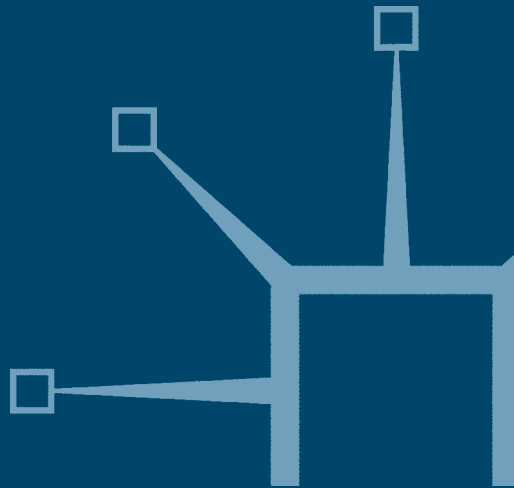


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# Prosodic Orientation in English Conversation

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Beatrice Szczepiek Reed



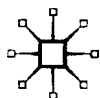
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Beatrice Szczeppek Reed  
*University of Nottingham*

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*In memoriam*

*Helga and Peter Szczepk*

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# Preface

This book addresses students, researchers and teachers of spoken language. It presents an empirical study of natural language data in which a basic behavioural pattern of human interaction is revealed and investigated: the display of awareness of another person's voice or vocal behaviour through the use of one's own voice. This phenomenon is referred to as 'prosodic orientation'.

An investigation of this phenomenon is of primary interest to phoneticians and phonologists, in particular to those for whom spontaneous voice production and vocal aspects of discourse are relevant. The high degree to which dialogue partners monitor and adapt to each other's vocal delivery clearly informs the study of phonological patterning, and its contribution to meaning in discourse. This book also contributes to fields in linguistics, psychology and sociology which specialize in the investigation of spontaneous human communication. While previous research has shown that humans interact through a variety of communicative modes, including verbal, gestural, proxemic and kinesic, this study shows that prosody is another independent mode through which speakers negotiate interactive meaning.

The communicative aspect makes this book also relevant to the areas of language use, pragmatics and applied linguistics. Research in TESOL, first and second language acquisition, native/non-native speaker interaction and intercultural communication may profit from the finding that speakers constantly adapt their speech to that of their interlocutor(s). It can be assumed that prosodic learning is predominantly and continuously informed by prosodic orientation.

Evidence of the ability to display orientation to another speaker's vocal production with split-second precision is of relevance to anyone interested in the cognitive aspect of human interaction and perception, including neurolinguists, psycholinguists and psychologists. Finally, as accommodation and mimicry are cross-cultural aspects of human behaviour, the practice described in this book may be of interest to students of linguistic anthropology as a potential prosodic universal.

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# GAT<sup>1</sup> Transcription Conventions

## Basic conventions

### Sequential structure

[ ]	overlap
[ ]	
=	quick, immediate connection of new turns or single units

### Pauses

(.)	micro-pause
(-), (--), (---)	short, middle or long pauses of up to 1 second
(2.0)	estimated pause of more than 1 second
(2.85)	measured pause

### Other segmental conventions

and=uh	slurring within units
:, :;, :::	lengthening, according to duration
uh, ah, etc.	hesitation signals

### Laughter

so(h)o	laughter particles during speech
haha, hehe	syllabic laughter
((laughing))	description of laughter

### Accents

ACcent	primary, or main accent
!AC!cent	extra strong accent

### Final pitch movements

?	high rise
,	mid-rise
-	level pitch
;	mid-fall
.	low fall

---

<sup>1</sup> Gesprächsanalytisches Transkriptionssystem: Selting *et al.* (1998).

Pitch step-up/step down

↑ pitch step-up  
↓ pitch step down

Change of pitch register

<<l>> low pitch register  
<<h>> high pitch register

Change of key

<<narrow key>> use of small segment of speaker's voice range  
<<wide key>> use of large segment of speaker's voice range

Intra-linear notation of pitch movement within an accent

`SO fall  
^SO rise  
^SO rise-fall  
^SO fall-rise

Loudness and tempo changes

<<f>> forte, loud  
<<ff>> fortissimo, very loud  
<<p>> piano, soft  
<<pp>> pianissimo, very soft  
<<all>> allegro, fast  
<<len>> lento, slow  
<<cresc>> crescendo, becoming louder  
<<dim>> diminuendo, becoming softer  
<<acc>> accelerando, becoming faster  
<<rall>> rallentando, becoming slower

Breathing

.h, .hh, .hhh breathing in, according to duration  
h, hh, hhh breathing out, according to duration

**Other conventions**

( ) unintelligible passage  
(such) presumed wording  
(such/which) possible alternatives  
-> specific line in transcript which is referred to in the text

# 1

## Prosody in Conversation

### Introduction

This book investigates how participants in everyday conversations collaborate in the prosodic domain of talk by making previous speakers' vocal patterns interactionally relevant in their own vocal delivery. The study contributes to ongoing research on the interrelation between prosody and spontaneous spoken interaction. It also contributes to research on natural conversation as such, as the prosodic practices described here are treated as part of the broad repertoire of social actions employed by participants in naturally occurring conversations. All data used for this study are recordings of everyday talk, either face-to-face or on the telephone. All analytical interpretations are made on the basis of the observed behaviour of the conversational participants themselves, rather than on the basis of linguistic intuition and/or introspection.

In spontaneous conversation, prosody has been found to have a variety of interactional functions, a principal one being its contribution to turn-taking. The prosodic delivery of the final part of a turn-at-talk is one of the signals which communicate to other conversationalists whether a current speaker has finished speaking, and whether a next participant may begin (Local *et al.* 1985; Local *et al.* 1986; Wells and Peppé 1996). Thus the turn-taking system is one conversational environment in which interactants show awareness not only of verbal content and syntactic constructions, but also of the way in which a previous utterance is phonetically delivered. Turn-taking heavily depends upon prosodic cues being produced and interpreted by participants in a given conversational context.

However, in the process of conversation participants not only display awareness of others' prosodic delivery as making a next action relevant.

Speakers also handle prosody itself as an independent domain for interactional collaboration by displaying in their own prosodic delivery that a preceding prosodic pattern is being responded to. This phenomenon is what is being investigated here under the term 'prosodic orientation'.

The term 'orientation' is used by conversation analysts to mean that 'throughout the course of a conversation ... speakers display in their sequentially "next" turns an understanding of what the "prior" turn was about' (Hutchby and Wooffitt 1998: 15). While prosodic orientation is not argued to be a display of 'understanding' of a prior turn, the following chapters show that one participant's prosodic design may display his/her awareness of a previous speaker's prosody. Thus, it is in the sense of 'displaying awareness' that the term 'orientation' is used here.

The prosodic display of awareness of another speaker's vocal delivery occurs most frequently in the form of repetition: a previous speaker's prosodic pattern, such as an intonation contour, is copied by a second speaker without necessary repetition of lexical choice, semantic content or syntactic structure. Awareness of other participants' prosody is also apparent in cases of a noticeable prosodic opposite in a second speaker's turn, such as a quiet reply to a shouted first utterance. Furthermore, prosodic orientation occurs when a second speaker continues a previous participant's unfinished intonation contour. This form of prosodic orientation frequently appears in combination with the syntactic domain, as for example in instances in which one speaker completes a syntactic construction which was left incomplete by a previous speaker, and simultaneously continues that speaker's pitch pattern. Certain types of prosodic orientation are frequently observed in instances in which speakers highlight and draw attention to their own prosodic design, often introducing an element of conversational play and aesthetics.

In the following chapters prosodic orientation is introduced as a basic phenomenon of talk-in-interaction, and subsequently two of its conversational varieties are investigated. Chapter 2 describes and investigates prosodic orientation in the form of matching, non-matching and complementing a previous prosodic design. Chapter 3 analyses participants' prosodic orientation in prosodically stylized sequences, which involve musical intervals, extreme prosody and repetition. Chapter 4 explores the collaborative production of turns, in which both an intonation contour and a syntactic construction begun by a first speaker are completed or extended by an incoming second participant.

Previous research on conversational prosody has focused on the prosodic delivery of utterances by single speakers and interactional implications thereof. So far, the collaborative potential of prosody has

been investigated only with respect to rhythm (Couper-Kuhlen 1993; Auer *et al.* 1999), and pitch range employed for quoting and mimicry (Couper-Kuhlen 1996). This book encompasses orientation in all other prosodic parameters. The following chapters attempt to show that prosody is treated by interactants as 'common property', interrelated with other speakers' prosodic designs. The data under analysis are everyday conversations by native speakers of close-to-standard British or US American varieties, which were recorded during face-to-face interactions, telephone conversations and radio broadcasts. Preceding the analysis of the phenomenon, this chapter outlines some basic claims about conversational prosody. The next section provides a brief definition of 'prosody' as the object of study; subsequently, four previous approaches to prosody are presented; the fourth section introduces the approach to the prosody of spoken interaction employed in this book; and the fifth section describes the linguistic units most relevant for the analysis of prosody in conversation. The chapter ends with information about the data corpus and a preview over the remaining chapters.

