevance of the one which was *in statu nascendi*. But should the “current-recipient/potential-next-speaker” to whom I was referring *get* the next opportunity to talk, then what had been an “incipient or potential next turn” may begin to be articulated, and thus progressively take on the cast of “current turn.” And on its completion, a completion sealed by the start of a following turn which is itself then making the transition from “incipient next” to “current,” what *was* current turn becomes “prior turn.”⁴¹

Of course, it is not so simple. For example, while some current turn is coming to possible completion and verging on becoming prior turn, incipient next turn may begin to show itself, for example, by features of its pre-beginning. And this pre-beginning of the potentially next turn may then induce changes in the turn which was lapsing from current into prior; for example, its speaker may

take measures to override a projected imminent possible completion and extend the turn into a hitherto “unplanned” direction. And the consequence of this extension may be that the incipient next turn whose pre-beginnings prompted this may be rendered irrelevant, and be replaced by a “new” next turn, which displays a new pre-beginning and passage into “current turn” status.

Indeed, elsewhere I have described an empirical instance of just this story (Schegloff, 1987b, 1988b (and cf. Excerpt (19) above and its discussion)). A speaker, Curt, proposes about the car races and one of the drivers, Al, that “He- he’s about the only regular he’s about the only good regular out there,” and as he projects upcoming possible completion with a pitch peak on “out,” his recipient Mike displays aspects of the incipient next-turn-in-formation, with a lateral shaking of the head which adumbrates disagreement. Thereupon the speaker, Curt, shifts into a rush-through, and anticipates the grounds of the incipient disagreement by adding another TCU, “Does Keegan still go out?” And, indeed, recipient Mike now shifts the shape of his pre-beginning gesture to a vertical, agreeing nod, and responds, “Keegan’s out there...”etc.

The point is that whatever understanding we wish to develop about the interface between grammar and interaction for the organization of turns and turn-constructional units will need to be triply considered. We will need to understand what happens to the grammar of an utterance as it passes from being an incipient next turn (indeed, from a *history* of incipient next turns, as the current turn progressively reveals itself) to being a current turn or TCU in the course of *its* progressive development through a series of turns-so-far, to being a/the prior turn or TCU, whether as a “revivable” or for its interest as the object to which *its next turn* must be adapted.

Another order of consideration which is relevant here again concerns the possible usefulness of our thinking not of “a grammar” or “the grammar” but of a set of positionally sensitive grammars. I mentioned this earlier in the present paper and will return to it briefly in a moment. But the relevance here is this. If utterances pass through the phases of next/current/prior, then all those phases may be positionally specified. For example, hearing an assessment being offered, its recipient’s embryonic next turn may be shaped up as a second assessment (Pomerantz, 1984), a second assessment

which is then delivered as a current turn, and becomes something to be dealt with by another as it passes into prior turn status. But if, as in the case I just described, the current turn which our incipient next speaker is parsing and forming a response to is not only changed but is sequence-structurally transformed – for example, into a question – then the sort of positional specification of the next turn is transformed as well, and with it the grammatical resources which are relevant for what is incipient next/current/prior.

I have introduced a number of reconfigurations of the discussion here: from turn organization to its obverse – transition space organization; from the talk which we can actually hear, to phases that are not quite as “tangible;” from just a turn-at-talk – or a unit from which it is constructed – to a situated opportunity to talk at a particular interactional and sequence-structural juncture. But it seems to me that all of these have to be entertained in considering the interface of grammar and interaction.

And so far, the focus has taken beginnings and endings of TCUs and turns as the point of departure. But surely there is more to the grammar than that, even if by grammar we mean only the way in which the component elements of a TCU can be selected and configured.⁴² So let me say just a little bit about the grammar other than beginnings and endings.

2.5.5 *The grammars themselves*

What *are* the elements that compose TCUs? What kinds of configurations do they take to compose TCUs, or to compose unmarked forms of TCUs? Here there is room for only a few reflections on these matters.

When we ask “what are the elements of which TCUs are composed” we are in search of such an account of what enters the talk as is built afresh – one that has not already presupposed that some sorts of elements are part of “the language” and others not; that some are components of the TCU whereas others are by-products of the process of its construction – a kind of psycholinguistic detritus. Initially we need to take a simple inventory: what actually occurs in a turn, in what order, in what configurations, by what practices. Then we can sort out what does, and what does not, belong in an account of turn and TCU construction.

For example, unless I am mistaken, “uh” is ordinarily not considered an element of the language of which a grammar must take account. It is a psycholinguistic artifact, likely to occur at important information-theoretic decision points, etc. Yet over twenty years ago Jefferson (1974) showed that the gearing of selection between alternative realizations of the indefinite and definite articles (between “ay” and “uh” and “thee” and “thuh”) to the initial sound of the following word incorporated sensitivity to “uh.” That is, the “initial sound of the following word” regularly referred not to the next word that “counted” by official standards of what a word is, but to the “uh” that intervened between the article and that word. “Uh” then needs to be counted as among the elements from which a TCU is constructed, for it figures in the construction of the turn even in a traditional sense, and affects the realization of other elements of its construction.⁴³ Our inventory of elements of TCUs needs to be assembled in the first instance in a generously inclusive fashion – to err on the side of inclusion; there will be ample opportunity subsequently to exclude occurrences which are better understood as other than constructional resources, but in the course of grounding their exclusion explicitly we stand to learn about the underlying constitution of the grammatical and the extra-grammatical.

Implicit in the earlier discussion of such key structural locations as pre-beginnings and pre-possible completion is an underlying organizational shape to the organization of the TCU which we can term “directionality.” In large measure this is prompted by the inescapably temporal character of talk-in-interaction, but it is reinforced by the organizational consequentiality of possible completion (and orientations to it by others) for all the participants.⁴⁴ About each next bit (including elements, but also bits of elements) of a turn-in-progress a recipient may be oriented to (not necessarily in this order) (a) its projection – i.e., what further course it adumbrates; (b) its realization – i.e., how it contributes to the realization of previously projected courses; and (c) its re-direction – i.e., how it operates to modify previous projections in new directions. These recipient interests can be directed to “elements” such as words, or bits of them such as syllables, sounds, breaths, etc., or the absence of these in silences-in-context, as well. TCUs and turns must be taken in the first instance to be designed and constructed by refer-

ence to such an orientation by recipient(s). Grammar is, in large measure, one organizational framework for such construction and receptive orientation.

This is one important reason for including such units of conduct as “same turn repair initiations” (such as glottal or dental stops, for example, or some sound stretches) as grammatical elements, even though apparently not phonemic for English. Serving as they do as possible alerts to a recipient that what follows may not be more of the trajectory which had preceded in the TCU-so-far (Jefferson, 1974; Schegloff, 1979), and often as the operation which marks an actual disjunction between what preceded and what follows, cut-offs operate as organizational operations relating elements of the TCU to one another – albeit productionally rather than positionally.