## Prosody defined

In most phonological traditions, prosody is understood to comprise the 'suprasegmental' elements of speech: pitch is realized in the form of intonation and pitch register; loudness is realized in the form of stress on single syllables and loudness over longer stretches of talk; time is realized in the form of duration, tempo, speech rate, rhythm and pause.<sup>1</sup>

Pitch is the auditory impression of speech sounds as located on a scale between 'high' and 'low'. It corresponds to the acoustic feature of the frequency of vibration of the vocal folds, it is measured in Hertz values and it is realized as a pitch curve in an acoustic analysis. Pitch range can be defined as the span of Hertz values covered by speakers' vocal output from the lowest to the highest pitch level. It is traditionally assumed that male speakers can roughly cover a pitch range between 60 and 240 Hz, while female speakers tend to range between 180 and 400 Hz. In this book, the term pitch register is used to describe the span of pitch values of a given stretch of talk, and we speak of high or low pitch register if speakers can be heard to raise or lower their 'baseline' (Cruttenden 1997: 123*f*), vocalizing at a higher or lower overall pitch level than during previous talk. The frequency analysis in Figure 1.1 shows a male speaker employing a pitch register between 92 and 185 Hz, and a female speaker using a pitch range from 277 to 400 Hz.<sup>2</sup>

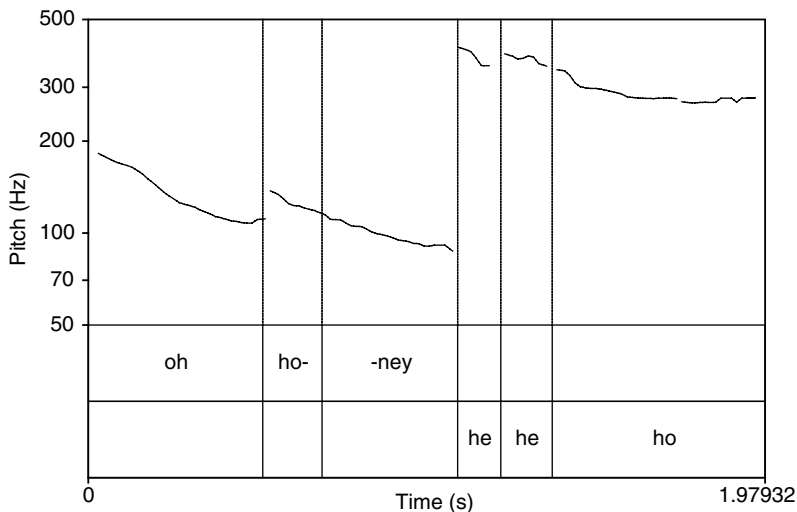


Figure 1.1 Pitch register

In addition to the overall pitch register of a given stretch of speech, we can describe the constant changes in pitch level which accompany all spontaneous talk. Such pitch movement is analysed under the term intonation. While pitch register concerns overall pitch level, intonation is melodic movement of pitch. The frequency analysis in Figure 1.2 shows a male and a female speaker.

The first speaker begins his utterance with a rising movement from 180 Hz to 257 Hz on the syllable *hi*, then steps down after the stop consonant /b/ to produce a slight fall from 127 Hz to 108 Hz on *bar-*, and rises again on his last syllable *-bra* from 128 Hz to 234 Hz. The second speaker begins with a rise from 240 Hz to 344 Hz on her first syllable *hell-*, from which she falls down to 118 Hz on *-o*; her last syllable *tim* steps up to 176 Hz and rises to 382 Hz.

Loudness is the auditory correlate of intensity and is measured in decibels; acoustic analyses are represented as wave forms. We distinguish between loudness over a stretch of talk and loudness on a single syllable. Changes in loudness are perceived along a scale from loud to soft, and the two are often referred to by their musical terms *forte* and *piano*, or, in the case of gradual changes, *crescendo* and *decrescendo*. The wave form in Figure 1.3 shows the same conversational sequence as Figure 1.2.

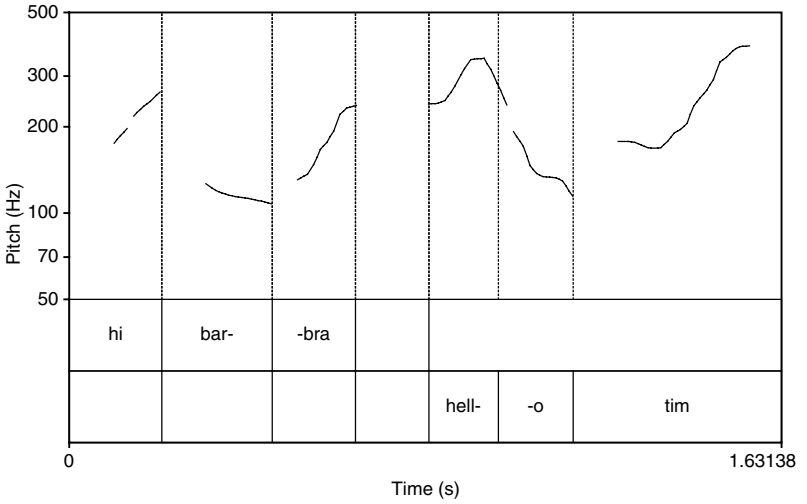


Figure 1.2 Intonation

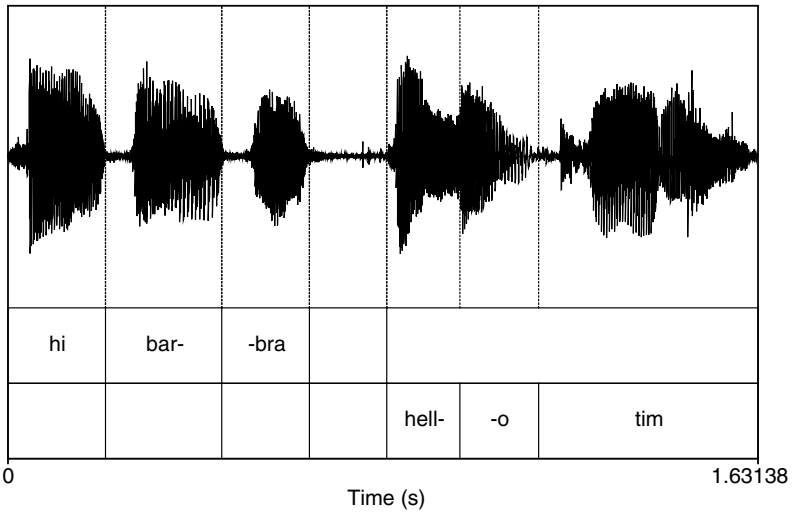


Figure 1.3 Loudness

Loudness on one syllable contributes to the realization and perception of stress. Stress can be defined as syllable prominence through loudness; in English the term is typically used for word or sentence stress, concerning the distribution of prominence on multi-syllabic words, compounds and phrases. Another term which is used to describe syllabic prominence is 'accent', or 'pitch accent'. As the latter term implies, pitch accent refers to prominence which is achieved through an increase in loudness and pitch, often in combination with duration. No vocalization is possible without pitch, and all voiced syllables, accented, stressed, or unstressed, involve some deployment of pitch. However, pitch accent is defined as implicating pitch movement:

Pitch accents depend on some sort of obtrusion of pitch at the point of accent from the pitch of surrounding syllables. Such obtrusions depend on movements to or from the accented syllable, involving (i) a step-up, (ii) a step-down, (iii) a movement down-from, or (iv) a movement up-from. Accents may involve either a movement to or a movement from alone, or a combination of both types of obtrusion. (Cruttenden 1997: 40)

Thus, stress and accent both involve some deployment of loudness on single syllables: stress implies a primary use of loudness, whereas accent is defined as a combination of loudness and pitch movement.

Time bears upon various aspects of sound production across a number of linguistic domains, from the single syllable to the level of utterance. On the syllabic level we can measure duration. Syllables may be lengthened or clipped. In the above example, the first syllable (*hi*) measures 0.22 seconds, the second (*bar-*) 0.25, while the third syllable (*-bra*) is shortened to 0.19 seconds. The second speaker's first syllable is also rather short at 0.15 seconds, her second syllable slightly longer at 0.19 seconds. The last syllable is lengthened to 0.38 seconds.

Concerning the time which speakers require for the production of longer spates of talk, two parameters are in use. The 'speech tempo' of an utterance is determined by the duration of its syllables, such that an utterance containing several long syllables is perceived as slow, while a succession of relatively short syllables is heard as fast. In contrast, another parameter can be applied for measuring speed: the 'speech rate' of an utterance refers to the number of syllables per second. Thus, many syllables per second are perceived as fast, few syllables per second as slow. See for example Figure 1.4.

Figure 1.4 contains 1.42 seconds of speech, during which the speaker produces 10 syllables. Thus, the speech rate of the utterance below is

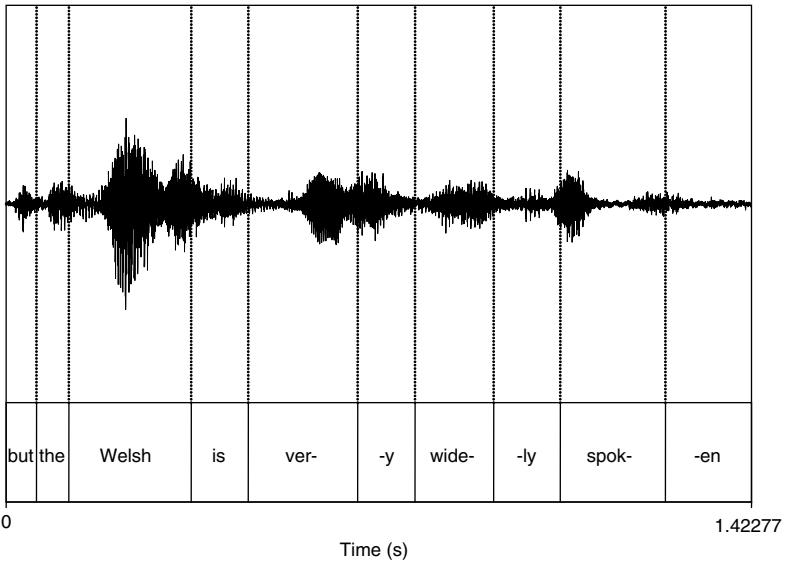


Figure 1.4 Speech rate

measured as 7.04 syllables per second. Both tempo and speech rate are often referred to by their musical terminology: *allegro* or *lento* for fast or slow speech; *accelerando* or *rallentando* for speech becoming faster or slower, respectively.