That observation, however, leads to another. Repair is one of several types of strips of activity which may be launched in the course of a turn or TCU-in-progress (replacing, or running simultaneous with, its continuing course) which have an organizational shape of its/their own. For example, word searches have a characteristic organizational trajectory, beginning with a series of “uh”s and pauses, followed by an interjection, and clues which might allow the recipient to aid in the search (though not each of these elements is present in every search), which composes the activity of “searching for a name/word/etc.,”⁴⁵ and which is launched as its own organization of elements inside the TCU in which a word search is undertaken. Similarly, speakers who believe they can recognizably refer to someone by name while speaking to their current recipient but are unsure of success (that is, are unsure that recipient will achieve recognition from the reference-by-name) may employ the name with “try-marked” intonation (Sacks and Schegloff, 1979: 18-20) and pause for evidence of recognition; in its absence they may produce a (further) clue to the identification of the intended referent, etc. Again, there is a characteristic course to the activity of achieving possibly problematic “recognitional reference” which may be introduced into a turn or TCU-in-progress, and (like the word search) “take over” the next stretch of talk. And some elements will properly be understood as positioned within this activity-based strip of talk, rather than within the organization of the TCU in which the strip was launched.⁴⁶

But there are other activities which commonly overlay the talk and co-occur with it, rather than displacing or deferring it, which may inform and complement the construction and import of the talk, and figure in its upshot and understanding together with the otherwise ongoing TCU. There are varieties of evidence, for example, that gesture is co-organized with the talk which it regularly accompanies. Some hand gestures may, for example, be co-organized with the distribution of stress and accent in the talk (what Ekman and Friesen, 1969 termed “batons”). Some head gestures may do the work which verbal components may also be doing, or in lieu of them (e.g., on lateral headshakes as “intensifiers” cf. Schegloff, 1987b: 106; 1988b: 142-43). Hand gestures may have more or less transparent iconic, semantic or graphic relationships to lexical components of the ongoing talk, and these gestures undergo a characteristic trajectory of delivery, from launching in advance of the word tokens to which they are affiliated, through deployment of the gesture or “gesture phrase” (Kendon, 1972), through the speaker’s gaze at the achieved gesture which underscores its interactional significance to recipient (Streeck, 1988), through decay of the gesture to its extinction or retraction (Kendon, 1972, 1979 as well as a number of more recent papers; Schegloff, 1984b). But gestures do not only map on to words; words may be selected in a finely calibrated relationship to the gesture with which they are co-produced, as with choices between the indexicals “this” and “that,” sensitive to the at-that-moment current state of the coordinate pointing gesture (Schegloff, 1984b: 291-94).

Here as well figure the unarticulated facial expressions (e.g., frowns and eyebrow flashes; cf. Ekman, 1979),⁴⁷ the partially articulated ones such as smiles (“partially articulated” because of the phenomenon known as “smile voice”), and the more decisively and unarguably immanent ones such as laughter (e.g., Jefferson, 1979, 1984c, 1985; Jefferson, Sacks, and Schegloff, 1977, 1987). This last is a systematically produced acoustic component of the “speech stream,” which surely contributes to the “meaning” and “import” and “understanding” of the speech production of which it forms a part (sometimes crowding it out, sometimes intercalated into its sounds), but so do the acoustically less obtrusive forms of conduct. All of them have beginnings, courses, and decays – some-

times discrete, sometimes imperceptibly shaded (this is itself a property of these elements), and these are introduced into the talk of a turn or TCU at some point, held for some duration, transformed into other elements and dissolved at some point. They are full-fledged candidates for inclusion in a grammar – or relative to a grammar.

Finally, we must explore the possibility that grammar(s) is/are built to provide for in-course incorporation of, and adaptation to, input from the environment (e.g., Goodwin, this volume) – most centrally, observable uptake and alignment by recipient(s). Various accounts of the production of what are unquestionably grammatical units – from the Goodwins (C. Goodwin, 1979, 1980, 1981; M. Goodwin, 1980; Goodwin and Goodwin, 1987) to Ford (1993), with many others in between and since – have shown that we may not be correctly understanding even apparently integral, single speaker productions if we do not understand all or part of those productions as informed by the speaker's orientation to what recipient has done or not done (Schegloff, 1995, *frth.*) in its course, or by other elements of the speaker's context. So accounts of the grammar organizing the talk which composes the TCUs which constitute turns-at-talk in interaction will need to provide analytic guidelines to the organization of speaker orientation to the environment of talk (is it organized by reference to the production of the TCU-in-progress?), as well as an account of how the talk may be reshaped by reference to what the speaker finds to be going on in that environment.

So we can add to our guidelines for parsing turns another set of specifications:

(C) The grammars. For any TCU, we can ask:

(1) What are the successive elements of each TCU, including (in however adjunct a status) pre-beginning and post-completion elements? In this inventory, we include such elements as: breaths and other aspirations including laughter and laugh tokens; recognizable contexted-silences, coughs, “y’know,” “uh” in all its varieties, etc., cut-offs, sound stretches, – i.e., all perceivable elements.

(2) Where do such elements occur? What sorts of elements occupy determinate structural positions in a TCU?

(3) Which elements count as “advancing” the progress of the TCU? Which count as “impediments?” These are, of course, in the

first instance vernacular “readings” of the contribution of an element to a turn; what is taken vernacularly to “retard” the turn’s progress can nonetheless be taken technically as its next component – a component whose “vector” (as one might put it) is retardive. Are there other ways in which elements relate to progressivity? How are they distributed relative to one another?

(4) What are the grammatical relations among successive elements? Among elements further removed? Are there different orders of grammatical relations, such that some operate on others? How does any of this vary by the position of the talk being constructed in its sequential, interactional, social, ecological, etc. context?

(5) Do “productional values” count as elements, i.e., pitch peaks and other prosodic features, qualities such as crispness/mushiness (cf. Jefferson, 1978b), etc.? If so, how are they positioned relative to others? Otherwise, how are they distributed *on* other elements?

(6) How are non-vocal production elements, values and shifts in them distributed relative to other elements? I have in mind such components of conduct as speaker’s gesture, posture, gaze direction, facial expression, smiling, and the course of their respective deployments etc.? How do these bear on TCU construction and organization?

(7) How are the elements of other ongoing activities incorporated in TCU construction and reflected in it – both activities by speaker (e.g., if eating, then ingesting, chewing, swallowing, etc., work activities in all their varieties, etc.) and by others (especially targeted recipients)?

(8) What kinds of grammatical structures provide for, or constrain, internal or boundary TCU expansion? (e.g., self-initiated same-turn repair as an organization for TCU expansion, truncation, and transformation; parentheticals; interpolation of sequences into TCUs such as the earlier-mentioned “try-marked recognitional reference;” cf. Sacks and Schegloff, 1979). Where do such expansions, etc. occur relative to other elements?

(9) How do different kinds of grammatical organizations and structures interface differentially with interactional contingencies, and how do different kinds of interactional contingencies (such as different turn-taking organizations in setting-specific speech exchange systems) differentially shape deployments of grammatical resources?⁴⁸

Here I can pursue only a few of these, and only minimally.

First, to provide just a sense of one kind of payoff of such examinations of data, examine the first page of the transcript of Auto Discussion (Excerpt (8) above) under the auspices of Query #2 above, asking only with what element(s) the TCUs begin. Here are the findings:

oh yeah; you've...; oh no; here we...; I...; I...; you'll...; you'll...; you...; you...; Well I...; Y-; you...; 'at's right; I...; I...; That's right; you....

In sum: 4 agreement markers, 14 starts referring to speaker, recipient or the party of the whole. (I have omitted laughter, of which there is a considerable amount.) Surely not every conversation will show such a distribution, but what are the terms of the alternatives? And do we learn something about this occasion – or this moment in it – by noting the elements out of which its TCU beginnings are constituted?

Second, to provide a sense of the payoff of asking about the possible relationship between elements, I want to recall the earlier discussion of “pre-possible completion” as an organizationally relevant place in a TCU. This locates a sort of structural – grammatical – place with consequences that I suspect are not otherwise brought to our attention – for example, in accounts of the syntax of sentences.