Another aspect of time in spontaneous English conversation is speech rhythm, which refers to the arrangement of syllables over potentially regular intervals of time. In order to describe the rhythmic pattern of an utterance, stressed syllables are established as rhythmic beats. Subsequently, the time span between those beats is measured. If it is regular, or perceived as such, a sequence can be described as *isochronous*, that is the rhythmic beats occur at roughly regular points in time over a stretch of talk, which minimally consists of three beats.<sup>3</sup> Once a rhythm is established, following syllables can be analysed as continuing the established rhythm, or breaking it up. If syllables continue a rhythmic pattern, they may come on the expected beat, or they may occur early or late, but still filling the rhythmic interval such that the next syllable is produced on time. Individual stretches of naturally occurring conversation can be described on a scale from perfect *isochrony*, that is the precise arrangement of syllables on the rhythmic beats, to *arhythmicality*, where no regular intervals can be detected in a succession of syllables. The waveform in Figure 1.5 shows an extract from Figure 1.1.

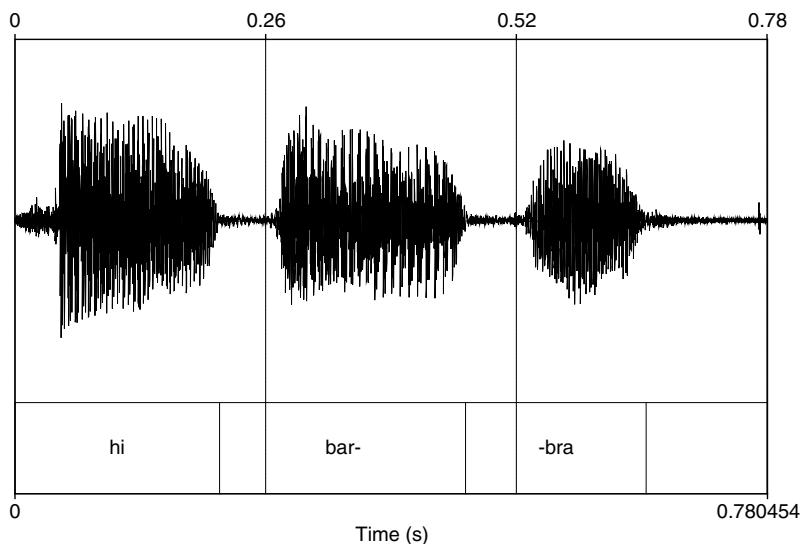


Figure 1.5 Speech rhythm

The three vowels can be seen to be begun at an almost precise interval of 0.26 seconds, the dotted line representing the time interval, the straight line in the text tier the actual syllable onset. Thus, this short spate of talk constitutes an isochronous rhythmic pattern.

Finally, time bears upon conversation in the moments when nothing is said. Silence is traditionally included in prosodic analysis, although it is not a suprasegmental phenomenon. However, its function for genuinely prosodic matters such as sequential structure, and its attitudinal and grammatical functional load, which is similar to that of other prosodic features, are important considerations in favour of a non-segmental classification of pausal phenomena (Crystal 1969: 166). Definitions of conversational silence typically distinguish between filled and unfilled pauses. The first involves a non-lexical vocalization, such as *uh*, the last refers to non-vocalization or silence. Pause plays a particularly important role in the analysis of speech rhythm: since isochrony is defined as a regular occurrence of rhythmic beats, pauses can be interpreted as 'silent beats' if they prolong a pattern of regular beats established in prior talk. Phonetically, unfilled pauses may not in all cases involve total absence of phonetic activity. The holding of a stop consonant or a

glottal stop, for example, is auditorily perceived as silence, but phonetically different from pauses produced by relaxation of the vocal apparatus.

The suprasegmental parameters introduced above are the conventional domain of prosodic analysis in most phonological theories in which segmental and suprasegmental distinctions are treated as different forms of linguistic contrast. While phonemic differences co-occur with changes in lexico-semantic meaning, suprasegmental variations are treated as signalling affective and thus pragmatic contrasts. Research on the phonetics of conversation has shown, however, that features from all aspects of sound production may be equally relevant for participants in the course of conversation (Local *et al.* 1986; Kelly and Local 1989; Local and Ogden 1998; Ogden and Walker 2001; Walker 2001). In addition to suprasegmental parameters, such features may include phonetic parameters traditionally treated as segmental; or parameters typically considered paralinguistic, such as voice quality. This book adopts a view on prosody which includes those additional aspects. It does not draw an artificial line between segmental, suprasegmental and paralinguistic features when they are clearly used for the same interactional practices.<sup>4</sup> If a feature of sound production can be shown to be made functionally relevant by participants with respect to the grammatical, pragmatic and discourse structural interpretation of an interaction-in-process, it is treated here as prosodic.

With respect to prosodic orientation, voice quality in particular was found to be employed by speakers in the same manner as other prosodic parameters. From the data used for this book it seems that not all aspects of voice quality seem to be employed for prosodic orientation but the following kinds of phonation could be shown to be used collaboratively (Laver 1980). Falsetto voice is perceived as noticeably higher in pitch than ordinary speech. This is the case because the vocal cords are stretched very thin during phonation, which results in a higher frequency vibration than in a more relaxed setting. Creaky voice is heard as low in pitch, an impression caused by a relaxed state of the vocal cords, which receive little longitudinal tension. Creaky voice also involves repeated interruption of the airflow. Harsh voice is not associated with a particular pitch level but is perceived as a rough vocalization. This seems to be caused by small variations in amplitude from one frequency cycle to the next, and by extreme laryngeal tension. Breathy voice involves hardly any tension of the vocal cords, such that the glottis is not entirely closed and air flows through it to such an extent that both voicing and air flow are perceived roughly at equal measure.

Whisper is perceived as unvoiced and is produced through a small opening of the glottis and without vibration of the vocal folds.

Voice quality was described by Abercrombie as 'those characteristics which are present more or less all the time that a person is talking: it is a quasi-permanent quality running through all the sound that issues from his mouth' (Abercrombie 1967: 91). However, when treated as a prosodic parameter in this book voice quality must be shown to be an optional and potentially contrastive feature of speech, signalling distinctions in linguistic meaning. Therefore the analyses of prosodic orientation in voice quality below exclusively contain instances in which speakers introduce a change in voice quality for interactionally motivated reasons; in all analysed extracts, speakers can be seen to change from their ordinary, acquired vocal setting into a specific voice quality, and, after the interactional relevance has subsided, to change back to their previous setting. A voice quality is not considered interactionally relevant, at least not on a local conversational level, when it constitutes a speaker's ordinary, unmarked way of phonation, and is 'quasi-permanent' in Abercrombie's sense.

### **Previous approaches to prosody<sup>5</sup>**

This section introduces three major phonological approaches to prosody: the tonetic approach, autosegmental-metrical phonology, and Firthian Prosodic Analysis. In addition to those theories, one of the most influential aspects from Dwight Bolinger's theory of intonation is presented, as it is directly relevant to this book. Similarly, the tonetic approach and Firthian Prosodic Analysis are strongly influential to the following analyses of prosodic phenomena. Autosegmental-metrical phonology is briefly introduced because it is among the leading theories of intonation today and it therefore seems appropriate to position the present investigation with respect to its main tenets.

#### **The tonetic approach**

The tonetic approach to intonation centres around the analysis of pitch movements and intonation contours, such as rises, falls, rise-falls, and so on, with the main focus on the pitch movement on and after the primary accent, or nucleus, of an intonation phrase. Kingdon (1958: 3) defines the intonation phrase as:

a slowly descending series of level tones usually starting at or near the normal voice range and finishing at or near the bottom. The stresses

fall on the more important words in an utterance and are interspersed with unstressed syllables that occupy pitches between those occupied by the stressed syllables on either side of them.

He distinguishes two kinds of stressed syllables, kinetic tones and static tones. Only kinetic tones carry pitch movement, while static tones are level and located high or low in a respective speaker's voice range. His five kinetic tones are falling, rising, falling-rising, rising-falling and rising-falling-rising. Schubiger (1958) distinguishes the same number of nuclear tones, adding three varieties of the rise: low-mid, low-high and mid-high, all of which are considered contrastive. O'Connor and Arnold (1973) describe six nuclear tones, which together with various prehead and head contours result in 10 kinds of tone groups, such as the low drop, where the prehead is low, the head high and the nucleus syllables falls to low. O'Connor and Arnold's analysis of intonation arrives at a distinctive variation of intonation contours, or 'tunes', which stretch over what they call a word group, defined as 'groups of words which are grammatically relevant' (1973: 3).

Halliday (1967; 1970), with his complex system of primary and secondary tones, sees intonation as inseparable from grammatical relations, a view he shares with the above-mentioned authors, and which can be considered the defining element of his approach.<sup>6</sup> His analytical unit is the 'information unit', in addition to which he applies a notion of 'tone group'. Halliday argues that tone group boundaries are used to delimit one sentence into potentially more than one information unit. Each tone group has a nuclear syllable, which is considered to be pointing to the 'information focus' of the tone group. Intonation is seen as closely linked to grammatical and semantic relations rather than as an independent functional domain.

Another contribution to the tonetic perspective on prosody is made by Crystal (1969), who describes not only intonation but also pitch range, tempo, loudness, rhythmicity, tension and pause. For all of these parameters, Crystal introduces a 'system': for loudness, tempo and pitch range he postulates simple systems, which involve individual degrees of the respective parameter, and complex systems, which address the issue of gradual change. For example, the simple pitch-range system contains features such as high or low pitch, while the complex system contains wide or narrow pitch range, and ascending and descending pitch. The simple tempo system describes the time in which a stretch of speech, monosyllabic or polysyllabic, is produced, whereas the complex tempo system addresses changes in speech tempo. With

respect to loudness, the simple system is concerned with the loudness of individual stretches of speech, while the complex system describes modifications in loudness. Crystal defines intonation:

not as a single system of contours, levels, etc., but as a complex of features from different prosodic systems. These vary in their relevance, but the most central are tone, pitch-range and loudness, with rhythmicality and tempo closely related. (1969: 195)

Central to Crystal's approach is the delimitation of stretches of talk into tone units. While other phonologists have spoken of similar kinds of prosodic categories before, they have by definition linked them to grammatical units. Crystal makes no such claim, but describes the tone unit as a phonological category alone. Its structure is described as consisting of an optional prehead and head; an obligatory primary accent, the nucleus; and an optional tail. As in other approaches of the Tonic School, Crystal's main interest is in the prosodic characteristics of the nuclear tone.

Brazil *et al.* (1980) and Brazil (1985) assume two distinctive contours, or tones, for English, which are classified as two functional categories: the 'referring' tone (r), realized as a fall-rise, and the 'proclaiming' tone (p), realized as a fall. The distinction between the two is made on speaker knowledge: the referring tone occurs with information which the speaker considers to be shared, the proclaiming tone is used for information which is treated as new. Pitch range, or 'key', is also introduced as high, mid or low; thus, a given stretch of talk may be described in relation to both tone (r or p) and key (high, mid or low).

Couper-Kuhlen (1986) introduces both rhythm and intonation as prosodic resources for talk. In her discussion of intonation she affiliates with Crystal's (1969) system and analyses functions of intonation in information focus and structure, grammatical relations, illocutionary force, attitudinal aspects, texts and spoken discourse. Her introductory work is the first piece of research on prosody to use naturally occurring radio-programmes as data for the analysis of the discourse functions of intonation. This feature is developed in Couper-Kuhlen's later writings, and is also a vital element of the approach to prosody applied in this book.

Cruttenden's (1986) introductory book adopts a delimitation of speech into intonation groups, which is similar to Crystal's and Couper-Kuhlen's; he, too, considers the pitch movements on the nuclear syllable of central importance. A further focus of his work is the description of intonational function and intonational variety in language use.

The tonetic approach to prosody is a holistic one in that it considers suprasegmental speech events, such as intonation contours, as coherent phenomena. While individual authors may classify pitch movements and other phonological structures in different ways, the overarching tenet is that prosody, especially intonation, can be analysed as a series of phonological events. The present study affiliates broadly to this approach in that it describes respective pitch movements as instances of intonation contours which occur both locally on a given accent, and more globally on a given intonation phrase. The notion of nuclear accent also plays a role in the analyses below.

### Autosegmental-metrical phonology

Autosegmental-Metrical Phonology (AM) is an approach to the phonological analysis of intonation which is rooted in two highly influential doctoral theses: Mark Liberman's *The Intonational System of English* (1975) and Janet Pierrehumbert's *The Phonology and Phonetics of English Intonation* (1980). As in the tonetic approach, intonation is treated as a suprasegmental phenomenon, as are intensity and duration. Intonation and its metrically motivated aspects are the main object of research, while other prosodic parameters play a smaller role. Ladd (1996: 42*f*) introduces four of the basic principles of autosegmental-metrical phonology:

- 1 *Linearity of tonal structure*: tonal structure is linear, consisting of a string of local events associated with certain points in the segmental string. Between such events the pitch contour is phonologically unspecified and can be described in terms of *transitions* from one event to the next. In languages like English, the most important events of the tonal string are *pitch accents*, which are associated with prominent syllables in the segmental string, and edge tones, which are associated with the edges of prosodic domains of various sizes.
- 2 *Distinction between pitch accent and stress*: pitch accents, in languages that have them, serve as concrete perceptual cues to stress or prominence. However, they are in the first instance *intonational* features, which are *associated with* certain syllables in accordance with various principles of prosodic organisation. The perceived prominence of accented syllables is, at least in some languages, a matter of *stress*, which can be distinguished from pitch accent.
- 3 *Analysis of pitch accents in terms of level tones*: pitch accents and edge tones in intonational languages can be analysed as consisting of primitive level tones or pitch targets, High (H) and Low (L).

- 4 *Local sources for global trends*: the phonetic realisation or *scaling* of any given H or L tone depends on a variety of factors (degree of emphasis, position in utterance, etc.) that are essentially orthogonal to its identity as H or L. Overall trends in pitch contours (e.g. gradual lowering of overall range) mostly reflect the operation of *localised* but *iterated* changes in scaling factors. (Emphasis in the original)

In direct contrast to the tonetic approach to intonation, AM does not analyse pitch movement as a coherent intonation contour, but as a series of individual events, such as pitch accents, phrase tones and boundary tones. The string of pitch events is described with reference to two level tones, High (H) and Low (L), and their configuration in a concrete segmental setting. Thus, the analysis of intonational structure remains maximally flexible while maintaining a minimum of descriptive categories. For example, a contour described as a fall in the British tradition may be analysed in the Pierrehumbert system as H\*+L, the star indicating which of the two tones is the central tone, in this case H, while the other tone 'leads' up to it or, as in this case, 'trails' behind.<sup>7</sup> If the pitch movement in-between the pitch accents and the phrase and boundary tones occurs across any number of unstressed syllables, that pitch movement is analysed merely as the transition from one phonologically significant event to another. Therefore, not all pitch values in a given utterance are of equal importance for the analysis of the phonological structure, but the interest centres on the structural focus points in the string of intonational events.

Pierrehumbert herself insists on an analysis of pitch movement in terms of discrete level tones, claiming a potential phonological 'grammar which generates the set of well-formed tonal sequences for an intonation phrase' (1980: 29). This 'grammar' consists of a boundary tone, followed by one or more pitch accents, a phrase accent and another boundary tone. Ladd (1996) introduces a modification of this taxonomy, suggesting that the notion of the nucleus, which is central to the tonetic approach but does not have a place in Pierrehumbert's system, is compatible with Pierrehumbert's 'grammar'. Ladd's grammar includes a boundary tone, one or more pre-nuclear accents, a nuclear accent, a phrase tone and a boundary tone. He adopts the tonetic definition of an intonation phrase that 'contours must consist obligatorily of one accent, which corresponds to the nucleus' (1996: 211), integrating it into the autosegmental system. However, he does so without accepting the constraint that the nucleus must be the last accent in an intonation contour. By analysis of certain Greek and

Romanian contours he shows convincingly that this constraint is the result of a bias towards Western European languages: 'The data ... show clearly that the essence of the nucleus is not its serial position but the fact that it is the most important accent from the point of view of focus' (1996: 217).

While the above description of intonation as a series of level tones and their transitions represents the autosegmental part of autosegmental-metrical phonology, metrical phonology is concerned with the relations and patterns of prominence in a given utterance. Liberman and Prince (1977) suggest representing prominence relations as a binary tree structure in which one part of the structure is strong and the other weak:



permit (verb)



permit (noun)

(examples from Ladd 1996: 51)

The above metrical structure may take on a more complex nature, involving different kinds of linguistic constituents, and reflecting a 'hierarchical rhythmic structuring that organizes the syllables, words, and syntactic phrases of a sentence' (Liberman and Prince 1977: 249). Prominence may be realized in a given sentence through the placement of stress, that is through an increase in acoustic loudness. The stress placement in an utterance serves as an indicator for the underlying rhythmic structure, or 'metrical grid':

The stress pattern of an utterance reflects the organisation of the syllables into a hierarchical metrical structure. This structure specifies abstract relations of prominence or strength between syllables, and between larger constituents such as words and phrases. (Ladd 1996: 59)

In addition to stress, a syllable can receive a pitch accent or edge tone. However, stress and intonational features, such as pitch accents and edge tones, are treated as two different levels of phonological analysis. The underlying assumption is that the intonation of an utterance is separate from its metrical structure. This implies that although there are structurally strong points in the metrical pattern of an utterance, this does not necessarily mean that they will receive intonational focus in the form of pitch accents, although this is frequently the case. The fact

that pitch accents do not always fall on the metrically strong syllables in the structure is explained via a comparison with music and its alignment to text. Much the same as in a vocal piece in which the strong syllables of the sung text do not always co-occur with the strongest rhythmical beat, but where there are certain adjustments to make if they do not, in speech, too, metrically strong syllables may be the expected locations for pitch accents, but instances of 'dissociations' do occur (Ladd 1996: 51ff).

While the above claims and findings of autosegmental-metrical phonology are mainly concerned with the analysis of phonological structures at various levels, there are works from within this theoretical framework which investigate some of the functions of intonation in discourse. Gussenhoven (1983: 383ff) mentions three different nuclear tones which he interprets with respect to speaker knowledge and background information. The sentence 'the house is on fire' is presented first with a fall on 'house':

The `HOUSE is on fire.

The fall on 'house' is interpreted as introducing the statement as future shared knowledge of two speakers. 'Its meaning could be paraphrased as "I want you to know that from now on I consider the house is on fire to be part of our Background".' Such a contour may be used if the sentence is intended as a warning or an inference. If the item 'house' occurs with a fall-rise contour, it is interpreted as already being of the shared information:

The ^HOUSE is on fire.