Or consider the import of the placement of breathing. It is tempting to dismiss breathing as merely a physiological prerequisite to talking, but this distracts from a variety of orderly practices which can inform the “doing of breathing” in ways which achieve differing outcomes for the turn's construction and hearing. Thus, for example, a hearable “deep” in-breath at the pre-beginning of a turn or a TCU can foreshadow an “extended” spate of talk to come – whether a lengthy TCU or more than one TCU. But the placement of inbreaths in Excerpts (26) and (27) are doing something different, and this turns on their (grammatical?) placement. These extracts are taken from telephone conversations in which a physician working as a reviewer for an insurer is discussing the pre-authorization of a surgical procedure (a tympanostomy, in which tubes are inserted in the ear to treat persistent or recurrent ear

infections) with the physician who has recommended it – a recommendation at risk of being rejected.

(25) Heritage/Kleinman, 2222:4/22/91

- Review: And she's ha:d uh: history: of an effu:sion, (0.2) but
the information I have is that she's recently had a hearing
test which was normal.
(0.2)
- Review: An:d uh::- and I know she's had some effusion but I don't know
how long °th° it's been documented for.
- Doctor: .hh (.) Wh- what- (.) when: did she have a normal hearing test?
- Review: I don't have the da:te,=it just says here hearing test within
normal limits. [hh An' I don't know if that was ju|st-
- Doctor: [(M-) ['Cause w
--> did an audiogram on th' hh ninth of April which was .hhh
--> abnormal.
- Review: Oh. Okay, (0.3)...

Here the inbreath comes (grammatically speaking) in the middle of a predication, between the verb and the descriptor which it is reporting. Interactionally, it is placed at a point which can – by the momentary delay which it introduces – strategically invite a collaborative completion (Lerner, 1991, this volume) by the recipient, here potentially a reversal by the reviewer of the claim that child-in-question's hearing is normal.⁴⁹ The point here is that breathings – whether in or out – are practices; they can be done in various modalities (e.g., designed to be heard or not, of different “sizes” or “depths”); they can be placed variously in the developing structure of the TCU. They (and various other traditionally “non-linguistic” objects) are deployable elements of its construction, and thus candidate building blocks for its grammar.

Fourth, and in particular, I want to reflect on the potential positional variability of the grammatical constitution of what composes a TCU in a way that might avoid promiscuous reliance on the notion of ellipsis. I find problematic that use which takes a one word or one phrase utterance, reconstructs from it a larger matrix sentence, of which the original utterance is then said to be a reduction by ellipsis. Some ellipsis may be demonstrably a member's – a speaker's – practice, and that status underwrites our academic account of it as such. But are not other lexical or phrasal TCUs directly constituted by a grammatical resource that recognizes their sequential position, and uses that position in the construction and parsing of the utterance by co-participants? (Note that the point here is different from one taken up earlier; “sequential position”

here refers not to the position of a TCU within a multi-unit turn, but to the position of a turn within a sequence.)

Consider the following sequence.

(26) Auto Discussion 5:16-26

Curt: (W-)/(Oh-) how wz the races las'night.
 (0.8)
 ??: (Ha-[u h)]=
 Curt: [Who w'n][th'feature.]
 --> Mike: =[A l w o n,]
 (0.3)
 Curt: [(Who)]=
 Mike: [A l.]=
 Curt: =Al did?
 Gary: ((hoarse whisper)) Go get im Bo!
 Curt: Dz he go out there pretty regular?

When I have worked on this episode with students, a question has routinely come up about the arrowed turn by Mike. Is it produced as an answer to the question by Curt, in whose course it is articulated?⁵⁰ Or is it a part – a delayed part – of a multi-part answer to the *initial* utterance in the excerpt, an addition to what is visible in the videotape but not in the transcript during the 0.8 second which follows that initial question – some head nodding by Mike.⁵¹

This can be sequentially and interactionally consequential. Curt has asked a question which carries a further action beyond a request for an assessment (in response to which Mike's nodding can constitute a "positive assessment"): it is proffering as a topic the automobile races which Mike had attended the previous evening. As was noted earlier, in response to topic proffers, minimal responses can be ways of declining the proffer, or at least of not embracing the topic which has been proffered. Expanded responses, on the other hand, can be ways of "buying into" them, and one basic way that expansion is done is by producing a multi-component response. So the interactional question here can be, is Mike discouraging or encouraging the topic which Curt has put on the table?

This question, and the entire segment in which it comes up, implicates a range of interesting details about the interaction, including ones which support both potential answers, though this is not the place to develop them. What is germane here is the possibility that later in the sequence we find evidence of a grammatical sort which has a bearing on the matter.

Note then that following the overlap between “Al won” and Curt’s follow-up question and second topic proffer (“Who won the feature”), there is a 0.3 second gap. Such gaps are not uncommon following overlapping talk which issues in simultaneous ending. Since neither speaker ended as “speaker of record” in the prior turn, it can be indeterminate who should be next speaker. And, in the manner of persons walking in opposite directions on a narrow path and seeking to get around one another, each can go in a direction in which the other also chooses to go, reproducing the blockage which prompted the move in the first place. And so also here. Each having waited for the other to talk next, each finds the other not to have done so, and himself then moves to take the turn, only to find the other arriving at the same place, at the same moment, by the same route. And so after the gap, there is another overlap.

But we – and they – can/could hear what is in those overlaps. Note then that Curt shows that he heard what Mike was saying in the previous overlap; at least he heard that there was a person reference in Mike’s turn, although (claimably) not who the reference was to, and he displays this with his category-specific repair initiator, “Who.”

Just as Curt is engaged in overlap retrieval on Mike’s contribution in the preceding overlap, so is Mike engaged on Curt’s. Mike heard through the overlap the question that Curt was asking, and grasps as well that the overlap may have impaired Curt’s ability to hear the answer – which he happened to be giving (as, indeed, it did). And so he here responds to the question which Curt asked, “Who won the feature.” And in doing so, he displays the form which an answer to that question takes. And it is “Al” – not “Al won” (or “Al did,” or “Al won the feature”).

Exchanges such as this seem to me relevant resources for exploring the notion of positionally sensitive grammars. Should we not understand “Al” as the proper grammatical form for an utterance doing an “answer” in this position – perhaps even as *the* way there is of showing that he is doing “answering?” Indeed, when Curt does a second other-initiated repair to deal with Mike’s part in the second overlap, he shows by the form he employs that he understood “Al” to be the answer to his question, “who won the feature?” Note that he does not offer just a questioning repeat for confirmation

(not “Al?”), but rather “Al did?,” in which the “did” specifically incorporates reference to “won the feature,” i.e., to the question which he takes it “Al” is the answer to. “Al” is, then, *the form* such an utterance takes – in an answer-to-question position like this, and is not an elliptical reduction of some other form.⁵²

Not that the other forms *cannot* be used; they simply *are* not used, here. Perhaps one can then be in a position to ask when they *are* used. We might then be able to speak not of “Al” as an elliptical form of “Al won” or “Al won the feature,” but of the latter as having some special use when they occur, given that the basic grammatical form in that sequential position is “Al” (if, that is, there *is* a “basic grammatical form”).⁵³

The general point about positionally sensitive grammars, then, is this.

When the object of traditional inquiry has been taken to be the utterance of a sentence, and investigators have asked how its composition or production is to be understood, it has seemed natural to begin with what the utterance is meant to convey or to do. Whether thought of in terms of information transmission or speech acts in the traditional sense, the analysis has begun with some sort of intention – because the *speaker* is understood to begin with some intention. That intention has then been tracked through subsequent stages in a production process – in which the intention is given some propositional form (perhaps with pragmatic operators as well), the proposition is furnished some specific semantic composition, a syntactic shaping is provided for the embryonic product, its slots are filled with lexical items, and so forth through phonological, intonational, articulatory, operations, through to final production of the utterance as enacted realization of the sentence. With some such conception of speech production, the notion of a single grammar by which the utterance/sentence is shaped is plausible enough, for it is well adapted to other elements of this conception – such as the single proposition.⁵⁴

This view – in the beginning was the intention – is an aspect of a larger strategy of inquiry which takes single sentences, single utterances, single actions or single composites – the single sentence/utterance/action – as the object of inquiry. If one begins with the singular, disengaged, sentence/utterance/action, then where else *could* one locate its origin if not in the impulse or disposition to

act/talk? Surely (it has seemed) it is with that that an impending speaker/actor begins.