'The meaning could be paraphrased as "I want you to take note of the fact that the house is on fire is part of our Background".' In this instance, the modification could function as a reminder or as an expression of surprise. A third possibility is a rise on 'house':

The 'HOUSE is on fire.

'Its meaning can be paraphrased as "I will leave it up to you to determine whether we should establish this Variable as being part of our Background".' This contour may be a request for information, a guess, or an expression of surprise.

Pierrehumbert and Hirschberg (1990) are concerned with the meaning of intonation contours, and they give individual interpretations for each component of a contour. Thus, concerning pitch accents they claim that they convey information about the status of the individual discourse referents, modifiers, predicates and relationships specified by the lexical items with which the accents are associated (1990: 286).

The authors go on to suggest different interpretations for various types of pitch accents; for example, H\* marks items as new, while L\* is placed on items which 'S intends to be salient but not to form part of what S is predicating in the utterance' (1990: 29). Phrase accents are claimed to 'convey information at the level of the intermediate phrase', while boundary tones 'contribute information to the intonational phrase as a whole' (1990: 287).

While autosegmental-metrical phonology is an extremely illuminative tool for the analysis of experimental data and constructed examples, it has not been adopted in this study, which investigates the prosody of spontaneous conversation. It is rarely possible to reduce everyday spoken interaction to single functional planes such as the communication or retrieval of information. In the course of an ongoing conversation participants negotiate and accomplish interactional goals on many sequential levels: they are, for example, required to orient to the local placement of their turn subsequent to a previous turn from another speaker with respect to its grammatical, sequential and interactional relevancies; they have to design their turn in relation to longer sequential requirements, keeping in mind the conversational action which is being carried out; their contribution must be oriented to the make-up of the entire conversation; and of course they must design their turns in relation to more global social influences of co-text and context. In all these activities, prosody has a part to play, and the information structure of a given conversation is not always of primary significance.

Regarding the methodology of data collection and interpretation, AM-analyses are typically based on examples which were either produced in the phonetics laboratory or which are theoretically constructed; the data are subsequently interpreted solely with recourse to the analyst's (near-)native-speaker intuition. This book analyses recordings of natural conversations, and interpretations of the interactional functions of prosodic structures are arrived at through observation of the behaviour of the conversational participants themselves. Thus, an attempt is always made to base the interpretation of a given utterance not on the analyst's intuition, but on scrutiny of participants' reactions to specific linguistic phenomena.

With respect to the representation of phonological structures, the Pierrehumbert system has been applied to analyses of conversational data.<sup>8</sup> However, this study uses a transcription notation developed specifically for the purpose of handling spontaneous talk.<sup>9</sup>

### **Firthian prosodic analysis**

J.R. Firth's writings date back to the first half of the twentieth century, the most widely known paper with respect to prosodic analysis being his 'Sounds and Prosodies' (1948). Today, a growing number of phoneticians adopt Firthian Prosodic Analysis (FPA), or aspects of it, in order to further develop it in combination with insights gained from other linguistic and sociological theories.<sup>10</sup> Precursors of this approach are researchers at the Department of Language and Linguistic Science at the University of York, UK, which holds the Firthian Phonology Archive. Underlying Firth's approach to linguistics is his basic assumption that all language is part of the social process and should be studied as such. This stands in stark contrast to other linguistic theories which consider language a system independent of its application in the world of social actions.

According to Firth, linguistic analysis is always required to be capable of 'renewing the connection' (Firth 1957) between the language data and the social domain. Individual linguistic events, and, in prosodic analysis, phonetic events, are seen to be exponents of a variety of social, grammatical and other contexts, and are therefore analysed separately according to a given linguistic environment. Different contexts, but also different levels of linguistic analysis are referred to as systems of language, a perspective which differs noticeably from the Saussurean and generative theory of language as one system underlying all speech. Thus, FPA can be described as a polysystemic approach to the analysis of language.<sup>11</sup>

This notion of language informs FPA's approach to phonetics. In opposition to other theories, prosodic analysis does not assume the existence of abstract entities such as phonemes, which are realized as clusters of different phonetic parameters in different environments via phonological operations. Prosodic analysis 'is concerned with the distribution of phonological terms and their phonetic exponents at given places in structure' (Ogden 1995). Rather than explaining variations in the realization of a phoneme as 'allophones', FPA claims that different phonetic features are relevant at different contextual positions – that is in different 'systems' – and that they occur in various combinations, according to their environment. Kelly and Local (1989) call this the

'variable relevance' of phonetic parameters, and provide an example:

We should be prepared to accept any parameter or group of parameters as of phonological interest at particular points in structure. For example, **m** is nasal, voiced, bilabial, half-dark, pulmonic, non-lingual, non-lateral, lax, non-pharyngealised, continuant, non-creaky, extended, approximant, spread. Any one of these, or group of them, may be what is relevant. So, a non-lateral, non-lingual nasal is what this phonetic bundle is phonologically at a certain point; whilst elsewhere it is a voiced non-lingual lax continuant. It is not necessarily always a voiced bilabial nasal, phonologically. (Kelly and Local 1989: 100, emphasis in the original)

Thus, the notion of sound 'segment' is redundant, as a segment already consists of a cluster of phonetic features. It is the phonetic features themselves which are of interest. Elsewhere, Local and Ogden explain with respect to /o/:

There are phonological categories which are contrastive at stable places in structure, and phonetic parameters whose temporal extents coincide for a certain amount of time. It so happens that we can describe this bundle of phonetic parameters as [o], but there is no such 'object' in speech. [o] is simply a shorthand for describing a whole set of synchronous phonetic features. (Local and Ogden 1998: 23)

If an individual phonological parameter has a discernible function which affects any linguistic unit from the morpheme upwards in a specific position, context and, thus, system, it is called 'a prosody'. Thus, for example, a glottal stop is prosodic in this sense in the context of vowel-initiation in German (Firth 1948), but potentially irrelevant elsewhere; a high rise in pitch takes on a prosodic nature at the end of a turn-at-talk in Tyneside English, where it marks the end of the turn (Local and Ogden 1998: 12); nasalization is considered a prosody 'in languages in which a nasal consonant is always followed by a nasalized vowel and a nasalized vowel is only found after a nasal consonant' (Robins 1957: 193). The glottal stop in V-initial position in German and the high rise at the end of a turn in Tyneside English are both defined as functionally delimitative, or demarcative, since they occur at certain points in the structure, marking off the beginning or end of a linguistic unit. In contrast, nasalization is considered functionally integrative, since it extends

over a longer domain in the grammatical structure. Prosodies, in Firthian terms, can thus be distinguished according to the functional categories of delimitation and integration.

From the above examples it is clear that a prosody may be what is treated in other phonological theories as belonging in the domains of phonetics (glottal stop), prosody (intonation) or paralinguistics (voice quality). It is also apparent that the domain over which a given prosody spans out is variable from a single position (glottal stop) to a syllable, word or sentence (nasalization). What defines certain features as prosodies is not their extent but whether they 'characterize or delimit particular aspects of (the) structure' (Anderson 1985: 186). Compared to other phonological approaches, FPA can be described as a purely representational theory which works with only a single level of abstraction:<sup>12</sup>

FPA's main claim to being DECLARATIVE as opposed to derivational or procedural is based on its search for a single invariable phonological description of any given item (e.g. a lexeme or a piece delimited on grammatical grounds). The Firthian concern for invariability underlines the static nature of phonological descriptions produced by prosodic analysis. In FPA there are no rules, operations, or processes, therefore no ordering of these things. Phonetics is not the outcome of operating rules on structures. There are no changes, insertions, or deletions, nothing gets turned into anything else, replaced or altered, moved or spread, linked or delinked. Differences between related forms are commonly accounted for by a difference in statement of phonetic exponents for a piece of phonological material under differing structural conditions. (Ogden and Local 1994: 181, emphasis in the original)

The Firthian approach to phonology offers a number of ideological and methodological inspirations for current research on the prosody of natural conversation. Its perspective on language as inseparable from its natural context of social interaction, and its demand of all analysis to constantly 'renew the connection' with real-life language data foreshadow what linguists of the interactional and conversation analytic tradition today have established as one of their most central positions; this position is explicated below and has been highly influential to the present study.

Additionally, although the term 'prosody' will not be used in the Firthian sense of a demarcative or integrative functional category, what this study takes from FPA is the notion of the variable domain over

which prosodic parameters may be made relevant by participants in a conversation. Prosodic variations are analysed as equal if they are treated by participants as accomplishing a comparable phenomenon, irrespective of their conventionally phonological classification as segmental or suprasegmental. The same principle applies to sound production features. If they are made functionally, and thus linguistically, relevant in the course of the conversation, they are treated as 'prosodic', regardless of their canonical categorization as phonetic, prosodic or paralinguistic events. Finally, the current work avoids operational derivations from the phoneme-level, but represents and analyses the data on the level at which they can be located in discourse; thus, it follows FPA in its representational approach to phonetic material.

### **Dwight Bolinger**

In contrast to many of the above-mentioned approaches which postulate a deep-rooted link between intonational function and grammatical relationships, Bolinger (1986; 1989) considers intonation to be essentially independent of grammar:

Intonation and grammar are pragmatically but not linguistically interdependent. Neither can be used to define the other in any strict sense, but both cooperate in giving communicators a fix on their meaning. (1989: 67)

Bolinger describes intonation as 'part of a gestural complex whose primitive and still surviving function is the signalling of emotion' (1986: 195), 'a nonarbitrary, sound-symbolic system with intimate ties to facial expression and bodily gesture, and conveying, underneath it all, emotions and attitudes' (1989: 1). He analyses pitch movements with relation to the metaphorical notions of 'up' and 'down', linking intonational rises and falls to their emotional and attitudinal correlates, and thus treating intonation as an iconic representation of emotion. Bolinger's work is not directly associated with any of the three larger approaches described above, but his view on intonation as part of the human gestural system bears relation to the way in which prosodic patterns are analysed in later chapters.

### **The prosody of spontaneous conversation**

The approach to prosody adopted in this book differs from some of those described above in several respects. For example, it includes

prosodic parameters in addition to intonation, such as pitch register, loudness, speech rate, lengthening, rhythm and some aspects of voice quality and phonetic sound production. This will be particularly relevant in Chapter 2 on prosodic orientation and Chapter 3 on stylized prosodic orientation, where speakers are shown to be collaborating interactionally in all these prosodic domains. This study also differs from more traditional approaches to prosody in its analytic framework. It adopts the perspective that prosody, like all other linguistic phenomena, has to be studied in its natural environment of talk-in-interaction. While most research on prosody, or intonation, has been carried out via introspective and intuitive interpretation of either invented examples or experimental data, the present study investigates spontaneously occurring conversations, recorded during natural everyday interaction. However, it is not only the nature of the data themselves which is different, but also the motivation to derive all analyses solely from these data. For this book, spontaneous spoken interaction is the primary object of study, and prosody a domain for linguistic practices which allow interactants to accomplish specific actions in conversation. Thus, this study affiliates with areas of linguistics and sociology which take human interaction as the starting point of their investigation. Several related paradigms embrace this view and they provide the theoretical foundation of this work. These paradigms include conversation analysis, phonology of conversation, and interactional linguistics, all of which are introduced in the following sections. In a subsequent part of this chapter the linguistic units central to the study of prosody in conversation, the intonation unit and the turn, are introduced.

### **Paradigms**

This work is firmly rooted in the tradition of empirical research on talk-in-interaction, a tradition derived from the sociological framework of Ethnomethodology, founded by Harold Garfinkel and his *Studies in Ethnomethodology* (1967). The main analytical assumption of this approach is that social interaction is constantly constructed and made sense of by the interactants themselves, rather than given *a priori*, and interpretable irrespective of its social context. This entails two major insights: that social interaction, and with it social order, is constantly emerging; and that the sense-making processes which participants employ in the course of social interaction rely for a large part on the context-sensitivity of all signalling cues, or their 'indexicality' in ethnomethodological terms. All of the research paradigms below are founded on these assumptions.

*Conversation analysis*<sup>13</sup>

Conversation Analysis (CA) represents a view on social interaction as orderly and systematic, and language as a set of devices with which interactants achieve precisely timed, appropriate social actions in specific conversational environments. Central to this way of thinking is the notion that analysis should not be separate from and superimposed upon interaction, but should draw its categories, units and interpretations from the participants within the conversation themselves. Given CA's central interest in the structure of spontaneous talk, its only relevant object of study is naturally occurring conversation, which is recorded and subsequently transcribed. Any other form of data, such as questionnaires, interviews, experimental data or focus groups are not considered informative with respect to the order of everyday interaction, as in one way or another they do not reveal conversational structures in pure form.

The most fundamental interactional structure which conversation analysts have described is the turn-taking system (Sacks *et al.* 1974), which organizes the change in speakership in an ongoing conversation. As Sacks *et al.* have shown, it does so via a number of rules by which participants negotiate whether one speaker has completed his/her local contribution to the conversation or is still projecting more talk; and whether and when other, temporarily silent conversationalists may come in with contributions of their own. A turn can be defined as the contribution to ongoing talk by one speaker, before and after which other participants are speaking. This is an idealized characterization, of course, since turns are frequently overlapped by incoming talk from other speakers, broken off and continued after an interruption,<sup>14</sup> or, as we will see in Chapter 4, broken off by one participant and continued by another. All these phenomena make the definition of a turn less straightforward than it may seem at first sight.

Deriving from the notion of turn is another analytical category which conversation analysts have found helpful for the interpretation of talk-in-interaction: the turn constructional unit (TCU). A TCU is a stretch of talk after which speaker change can potentially occur. It ends in a transition relevance place (TRP), which is a point in the interactional structure at which other participants may take the floor. This means it is prosodically, syntactically and semantically complete (Ford and Thompson 1996). There are turns which contain a single TCU and so-called multi-unit turns during which a participant continues after one or more possible TRPs.

Another interactional structuring device which is itself structured is the conversational sequence:

Across all the different kinds of actions which people do through talk, are there any sorts of general patterns or structures *which they use* (and which we can describe) to co-produce and track an orderly stretch of talk and other conduct in which some course of action gets initiated, worked through, and brought to closure? If so, we will call them 'sequences'. (Schegloff forthcoming: 3; emphasis in the original)

A sequence minimally consists of two turns, in which case it typically forms an adjacency pair, such as a greeting followed by a greeting, or a repair initiation followed by a subsequent repair. The first and second turn in an adjacency pair are referred to as first pair part (FPP) and second pair part (SPP), respectively. Longer turn exchanges may also count as a sequence if they are held together by a single interactional achievement, or one common 'goal' among participants. Schegloff (forthcoming) shows, however, that such longer sequences frequently centre on adjacency pairs. Therefore, longer sequences are often expanded versions of this type of sequence, including pre-s, such as pre-invitations, pre-offers, and so on; inserts, such as post-first and pre-second inserts; or posts, such as assessments and other-initiated repair:

There *are* sequence organizations not based on adjacency pairs – for example, some forms of story-telling sequences, some forms of topic talk (although adjacency pairs may figure in such talk, even when not supplying its underlying organization), and quite possibly other ones not yet described ... But a very broad range of sequences in talk-in-interaction do appear to be produced by reference to the practices of adjacency pair organization, which therefore appears to serve as a resource for *sequence* construction comparable to the way turn-constructional units serve as a resource for *turn* construction. (Schegloff forthcoming: 3; emphasis in the original)

All of the above analytical assumptions are fundamentally relevant to the following chapters. The notions of turn and sequence are frequently invoked, and the claim that social interaction is highly organized is taken seriously and shown to be valid for the prosodic domain of spoken interaction. All attempts are made to base analytical interpretations solely on what can be observed in the behaviour of conversationalists themselves, and all the data used in this study come from everyday

environments and have been recorded from naturally occurring instances of talk. Prosody is seen to be a linguistic device with which interactants achieve relevant conversational actions in locally defined sequential environments.

### *Phonology for conversation*

Phonology for conversation is an approach from within linguistics which adopts conversation analytic methodology and Firthian Prosodic Analysis.<sup>15</sup> Local *et al.* (1985), Local *et al.* (1986), Local and Kelly (1986), Kelly and Local (1989), Local (1992; 1996; 2000; 2002a, b) and Wells and Peppé (1996) put forward an approach to phonetics and phonology which treats them as resources for conversation. The work published in this field focuses on the interactional functions of phonetic phenomena in spontaneous talk. One broad area of interest is the phonology of turn-taking, which so far has been described for three different varieties of English: London Jamaican (Local *et al.* 1985); Tyneside English (Local *et al.* 1986); and Ulster English (Wells and Peppé 1996). In those works, the phonetic features of turn delimitation are specified with respect to individual parameters such as pitch, loudness and tempo variations, vowel quality and duration, and pause. In addition to turn delimitation, other actions relating to turn-taking are analysed according to the phonetic features which conversationalists use to accomplish them, amongst them turn holding (Local and Kelly 1986), and turn continuation and restarting (Local 1992). A further focus for phonology for conversation are specific types of conversational actions, such as news receipts (Local 1996), the achievement of which is characterized by the phonetic delivery of the respective turns-at-talk. Kelly and Local (1989) propose phonology for conversation as the only legitimate way to pursue phonological description and analysis:

The first principle that underlies the way our work has been and is carried out is ... that phonetic records of spoken language material are the only serious starting point for phonological analysis and that they should be as detailed and accurate as it is possible for the investigator to make them ... For the hurly-burly of language situations in general it is *only* a record that is painstaking in its attention to detail that can hope to come to terms with what it is that plays a part at the phonological level in effective communication. (1989: 1f, emphasis in the original)

The above authors typically use the term 'phonetics' rather than 'prosody', as their work is inspired by Firthian Prosodic Analysis. Their

aim is a broad perspective on linguistic sound production which does not make analytical distinctions between segmental and suprasegmental aspects of speech. Concerning the demand for a phonological analysis based on naturally occurring conversation this line of research takes the same direction as interactional linguistics.