But if one takes as one's object of inquiry an utterance/action which occurs on an actual occasion, in an actual context, at an actual moment, that is *not* where its speaker begins; that is *not* the point from which the composition or production of the utterance departs. With the exception of initial utterances on an occasion (a class whose form is in general quite distinctive, and in substantial measure for just this reason), any utterance – and its speaker – begins at just the end of what precedes it.⁵⁵ A speaker finds her/himself situated at the moment following the possible completion of some other utterance or action by self or another, or at some point in the ongoing production of one – such as the possible completion of a TCU in a turn, or the incipient start of a non-first TCU in a turn. If we are to entertain intentions, then surely they are situated by reference to such moments.⁵⁶

If what lies at the origin of a next increment of conduct in interaction is the state of the interaction which has just been arrived at, then the just-current *sequential* state of the interaction is part of that starting point. And just as possibly relevant next actions, or possibly coherent next utterances, can be shaped by reference to the immediately preceding talk and action, so can a possibly relevant organizational form for a next contribution – a relevant *grammar* – be shaped by the immediately preceding talk and action. If one has been just asked a question, then what one inherits at the next moment is not only the relevance of an answer as one (central) possible action/utterance to do next, but with it one or more candidate or eligible grammatical formats for doing an answer, or doing an answer *to such a question*, or doing an answer to *that* question, and so on. On this line (and whatever may be the case for written or other “textual” language deployments), one does not have “a grammar” for sentences, whose products get whittled away to satisfy discourse or pragmatic considerations in an operation conventionally termed “ellipsis.”⁵⁷ One has a range of grammatical resources, grammars if you will, whose relevance is positionally sensitive to organizational features and contingencies of the sequential and interactional moment in which the conduct is situated.⁵⁸

If some such view captures the practices of talking in interaction, then the formulation with which this paper began (its title), and

which underlies the very title of the volume, can itself occlude our vision. For the domain to be explored may not be the interface between some monolithic grammar and interaction per se, but rather between the sorts of junctures and contingencies which the organizations of interaction engender on the one hand, and the forms of grammatical structure and practice which get deployed at those junctures and in those contingencies on the other. Such an exploration needs to make room, in principle, for the possibility of multiple, positionally sensitive grammars, with the related search for the sorts of positions they are sensitive to.

2.6 The challenge

These last considerations can strike linguists as perplexing in ways which call into question the viability of the entire undertaking being entertained here.

On one view, without a fundamental notion of predication underlying language, linguists do not have anything on which to hang grammar, or anything to count as units. As one linguist put it (p.c.):

In what sense can we see the TCU forming an initial, superseding category similar to the S in the transformational grammar? All Ss, as it has been defined in grammars through the ages, have had the one thing in common that they are predications. But what can we say that TCUs have in common, other than the possible intonation curve (prosodic completion), and the possibility of the turn ending in the end of the TCU (pragmatic completion)?

Here we encounter again the underlying presence of truth-conditional identity, of language as description, of the logical structure and identity of the proposition as the fundamental constitutive grounding for language. It is this propositional, predicative core which makes the sentence or clause – with its “arguments” – central; makes smaller units (“fragments”) invite treatment as reduced versions of units with propositional, predicative import, which can be reconstructed from them, to be reduced again to “fragments” by rules of ellipsis.

What is needed then, is to relax the stranglehold of predication on our understanding of language, and especially on talk-in-interaction. What can we say TCUs have in common, aside from

intonation (if that) and possible completion? The key may be that they are productions whose status as complete turns testifies to their *adequacy as units for the participants*, units which are addressable with the generic issue for practical actors (Schegloff and Sacks, 1973: 209): “why that now?” Overwhelmingly this issue is grounded for practical actors as parties to interaction by some version of the *action(s)* the unit is doing (Schegloff, 1995, frth.). Because “telling” and “describing” are among the actions which get undertaken, predication is among the structures recurrently underlying the construction of TCUs, and available for elaboration in other deployments of language – in monologue, in writing, in logic and science, and so on. But the counterpart to predication in talk-in-interaction is the move, the action, the activity, and it is that which gives a TCU (without respect to its size or mode of realization) its recognizable unit status, the consequentiality of its possible completion, and the omnirelevant action thematics of its analysis – why that now.⁵⁹

In this regard, it appears that Austin’s (1962) “revolution” was too conservative not only in retaining the single sentence/utterance as the analytic target and a set of “conditions” as the format for analysis (albeit felicity conditions rather than truth conditions), but in another respect as well. It undershoots the mark to insist that language is used not only for description but also for action. In its home environment, it is for action in the *first* instance; it is “description” which is the “also,” in its capacity as one type of action. In this regard, Wittgenstein (1953) was nearer the mark.

There may be domains (e.g., logic and science) for which the narrower commitment of language as a tool of description may be taken as a satisfactory basis for establishing a framework for analysis, and the proposition/sentence may be the key resource. But for the more inclusive domain of language’s range, especially as it figures in the quotidian settings of interaction, it is the parameters of action – not proposition – which need to be formative. If it is this larger domain of language which sets the horizon of our analytic ambition, then we must call into question all those versions of pragmatics which apply “pragmatic operators” or “function indicating devices” to underlying propositional forms, or detect “tacit” underlying performative verbs attached to them, or other tacks of this sort (as in such early work as Searle, 1965, 1969; Gordon and

Lakoff, 1971, 1975; Ross, 1970, etc., and many subsequent efforts which proceed along basically similar lines) as ways of reconciling the analysis of a reality composed of *actions* with an underlying analytical format of *propositions* built for *descriptions*.⁶⁰

Rather than starting with propositional forms and overlaying action operators, our primary characterizations need to capture the action(s) embodied in a burst of language. For those actions and on those occasions in which something like a proposition seems to be involved, we need analytic accounts of how these propositions are formatted and associated with the actions which occasion their relevance. There is every reason to suspect that grammar for talk implementing action is quite different from grammar for talk expressing propositions.⁶¹ That we may not yet have much of a clue as to what such grammar(s) look(s) like does not change the suspicion, but may encourage the sort of reaching that promotes the possibility of grammars rather than *a* grammar.

One can take the full range of environments of what can be called “the use of language” – oratory, conversation, technical writing, advertisements, poetry, bureaucratic memoranda, scholarly books, pornography, etc. and make one’s account of “grammatical (and other linguistic) structure” answerable to that full range. An alternative strategy is to take those environments to be neither equivalently relevant nor temporally or analytically commensurate, and to take ordinary talk-in-interaction to be the constitutive environment, with writing a further adaptation along lines pioneered by oratory and monologue – that is, the textual (Schegloff, 1995: 202, fn. 1; frth.). This is compatible with every known society and culture having institutions for talk-in-interaction, and not all having writing.⁶²

Contemporary (and most, if not all, past) linguistics appears to have adopted the first strategy and has then exploited the license thereby afforded to seize on the most convenient materials to do its work – whether imagined constructions, written texts or the dicta and performances elicited from authoritative informants/consultants. The result has been, as Sacks remarked over twenty-five years ago (in his lectures for Fall, 1967; cf. Sacks, 1992: I: 622-3; cf. also Schegloff, 1992a: lv-lvi), that

By and large, the specific interest of linguistics in the utterance is that study of the utterance which involves detecting those features of it which are handleable without reference to such considerations as sequencing, i.e., without reference to that it has occurred in conversation . . . Polemically we could be seeing if there is the *possibility* of, say, a fully comprehensive, coherent linguistics *without* such matters.