### *Interactional linguistics*

Although conversation analysis is deeply rooted in sociology, linguists have applied it to the study of language-in-use from early on. Indeed, Sacks *et al.* (1974: 703) explicitly call for linguistic contributions to conversational issues such as unit-projection in turn-taking. Since CA so far has dealt primarily with spoken language in interaction, a joint venture with linguistics suggests itself.<sup>16</sup> Yet, since the main body of traditional linguistic research investigates language with respect to its structural and distributional characteristics, and treats it as independent from its natural environment of social interaction, those linguists who are interested in a study of language as a tool for social action have to redefine their priorities, methods, data collection practices, and indeed their object of study. This new field of linguistic enquiry has been termed 'interactional linguistics'. Seminal volumes include Couper-Kuhlen and Selting (1996), Ochs *et al.* (1996), Ford and Wagner (1996), Selting and Couper-Kuhlen (2001) and Ford *et al.* (2002):

It is only recently that linguists, conversation analysts and anthropologists have become aware of what they stand to gain from joining forces. The fact is that the individual strengths of each discipline – technical description in linguistics, research methodology in conversation analysis and cultural breadth in anthropology – complement each other quite comfortably ... It is the conversation-analytic understanding of speech exchange as social interaction and the conversation-analytic tools of micro-analysis and participant-oriented proof procedures which are instrumental to the interactional linguistic enterprise. (Selting and Couper-Kuhlen 2001: 1ff)

The main interest of this approach is to view language as embedded in ordinary interaction and its structures as emergent from conversation, which is considered its natural habitat.<sup>17</sup> Linguistic phenomena are therefore discussed with respect to the interactional tasks and functions they accomplish in conversation; or vice versa, conversational actions are examined for the linguistic practices which can be employed for their achievement. All research in this area, however, works with the

underlying assumption that linguistic phenomena – be they known in traditional grammar, such as sentences and syntactic constructions, or discovered through detailed analysis of talk-in-interaction, such as discourse markers (Schiffrin 1987; Brinton 1996), left-dislocation (Geluykens 1992) or concessive patterning (Couper-Kuhlen and Thompson 1999; 2000) – are social practices which have emerged through time to fit specific conversational tasks.

So far, work in interactional linguistics has contributed to two major areas: phonetics/phonology and syntax. In both domains, research has focused on the signalling function of linguistic phenomena with relation to turn-taking, in particular to the projection and completion of turns and conversational actions. Both syntax and prosody have been found to be fundamental projecting resources, the first on a global scale, the latter locally (Selting 1996), and it is argued that it is precisely for the purpose of such projecting functions that they have remained flexible to a certain degree. Another large body of research has investigated individual linguistic phenomena in spontaneous conversation.

This book situates itself in Interactional Linguistics. It is concerned with prosody as a common resource not only for turn-projection but also for collaboration in various interactional environments. It seeks to contribute to the ongoing investigation of linguistic practices as central tools for human interaction, and of human interaction itself as collaboratively achieved by the members of a given society.

### **Linguistic units for the analysis of prosody in conversation**

Prior to an analysis of prosody in interaction we have to be clear about which linguistic units will be referred to as the relevant analytical categories. In the following, two units are briefly introduced: the intonation unit as the phonological unit at the centre of prosodic analysis, and the turn as the main unit in natural conversation.

#### *The intonation unit*

The most prominent prosodic unit which has been described in the past and which will facilitate our analyses here is the intonation unit, also referred to as the tone group (Crystal 1969; Couper-Kuhlen 1986; Cruttenden 1986; Selting 1995). An intonation unit has been characterized as 'a stretch of speech uttered under a single coherent intonation contour' (DuBois *et al.* 1993: 47). Its potential boundaries have been defined by Cruttenden (1986: 29ff). External boundaries include filled or unfilled pausing; anacrusis, that is acceleration on the unstressed syllables preceding the first accent; lengthening of the final syllable,

irrespective of its degree of stress; and a change in pitch movement on unstressed syllables. An internal criterion for the determination of a potential intonation unit is the existence of at least one stressed syllable which carries prominent pitch movement.

Each intonation unit minimally consists of a nucleus, that is one (most) prominently accented syllable, with prominence relating to pitch movement, syllable duration and loudness, either as independent parameters or, more typically, in combination with one another. Commonly the lexical item carrying the nucleus is part of the semantically most significant material in the tone group. The nucleus has frequently been claimed to be the last accented syllable in an intonation unit, although Ladd (1996) has shown that this claim cannot be sustained across languages. Similarly, my own practice of transcribing natural conversation has taught me that a given intonation unit is by no means restricted to one nucleus, but may carry two or more syllables with equally prominent stress. I am also aware that the very act of presenting a turn at talk as a succession of intonation units may be a mere analytical tool. Orientation by participants to such a unit has not been shown empirically, and must be left for future research. However, there are tentative signs in the present work that interactants do orient to intonation units, and transcripts have been ordered as a succession of tone groups.

From the nucleus onwards the pitch movement of the intonation unit is classified as either turn-final or non-final. These notions relate to perceptive finality: does the end of an intonation unit project more talk from the same speaker, or does it signal the end of a turn? In the varieties of English considered here, turn finality has traditionally been considered as occurring in two forms: either as a low fall (beginning with the nuclear pitch movement) to the bottom of the speaker's voice range, or as a high rise from the nucleus onwards. Non-final intonation units have frequently been described as ending either in a fall-to-mid, a slight rise or level intonation. Szczepek Reed (2002; 2004) has shown, however, that the relation between pitch movement and turn-finality is a more complex one. Falls-to-mid, level pitch and sometimes even slight rises can co-occur with turn finality under specific interactional circumstances.

### *The turn*

In their seminal article, Sacks *et al.* (1974) introduced the unit which since then has been central to research on conversational interaction: the turn-at-talk. A turn is a syntactically, pragmatically and prosodically complete contribution to an ongoing conversation. It is typically produced by a single speaker, although Chapter 4 shows that a turn can also be produced by two or more conversationalists working together.

From the analyst's retrospective point of view on recorded conversations, the identification of turn delimitation is mostly unproblematic. A turn begins when a speaker starts talking, and it ends when a speaker has stopped. For the conversationalists in situ, however, the issue is not always as clear. They have to rely on various projecting mechanisms in the prosodic, syntactic and semantico-pragmatic delivery of their co-participant's speech in order to determine whether a current turn is coming to an end.<sup>18</sup> Routinely, this decision focuses around points in an interlocutor's speech which could potentially be turn endings, that is the transition relevance places (TRPs). As described earlier (p. 23ff), conversation analysis calls those stretches of talk which potentially constitute a turn, turn constructional units (TCUs):

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' ... 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).

... 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. (Schegloff 1996a: 55, emphasis in the original)

The concept of TCUs and TRPs is potentially problematic if scrutinized. Jefferson (1978) shows that in certain conversational activities such as story telling, speakers negotiate a longer turn space at the beginning of the activity, after which they legitimately hold the floor across many TCUs. Even though these TCUs can be analysed as locally complete, the overriding activity of story-telling temporarily annuls the right for participants to come in after each TCU.

More theoretically, the postulation of TCUs can be criticized from within the conversation analytic framework itself. If a line of analysis is committed to the notion of members' categories, which prescribes the reduction of all analysis to those categories which are treated as such by participants themselves, it seems that only the treatment of a conversational space by a participant as turn-final would qualify for turn-finality, not a theoretical possibility of turn transition. Schegloff (1996a: 116f) addresses a related issue, claiming that practices such as 'possible invitations' or 'possible complaints' are,

describable (practices) of talk-in-interaction which (are) 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.

However, as the construction of a turn relies on a wide variety of local and global linguistic and other resources, and as the notion of 'turn' encompasses a much broader range of possible realizations than does, for example, the notion of 'invitation', to speak of possible turns, or TCUs, occasionally causes problems for an interpretation which attempts to rely strictly on participant orientation. Yet, at other times, the notion of the TCU may bring to light structural matters concerning conversational sequences. An essential characteristic of turns is that, like sentences, they are infinitely expandable (Selting 1996). A turn can minimally consist of a monosyllabic word, as shown in lines 2–4 in the following excerpt from a conversation among friends:

(1)

South Carolina

- 1       JA:   and now south carOLINA or sOMething.  
 2  -> AN:   YEAH?  
 3  -> JA:   YEAH.  
 4  -> MA:   HUH?  
 5       JA:   i hAve the address upSTAIRS.

The turns in lines 2–4 above consist of monosyllabic words, which are intonationally, pragmatically and syntactically complete. A longer turn may consist of a single intonation unit containing more than one word, as in the following exchange from a private telephone call:

(2)

Tom

- 1  -> OZZ: TOM there please,  
 2       LES: YES,

Finally, turns can be composed of more than one intonation unit, and of more than one syntactic gestalt,<sup>19</sup> as for example in the following

instance, taken from a family birthday party:

(3)

Baking cookies

- 1 -> KE: <<h> hihhi,>>  
 2 -> .h I can TELL;  
 3 -> my FIRSt saturday in my nEW apartment; =  
 4 -> I:'ll be CELEbrating and i'll go; (.)  
 5 -> <<all> WHAT am i gonna do;  
 6 -> WHAT am i gonna do;>  
 7 -> and THEN i'll go; .hh  
 8 -> <<h+ff> i'm baking COOKie::s ->

## The data

The data for this study have been collected from roughly 52 hours of recorded conversations. Approximately half of these data are private interactions, face-to-face and on the telephone. They were recorded in the USA (Minnesota and California), and the South of England; some of the North American data have since appeared as part of the Santa Barbara Corpus of Spoken American English, and are available via the Linguistic Data Consortium (LDC). Corresponding to the geographic areas from which the data originate are the regional varieties of English spoken by the participants, although conversations in which one or more interactants use a strong regional accent have been generally avoided. All of the conversations occur among friends and family members, the face-to-face interactions typically take place around a dinner table. The second half of the corpus holds recordings of radio phone-in programmes, which are all conducted in an informal, almost intimate atmosphere, where both hosts and callers maintain a casual, 'chatty' stance throughout. Some of the phone-ins focus on a specific issue. One such broadcast is a phone-in programme from San Francisco during the first three nights of the 1991 Gulf war. Another one is the 'Barbara Carlson and Friends Show' from Minneapolis, which highlights a different subject matter each day, including mayoral elections, the local university administration, or 'death and dying'. One radio-show from Manchester, England is a quiz show called 'Brainteaser'.