Arguably, there is not.

We very likely have two enterprises before us. One is stretching an older linguistics – built for predication and writing – to cover action in interaction. But whatever stance one takes towards the linguistics which we have and which we may try (and have tried) to stretch, it seems increasingly clear that we need another, one which captures something inescapable about language for humans, one which *starts* with the domain of talk-in-interaction, and gets the appropriate initial units from that domain. That enterprise may later on have to stretch to accommodate monologue and writing, etc., that is, the textual, as opposed to the interactional. But it will almost certainly from the outset contain within it “predication,” for that is one of the things people *do* do in talk in interaction – *but only one*. Received linguistics has treated it as the *only* one, or the main one – the one which sets the first-order terms for the understanding of language, and it is far from clear that it is. It may turn out that much in this paper, and in this volume, is stretching the old linguistics to meet the challenge of talk-in-interaction. Perhaps we need to search even farther for new beginnings, or search with fresher eyes and ears, in the details of the talk with which we must, in the end, come to terms.

Notes

- 1 Prepared for the Second Grammar and Interaction Workshop, UCLA, March, 1993. I want to thank participants in one of my seminars with whom I tried to think through some of these matters: Elizabeth Boyd, Byron Burkhalter, Maria Egbert, Patrick Gonzales, Kyu-Hyun Kim, Geoff Raymond, Andy Roth, and Marja-Leena Sorjonen, and those in another seminar who aided in spotting places where the text needed clarification: Elizabeth Boyd, Irene Koshik, Anna Lindström and Geoff Raymond. I am indebted to Elinor Ochs and Sandra Thompson who helped me give voice to this effort in various, sometimes unanticipated, ways. Chuck Goodwin, Auli Hakulinen, Makoto Hayashi, John Heritage, Gene Lerner, Junko Mori and Jürgen Streeck contributed helpful comments on earlier drafts.

What I am doing with the collection of observations and themes worked through here is, in part, something I undertook not to do some twenty-five to thirty years ago, and that is programmatic. I do not do it without some empirical grounding, but I also do not do it without misgivings. I do it because I increasingly think that much of this work needs to be done by people with training, knowledge, and skills that I lack, but needs to be done in a manner which benefits from, and is grounded in, what we already have learned from examining conversation. This is then, a contribution to collaboration but one which is tentative and still in development.

Publication conventions vary among disciplines. In some, notes hold largely supplementary bibliographical information. In the present paper, notes contain substantive material, ordinarily important to the overall theme, but not directly on line with the argument then ongoing in the main text. Material in the notes is of a piece with the main text.

- 2 And it was at this interface that some of the early linguistic explorations of grammar and interaction were focussed, e.g., Duranti and Ochs, 1979, and my own earlier effort, in Schegloff, 1979.
- 3 What sorts of entities (described in grammatical or other terms) will be used and treated as turn-constructive units is determined by those who *use* the language (broadly understood – that is, to include gesture, facial expression, when/where relevant), not those who study it academically. Calls for formal definitions of a TCU – beyond their status as units which can constitute possibly complete turns as above – are therefore bound to be disappointed, but empirical inquiries to explore such issues should be expected to yield interesting results.
- 4 It is worth recalling that, until Chomsky's (1957: 18–25) attack on “left-to-rightness” or linearity, it was not unusual for temporality to be addressed in linguistic treatments of grammar. Bolinger's “Linear Modification” (1965: 281; first published in 1952), for example, depicts the progressive structuring of talk from “the moment of pre-speaking, followed by the first word and each additional word in course.” “Linearity” is, in substantial measure, the written or visual analogue of temporality. Bolinger's reference to “the moment of pre-speaking” (a moment which is taken up below in the section entitled “A Reprise on TCU Beginnings”) may remind us of the focus still current among linguists at that time on actual occurrences of language use, among them speaking. The same year as Bolinger's “Linear Modification” first appeared, Charles Fries based his *The Structure of English: An Introduction to the Construction of English Sentences* on an “entirely different kind of evidence” (identified as telephone conversation at p. 37). Regarding this evidence he wrote (pp. 3–4),

With the recent development of mechanical devices for the easy recording of the speech of persons in all types of situations there seems to be little excuse for the use of linguistic material not taken from actual communicative practice when one attempts to deal with a living language. Even though the investigator is himself a native speaker of the language and a sophisticated and trained observer he cannot depend completely on himself as an informant and use introspection as his sole source of material. He has a much more satisfactory base from which to proceed with linguistic analysis if he has a large body of mechanically recorded language which he can hear repeated over and over, and which he can approach with more objectivity than he can that which he furnishes from himself as informant.

Within five years, of course, other “developments” were to supersede this one in shaping the course of linguistics. Although the import of the present paper is not to revive the structuralist linguistics of the early 1950s, it is worth recalling that serious efforts to deal with real talking, and contingencies such as temporality, have had a place in relatively recent linguistic inquiry.

- 5 I should make clear that I do not use these terms here to indicate particular commitments among currently practiced views of grammar – whether conceptual, cognitivist, symbolic, formalist, etc. Rather I mean to juxtapose generic resources, abstracted from particular realizations and available as deployable practices, on the one hand, with particular instantiations, always realized in and particularized to an idiosyncratic moment, on the other, – and embrace both as relevant to the discussion.
- 6 Note that the concern here is with the bearing of turn-taking contingencies on certain deployments of prosody, rather than the bearing of prosody on turn-taking organization (on which more below, and *inter alia*, SSJ, 1974: 721, and Ford and Thompson, this volume).
- 7 For the notational conventions employed in the transcript excerpts in this chapter, cf. the Appendix to this volume. Cf. also SSJ, 1974: 731–4, or Atkinson and Heritage, 1984: ix–xvi.
- 8 It may be useful to clarify the usage in this paper (and in some other conversation-analytic writing) of the term format “possible X,” as in the text above: “...understood by reference to the speaker Ava’s orientation to the status of ‘No’ as a *possible TCU*, and its end as a *possible turn completion*, and thus as a place at which Bee would relevantly locate a *possible start for a next turn*.”

The usage is not meant as a token of analytic uncertainty or hedging. Its analytic locus is not in the first instance the world of the author and reader, but the world of the parties to the interaction. To describe some utterance, for example, as “a possible invitation” (Sacks, 1992: I: 300-2; Schegloff, 1992a: xxvi-xxvii) or “a possible complaint” (Schegloff, 1988c: 120–2) is to claim that there is a describable practice of talk-in-interaction which is usable to do recognizable invitations or complaints (a claim which can be documented by exemplars of exchanges in which such utterances were so recognized by their recipients), and that the utterance now being described can be understood

to have been produced by such a practice, and is thus analyzable as an invitation or as a complaint. This claim is made, and can be defended, independent of whether the actual recipient on this occasion has treated it as an invitation or not, and independent of whether the speaker can be shown to have produced it for recognition as such on this occasion. Such an analytic stance is required to provide resources for accounts of “failures” to recognize an utterance as an invitation or complaint, for in order to claim that a recipient *failed* to recognize it as such or respond to it as such, one must be able to show that it was *recognizable* as such, i.e., that it was “a possible X” – for the participants (Schegloff, 1995, frth.). The analyst’s treatment of an utterance as “a possible X” is then grounded in a claim about its having such a status for the participants. (For an extended exploration of how a form of turn construction – repetition – can constitute a practice for producing possible instances of a previously undescribed action – “confirming allusions,” cf. Schegloff, 1996.)

This discussion requires modification in various respects for different values of the variable “X” in the phrase “a possible X;” one might wish to phrase the discussion differently for “a possible name,” “a possible TCU,” or “a possible completion.” For now the reader should try to adapt this rough abbreviated account to particular “possibles” in what follows.

- 9 Cf. the discussion of Excerpt (20) below at pp. 88-90 for a contrasting analysis of a turn-initial “no.”
- 10 Goodwin, 1979 offers a beautifully analyzed case in point. Labov and Fanshel (1977) were right to see that the organization of action was key to the coherent use of language, but not in counterposing it to the organization of the linguistic usage itself; they are intertwined. Grammar and action are each subject to both autonomous and interdependent organization.
- 11 Because this is the very beginning of the videotape reel, the immediately preceding context is not available, beyond the observation that Carney appears to have just referred to a story which has recently been told, and Pam either suggests, or endorses the suggestion, that the story be told again for the benefit of both the recently arrived guests and the ethnographers (Charles and Marjorie Goodwin) recording the occasion on tape. Pam and Curt are hostess and host, Carney is Curt’s cousin and Gary is her husband, Mike and his wife Phyllis have just arrived.
- 12 Although this is, in a sense, a choice between continuing and restarting, it is different from the occurrences which Local (1992) examines under the auspices of “continuing vs. restarting,” which involve utterances abandoned before completion and then taken up again.
- 13 Some might take yet another view, namely, that the utterance as produced should be understood as a new TCU, built to be grammatically continuous with what preceded. Cf. for example, note 26 below for such a view of similar data. However it is important to recognize that

the possible completion at “tha: t” is just that – a *possible* completion. One import of the construction of turns and TCUs in conversation around *possible* completions is that, if their sequelae are not felicitous (e.g., if they do not engender appropriate talk next, or *any* talk next), subsequent conduct by the same speaker can treat them to have *not* been completions after all. One key way this is done is by producing further talk as an organic continuation of the talk which preceded, as an increment of talk within the *same* TCU, which is thereby presented as having not been complete at all, and therefore not ready to engender sequelae or responses, and therefore not a failure in having not done so. And that is the analysis being proposed of Pam’s turn in Extract (2). More generally, that is a possibility for TCU construction and its (interactionally) contingent extension which is important for the claims of this paper. (For analysis of another interactional episode along such lines, cf. Schegloff, 1995, frth.)

- 14 How much work, and what kind of work, will be involved in getting more than one TCU into a turn can itself be positionally variable. Second position turns (in a sequence) may be more expansible than first position turns; for example (many) turns following questions appear to provide for multi-unit answers (at the same time as they may permit/require single TCU responses to be packaged in sub-sentential, sub-clausal TCUs). This may be one theme bearing on the grammar of some TCUs – how they figure in providing for additional TCUs, as per the discussion following in the text. Note as well that some practices (such as the story preface) work not to get an additional TCU in the turn, but to neutralize the “transition-relevance” of the possible completion of ensuing TCUs until some projected feature is articulated, e.g., until something analyzably “funny,” “strange,” or the like has been told (cf. Sacks, 1974; Schegloff, 1992; Goodwin, this volume). This is a key feature of the production of many so-called discourse units or discourses in conversation (and not only narratives), but may vary in other speech-exchange systems, if different turn-taking practices are in effect, with associated differences in turn organization.
- 15 This possibility is surely resonant with the current interest in “text grammars,” but is here meant for the specific context of talk-in-interaction.
- 16 Preliminary examination by Andrew Roth of a small corpus of material encourages this line of inquiry. There are particular forms whose deployment and import reinforces their apparent positional restriction; “oh,” for example, occurs overwhelmingly in turn-initial position (and I do not mean to refer only to the “touch-off oh” or to the “oh” which Heritage (1986) studies under the rubric “oh-prefaced responses to inquiries,” but to free-standing “oh” (Heritage, 1984; Schiffrin, 1987).
- 17 See also his lectures for Spring, 1972 in Sacks, 1992: II: 521–70.
- 18 Although raised in the context of a discussion of the organization of multi-unit turns, all of this has direct bearing on the grammar or

grammars by which TCUs are constructed and recognized, and their shaping by reference to the organization of the turn as the host environment. Aside from the Sacks reference above (1987[1973]), see also Pomerantz, 1984 which is directly concerned with turn shapes, the activities being prosecuted and sequential position.

- 19 On such topic shifting elsewhere see Jefferson's (1984a) account of stepwise topic shift as a device for exiting "troubles talk," though the steps there are not necessarily constituted by successive TCUs in a turn.
- 20 For an extended discussion of a virtually canonical multi-unit turn format, cf. Schegloff, 1992c: 1304–17.
- 21 For an extended treatment of the material from which Excerpt (7) is taken which pursues a different theme in its analysis cf. Mandelbaum, 1991/92.
- 22 The last of these is open to question, for the "preface" – "you're not in on what happened" – could be taken to project not (only) an announcement but a story, in which case there is projectably more (more *telling*, that is) to come after "He's flying."
- 23 For another type of exemplar of "in but not of" cf. Schegloff, 1979: 272, fn. 15.
- 24 Indeed, the very reference to a "stretch of talk" or "spate of talk" presumes recognition of some object not yet well defined. By it I will mean, loosely, some talk by a speaker, often but not always one who has not just been speaking.
- 25 I mean to refer specifically to "Right after (0.2) school is out."
- 26 These points are both arguable and not fully specified. On the first count, my colleague Chuck Goodwin (p.c.) wants to speak of the arrowed talk in Excerpts (10)-(13) as *new* TCUs constructed to be grammatically continuous with preceding talk. Whether this involves substantive differences in analysis or merely stylistic preferences remains to be elucidated. But see also note 13 above. On the second, much remains unspecified and unexplored. Is what constitutes a recognizable beginning itself positionally specific or sensitive? Or does one (the talk's recipient, the academic analyst) recognize first "not a beginning," and then (therefore?) search for symbiosis with (a) prior turn?
- 27 For a nice, context-informed account of this fragment, cf. Sacks, 1992, Volume I: 659–64 (Fall, 1967, Lecture 5).
- 28 Sacks (ibid.) makes the point that such "appendor questions" virtually always constitute the whole of their turn. He remarks as well (663) that it is just the continuative syntax that is of key importance to their realization *as* "appendor questions: "

there is a specific machinery whereby the transition from speaker to *non-speaker* is made a transition that ought to be from speaker to *bearer*. Where being a hearer involves, for one, having available to you an analysis of the syntax of the utterance after yours, and its possible relation to the syntax of your own utterance. That is, you have to see that this prepositional phrase is not the begin-

ning of some puzzling utterance, but that it can possibly be latched onto your own. (I leave aside the issue that it involves you in having listened to what you yourself said.)

- 29 Note that (except for the last) these are all organizationally features of the start of the *turn*, though not of the TCU; “uh” in particular can be a way of starting a turn with other than a TCU beginning.
- 30 Here again the relevance of positional sensitivity insists itself, for the sort of issue posed by starting a turn with a display of its relationship to what precedes is very different if what just precedes has initiated a new sequence than if it has possibly closed one. Heritage and Sorjonen’s “And-prefacing” (1994) – often invoking “external” agendas and constraints on the talk – is a feature of sequence-initiating but activity-continuing questions for good reason; there is little place for “and-prefaced” answers.
- 31 This is, of course, one of the major points in bringing the theme of grammar and interaction to *talk in turns*.
- 32 The treatment is rudimentary at best, as is the discussion of endings which follows, and both notions remain arguably quite vague. But the solution is not to provide (as one reader suggested) definitions of “beginning” and “ending.” Rather, we register observationally that there are recognizable alternative ways in which spates of talk by a speaker are bounded, and they are deployed differentially, as implementations of different practices, with differing uptakes by their recipients. The solution is the progressive empirical specification of what practices of talking accomplish recognizable beginnings and endings for the participants, rather than the stipulation of definitions by investigators.
- 33 The locus of “pre-possible completion” described here is almost certainly only one of a number of organizationally relevant loci, depending on the level of granularity oriented to by the parties in doing the talk and the professional analyst in providing accounts of it. For example, speakers may cut off an utterance which is virtually complete, i.e., just before its possibly last sound, and launch a new TCU, thereby exploiting a more fine-grained metric for pre-possible completion than is described in the text. Some of these metrics are described in the early parts of Jefferson, 1984b. If “pre-possible completion” is a grammatically strategic place in a TCU, then it is potentially a set of such places.
- 34 I only mention here the work of Davidson (1984: 115–25) who, building on Jefferson (1973), examines utterances in which there is “a possible sentence completion point that is not actual utterance completion, such that components occur after this possible completion point,” and focusses on the possibility that “the components occurring after a possible completion point may be providing the [speaker] with a *monitor space* in which he or she can examine what happens or what does

- not happen there for its acceptance/rejection implicativeness" (117; emphasis in original).
- 35 Actually, in Excerpts (22) and (23) the increments do not so much complement what preceded as they restructure it. In (22) "days" which is initially the object of "had" is replaced in that grammatical role by "classes" and becomes something of a prepositional phrase ("[on] what days..."). In (23), the "not" in "definitely not" is an intensified replay of the "not" in Bee's preceding turn, "Still not getting married," and what it is negating is the activity "getting married." With the addition of "married," the scope of the "not" is recast to the state "married," rather than the activity "getting married." So post-completion increments can not only add new grammatical units to the previously complete TCU, and complement what are retrospectively cast as incomplete constructions; they can restructure the grammatical roles and relations as well.
- 36 Some British "tag questions" seem different, not least in being placed not after possible completion of a TCU but at a place analyzably *not* that. In such cases they obviously are not being used for "decisive completion of the turn." Some such usages appear to be doing "recipient design" work, marking the assertion or assessment to which they are (quite often) affiliated as designed to express what the recipient is figured *already* to know or feel, and hence not something the speaker figured the recipient(s) *needed* to be told. But this is not the place to document or explore this claim. I should also note that some so-called "tag questions" in American English are not designed as post-completion elements, but are indigenous parts of the construction of the clause to which they are appended, as in "You're not leaving, are you?" The familiar term "tag question" may thus refer to usages whose structural character and positioning are diverse.
- 37 As this list makes clear, in English this post-completion stance marking is not grammaticalized, and is often accomplished by what are conventionally taken to be non-linguistic resources. In languages such as Korean, Japanese, and some languages of China, grammaticalized resources such as particles are used to similar ends.
- 38 Jefferson, 1984b: 11–28 can be understood as, in effect, an examination of one aspect of the organization of the transition space.
- 39 I refer here to the familiar drawings to which gestalt psychologists drew attention, in which, in one instance, a figure looked at in one way is a cup or goblet but looked at in another way is two faces oriented to one another; in another instance, the drawing can be seen as either a duck or a rabbit. In such instances, one sees it one way or the other, but not both simultaneously. The shift from seeing one configuration (or, in German, *Gestalt*) to seeing the other may be termed "a gestalt switch."
- 40 I believe that it is this which is conventionally (and rather blandly) referred to in the speech production literature as "the planning stage,"

as if the planning was going on in a temporal and sequential vacuum, and a stable and unchanging one at that.

- 41 Cf. Sacks, 1992, vol. 2: 554–60 [Spring, 1972]; Schegloff, 1992b: xlvii; Sacks and I were pursuing related lines in the mid-1970s.
- 42 There is, of course, even more to grammar – deixis, anaphora, reference, tense and aspect, modality, voice, as well as the resources and practices by which spates of talk get analyzably put together, and these too will be productive when examined in the materials of talk-in-interaction under the auspices of an interest in grammar and interaction.
- 43 That it does not count as advancing the progress of the construction of the turn – that it counts as retarding progressivity (Schegloff, 1979: 272-80), is another kind of fact about it, maybe even a *grammatical* fact about it, but that should not be taken to discount the validity of the object as an element of the TCU. And perhaps it is not even a fact; from various sources – Sacks (1992: II: 495-98, et passim), the Goodwins separately and together (M. H. Goodwin, 1983; Goodwin and Goodwin, 1986; C. Goodwin, 1987); Gene Lerner, (1987, 1991) – we can learn things about searches and “forgetfulness” which can allow us to see that some “uh”s may in fact promote the progressivity of a TCU in some respects – the progressivity of a distinct type of turn, or one which is made to embody distinctive features or activities.
- 44 This is without prejudice to the possible co-operation of hierarchical organizations in the talk.
- 45 The text summarizes parts of an account which Sacks and I were preparing to write up shortly before his death in 1975, based largely on work which he had done. See also M. Goodwin, 1983 and M. Goodwin and C. Goodwin, 1986, as well as Lerner, 1987.
- 46 Some such interpolations into a TCU, for example, parentheticals, can themselves engender sequences, entirely encapsulated within the TCU, as in the following exchange (taken from Schegloff, 1979: 266), in which the sequence is encapsulated between a prepositioned conditional clause and its “main” clause:

KC-4, 16:23-31

- Kathy: That is if the warp has sixteen greens an two
blacks an two light blues an two blacks an sixteen
greens an: sixteen blacks on sixteen blues an so on,
--> 'hh y'know the warp are the long pieces.
(0.5)
- > Frieda: Mhhm
Kathy: The weft has exactly tha:t.
Frieda: Yah.
(0.5)

- 47 I give no more than a mention here to other features of conduct which can figure comparably in the design and understanding of the turn, such as posture. For example, a speaker may bracket a whole utterance or sequence as being in a side or subordinate focus of attention and involvement (Goffman, 1963: 43–44), this bracketing being embodied

via “body torque,” in which only the upper reaches of the body are oriented to the recipient, while the trunk and torso remain directed toward a competing main or dominant interactional focus (Schegloff, 1990), thereby placing the talk under constraints not to expand.

- 48 On the first score, morphologically inflected languages would seem to contrast with predominantly word order languages in the strength and medium by which projection of the shape of the TCU works. So also do differences between SVO and SOV languages invite examination in these terms. We should anticipate a variety of specific mechanisms by which such robust features of turn-taking organization as local organization, interactional management and party administration (SSJ, 1974: 724–27) are implemented, and different detailed empirical outcomes as the result. Regarding the bearing of setting-specific turn-taking organizations on the grammatical constitution of the talk, see the discussion of the news interview in sources such as Clayman, 1988, Greatbatch, 1988; Heritage and Greatbatch, 1991; Heritage and Roth, 1995.
- 49 Such occurrences are not idiosyncratic. Here is an excerpt from another reviewer and another doctor, with at least three inbreath placements of possible interest, whose examination I leave to the reader’s consideration.

Heritage/Kleinman, P2:5:4

- Review: No I- I would not see it because the nurses that eh- do the initial screening they have our same criteria .h an’ they only refer cases to u:s that don’t meet the initial criteria .h an’ I’m telling you what the criteria a:re .hh uh for-for that:t. It’s .hh [with the hi- if there was no hearing=
- > Doctor: [Okay.
- Review: =lo:ss documented we would wanna see three months .h of effusion .h [so you know: you might wanna just (.) .h uh::=
- Doctor: [Okay.
- Review: =find out when they repeated that hearing test just to confirm that it’s still present.
- Doctor: [Yeah
- Review: [.h B’t I- yih’know i- that- that’s our criteria so it shouldn’t have any problem if- if you do: .hh fi:nd
- > that this effusion is still present in another uh::
- > .hh you know after two mo:nts.
- Doctor: Tch. O:hka:y....

- 50 It clearly can constitute such an answer semantically or propositionally; but was it produced as hearably responsive to that question?
- 51 I might mention that the phenomenon being examined – an answer partially simultaneous with the question it could be answering – is not idiosyncratic, although the route by which it is produced obviously varies. Consider, for example, the following fragment, taken from Whalen (1995: 188, 207) on the work of a 911 Emergency call-taker (CT in the transcript below) in interaction with a citizen caller. This caller has reported confronting two men. Both the overlapping “answer” and the response to it via other-initiated repair appear

directly cognate with the fragment under examination in the text, although their interactional import and sequential origins are quite different. Reservations about the capacity of recipients to respond this quickly should be assessed against the background of the analysis in Jefferson, 1973 which displays compelling evidence of comparable capacities.

Whalen, 1995

CT: =what(r) they doing?
 Caller: Well they had uh (.) concealed
 weapon (.) they had a pistol and
 wuz shootin'
 (1.0)
 CT: [How long ago?]
 Caller: [and what I: con-] (0.5) wha:at?=
 CT: =ho:w=-
 Caller: =just about ten minutes ago
 CT: And where- (.) [di- you see]
 --> Caller: [Willow Crick Road]
 --> CT: Whe:re?
 Caller: On Willow Crick Road
 CT: [Did you see the gun?

- 52 The relevance of this theme is by no means restricted to the “answer-to-question” position. See, for example, Ono and Thompson, to appear, which excludes answer-to-question instances, and explicitly considers the “ellipsis” analysis and finds it wanting.
- 53 Elsewhere (Schegloff, 1996), for example, I have examined confirmatory responses which repeat all (or virtually all) of that which they are confirming – exchanges such as the following, between a late-arriving supervising physician and a medical resident who is reporting at a hospital case conference about a case they have both worked on:

Super: You talked abou'what happened at thee other hospital?
 Res: I talked about what happened at thee other hospital.

The basic grammatical form(s) for response here might be thought to be “yes,” or “I did,” rather than this full sentence repeat of the question. The paper in which this practice is treated shows that one use it has is to claim that what is being confirmed had previously been conveyed inexplicitly. This full form, then, is not the “basic” one; its use is marked, and is designed to accomplish a particular action in the sequence.

- 54 Perhaps the most comprehensive account along these general lines may be found in Levelt, 1989, whose very title and subtitle celebrate the analytic commitment.
- 55 Indeed, it may go back further yet, to the implicativeness of the prior talk for what should follow it, which itself follows the developmental course of that prior talk; cf. the earlier discussion of the “incipient-next” phase of an utterance’s triple phase life, at pp. 97–99.
- 56 For a related, methodological take on this theme, cf. Heritage, 1990/91.

- 57 What is being proposed here is thus an alternative to the tack taken by Labov (1966, 1970), who sought to reconcile then-developing syntactic accounts of “the sentence” with actual speech data. His assessment of how much of ordinary speech is actually grammatical, or separated only slightly from grammaticality, led him to formulate “rules of ellipsis and certain editing rules to take care of stammering and false starts” (Labov, 1970: 42). As noted above in the text, where it captures interactants’ orientations and practices in talking and hearing/understanding, precisely formulated and empirically grounded accounts along these lines are just what is wanted. However, this tack can be extended to “handle” deviations from stipulated sentence forms on behalf of linguistics taken as an island unto itself, or as one of a group of islands called “cognitive sciences.” But the effects of treating such “deviations” as anomalies and “disposing” (or “taking care”) of them with a few rules of ellipsis and editing are to mask and suppress relations between grammar as *one* form of organization and other forms or orders of organization with which it interacts in the production and understanding of talk-in-interaction, and whose points of articulation (the plate tectonics of talk-in-interaction, if you will) these departures partially index.
- 58 Consider, for example, the assertion (in the context of an exchange on “pro-drop” of subject and auxiliary on an electronic scholarly “hot line”) that “the auxiliaries that can be eroded are exactly those auxiliaries that are greatly reduced phonetically – to a single consonant, obligatorily (in non-emphatic contexts),” but that “You CANNOT get rid of similar but less reduced auxiliaries, like WAS: Was eatin’ an apple./*Eatin’ an apple.” (Stemberger, 1993; Linguist Hot Line, 08 Mar, 1993, emphasis in original.) Put into the second turn of an adjacency pair, e.g., after a question such as “What were ya doin’?” “Eatin’ an apple.” is not starred, but is exactly right.

Or consider an empirical instance drawn from a classroom setting with young children, for whom the alternatives pose an issue for explicit instruction; answering with full sentences is something they have to be told to do (taken from Lerner, 1995: 124).

The production of stand-alone complete-sentence answers represents a “marked” form in contrast with elliptical (i.e., sequentially tied) responses ordinarily used in talk-in-interaction. Spoken answers need not be produced as complete sentences (as [the excerpt below] shows) nor do answers ordinarily repeat their originating question (or only reference it indexically) because answerers can rely on their turn’s proximity to the question’s original production and the projected relevance of answering as a next action for their turn.

- Simson: If you were big, if you were big, bigger than anybody in this whole classroom (.) how could you solve (.) that problem.
- Erica: um
- Juan: cutting your legs ((laughs)) no huh huh
- Erica: bend dow::n::?
- Juan: get on your knees
- Daniel: (to exercise)
- Juan: get on yr knees

In contrast, producing stand-alone answers requires the construction of an utterance that is markedly disengaged from its local sequential environment. Yet, the construction of that utterance is always situated within a particular course of action using practices designed in the first place for situated conduct and copresent recipients. Complete-sentence answers that repeat elements of the question introduce a marked redundancy into the reply that is nonetheless an unmarked (and non-redundant) element of an eventually written sentence that is to be designed to stand on its own, independently of the question. Students must counteract ordinary conversational practices to produce stand-alone, complete and unabridged sentence responses. Yet, this teacher-mandated response-form can itself provide resources for answering questions

Do we not see here a juxtaposition of textually and interactionally grounded grammars, posed, as Lerner puts it (p.c.), “as a member’s problem of talking vs. writing?”

- 59 Curiously, as Goffman (1964) argued that the place of talking was in “situations,” in which talking need not occur, so does grammar for talk-in-interaction operate on units which (like nods and shrugs and compliant actions) need not be actually realized in language – actions or activities. It is this (in part) which grounds the withholding of principled primacy from language in CA studies.
- 60 Indeed, the whole conception of “speech acts” may be understood as an effort to make a propositionally based conception of language – whether linguistic, logical or philosophical – available to satisfy the requirements of the analysis of action. For one thoroughgoing critique of speech act theories, cf. Levinson, 1980, 1981, 1983: Chapter 5.
- 61 The issue does not involve including such categories as functional grammar’s “agent” and “patient,” for these are still categories for aspects of propositions.
- 62 It may be relevant as well to understanding troubles like dyslexia, where a whole component of language resources presumed by the constitutive environment for language (i.e., sound) is dropped out and replaced by a non-constitutive feature – written representation, and such key dimensions as temporality are neutralized by orthographic stasis, with consequent transformations of directionality, the consequentiality of possible completion, the availability of help via repair organization, etc.

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