## Preview

The following three chapters contain empirical studies of the conversational phenomenon of prosodic orientation. Chapter 2 introduces,

describes and investigates the basic form, beginning with an analysis of the formal aspects of prosodic orientation, differentiating three possibilities: prosodic matching, prosodic non-matching and prosodic complementation. Subsequent to the formal analysis, the interactional environments for prosodic orientation are described, and the sequential structures of individual sequences are explored.

Chapter 3 presents stylized prosodic orientation, a highlighted and prosodically exaggerated version of prosodic matching, which is used by participants to draw attention to their orienting turns. The chapter sums up previous research on stylization before it presents three types of stylized prosodic orientation: musical intervals, marked prosody and prosodic stylization involving verbal and prosodic repetition. In the second half of the chapter, interactional environments for stylized prosodic orientation are analysed, and specific actions which prosodic stylization can be used to accomplish are investigated.

Chapter 4 analyses the practice of collaborative productions, which involve a further sub-form of prosodic orientation in addition to the matching, non-matching and complementation described in Chapter 2. Collaborative productions offer speakers an opportunity to work together in producing a prosodic and syntactic unit. The chapter gives an overview of previous literature, before it analyses the phenomenon according to its formal characteristics. Prosodic and syntactic projection and various types of collaborative incomings are differentiated according to their prosodic and syntactic make-up. For both the prosodic and the syntactic domain a distinction is made between completing and extending a prior speaker's utterance. Subsequently, collaborative productions are analysed as non-competitive early incomings with recourse to French and Local's (1983; 1986) model of the management of interruptions. The chapter then shows a number of interactional environments for collaborative productions, and introduces potential interactional achievements in concrete conversational sequences. A last section considers the way in which collaborative productions are received in third-turn position.

Chapter 5 offers a summary and a conclusion, and suggests potentials for further research.

# 2

## Prosodic Orientation

### Introduction

Prosody has been widely shown to be a relevant parameter for conversation.<sup>1</sup> Participants show their awareness and recognition of other speakers' prosody by designing their own talk according to the relevancies opened up by the prosodic design of previous turns. For example, they orient to another participant's prosodic turn-completion, as it co-occurs with other sequential, syntactic and semantico-pragmatic completion signals, by coming in with their own next turn; they interpret a syntactically complete statement as a question on the basis of its rising final intonation; and they recognize another speaker's held glottal stop as a turn holding signal. From these examples it can be said that participants 'orient' to previous speakers' prosody in a basic, conversation analytic sense of the term, as described by Hutchby and Wooffitt (1998: 15):

Throughout the course of a conversation or other bout of talk-in-interaction, speakers display in their sequentially 'next' turns an understanding of what the 'prior' turn was about ... We describe this as a next-turn-proof-procedure, and it is the most basic tool used in CA to ensure that analyses explicate the orderly properties of talk as *oriented-to* accomplishments of participants, rather than being based merely on the assumptions of the analyst. (Emphasis mine)

The concept of prosodic orientation as it is introduced here, however, is a narrower one: prosodic orientation denotes orientation in the prosodic domain alone. It is the conversational activity of displaying awareness of another speaker's prosody in the prosodic design of one's

own next turn. Thus, prosodic orientation does not encompass the wide range of conversational next actions which may have been made relevant by previous prosodic designs; neither does it entail other reactions to a previous speaker's prosodic delivery, such as laughter<sup>2</sup> or meta-linguistic comments;<sup>3</sup> nor does this study contribute to what has become known as accommodation theory (see for example Giles 1973; Giles *et al.* 1973), which is concerned with speakers' gradual change of regional accent, depending on the accent spoken by their co-participants. Prosodic orientation is concerned solely with an orientation to previous prosody which is manifest in the prosodic pattern of a next speaker's turn.

The next section takes a formally descriptive approach to the phenomenon in question and classifies it according to its phonological qualities. Four broad types of prosodic orientation have emerged from the data. Interactants may display prosodic orientation by matching previous speakers' prosodic design, or by a marked non-matching of prosody. Participants may also complement a prior turn with a second, structurally related prosodic design, or they may continue previously unfinished prosodic patterns. All instances of the last type, prosodic continuation of a previously incomplete prosodic design, co-occur with syntactic completion or extension of a previous speaker's syntax, and are described in Chapter 4 under the term 'collaborative productions'. The second part of the chapter analyses interactional environments for prosodic orientation, both with relation to specific conversational actions, and more global sequential positioning. Previous research on prosodic orientation is scarce, such that discussion of existing work has been integrated into the presentation of individual phenomena in the respective sub-sections.

## **Types of prosodic orientation**

The entire collection of prosodic orientations for this study consists of just over 600 sequences. In order to find instances of prosodic orientation, the data corpus was searched for any two adjacent turns which were employed by participants in a prosodically orienting manner. The collection showed that with respect to conversational structure, prosodically orienting turns are typically responding seconds, rather than sequence initiating turns.

Some prosodically orienting practices, such as prosodic matching and non-matching, may be accomplished with a variety of prosodic parameters, such as pitch, loudness, speech rate, voice quality and phoentic

sound production; while others, such as prosodic complementation and prosodic continuation, are restricted to speakers' deployment of pitch.

### Prosodic matching

Prosodic matching refers to the activity of copying a previous speaker's prosodic pattern. It has been found to occur with relation to intonation contour, pitch register, pitch step-ups, loudness, speech rate, voice quality and sound production. Prosodic matching may involve one of these parameters individually, or a combination of prosodic features. It is by far the most frequent type of prosodic orientation to be found in the data. One kind of prosodic matching has already been examined in full, and is therefore not covered in this book. Rhythmic integration of other speakers' talk into one isochronous pattern has received close attention from Couper-Kuhlen (1993) and Auer *et al.* (1999):

Participants are sensitive to their interlocutor's rhythm and indeed are able to 'tune in' to it with enough precision for an isochronous pattern to arise across turns. The pattern is created through a pooling of appropriately timed prominences by two or more speakers ... Having a common rhythm counts as a display of mutual endeavour; it turns the sequence of turns into a conversational 'duet' (Falk 1980) with speech rhythm serving as a unifying frame. (Auer *et al.* 1999: 59)

Prosodic matching of some of the other above-mentioned parameters has been described for certain conversational contexts. For example, 'pitch concord' was described by Brazil *et al.* (1980) who found speakers to be employing the same pitch for 'the termination choice of the final tone unit of one move and the initial key choice of the next move' (1980: 75). Pitch concord is presented by Brazil *et al.* as a particularity of openly hierarchical interactions, such as teacher/pupil or doctor/patient discourse. This phenomenon is not in complete overlap with what below is introduced as matching of pitch register (p. 42 *ff*), as pitch concord is only concerned with harmony between the end of one turn, typically its nucleus, and the beginning of a successive turn, mostly only its onset. Our instances of prosodically orienting next turns involve a matching of the overall pitch register across at least one TCU. We also describe the phenomenon for naturally informal conversations without emphasis on power relations between participants.<sup>4</sup>

Prosodic matching is also similar to a form of prosodic replication which Couper-Kuhlen (1998) calls 'the phenomenon of "chiming in" '. It occurs in reported speech sequences in which 'recipients participate in

the voicing of a particular figure' (1998: 10). Klewitz (1998) likewise discovers that 'different speakers are found to use the same prosodic design for a certain character' during collaborative reported speech (1998: 38).

Schegloff (1998) has analysed a form of 'negotiation over pitch level' in telephone openings, while Cowley (1998) uses the term 'pitch matching' to describe similar frequency ranges employed by Italian speakers during animated conversation. Couper-Kuhlen (1996) examines the relation between matching in pitch register and verbal repetition in quoting and mimicry: '(Speakers) use this kind of prosodic repetition together with a high degree of verbal repetition to imitate, and at the same time critically comment on, another speaker' (1996: 401). However, prosodic matching as such has not yet been investigated as a distinct phenomenon. In the following, orientation to individual prosodic parameters is presented through analyses of conversational data.

#### *Prosodic matching of intonation contours*

The most frequent form of prosodic matching is the matching of intonation contours, and our data corpus holds 251 clear instances. An intonation contour is a pitch movement which can be heard as a coherent whole, and is transcribed in most transcripts below as an intonation unit. In the case of prosodic matching a second participant repeats the intonation contour produced by an immediately previous speaker in his/her own next turn, irrespective of verbal repetition, repetition of syntactic structure, or semantic content.

A first instance of prosodic matching of an intonation contour is illustrated in example (1), below. The recording is of a Northern English radio phone-in programme, the host is Dick Hatch. Caller Mark has been talking about a new book, the author of which suggests that the Nazi criminal Rudolf Hess, then still alive and imprisoned in Berlin, is not really Rudolf Hess but an impersonator:

(1)

#### **Who the heck**

- |   |        |                               |
|---|--------|-------------------------------|
| 1 | DH:    | well-                         |
| 2 |        | YEAH;                         |
| 3 |        | ALRIGHT then.                 |
| 4 |        | let me ASK you.               |
| 5 |        | if it Isn't HESS,             |
| 6 | ->     | <<h> ↑whO the `heck 'IS `it.> |
| 7 | -> MA: | <<h> ↑i've `nO 'I'DE`a.>      |

- 8 (0.5)  
 9 [well you sEE-  
 10 DH: [but I mean how HOW can you persuADE somebody;  
 11 to spend dOnkey's years (.) in PRlson;  
 12 withOUT sort of kicking up and saying; (.)  
 13 hang ON a minute,  
 14 I'm nOt HESS.

In line 7 the caller can be seen to copy Dick Hatch's previous intonation contour (line 6): both speakers start with a high onset on their first syllable (*who; I've*), then produce a steep declination line across the next syllable/s (*the heck; no*), rise on the following syllables (*is; ide-*) and fall on the last syllable (*it; -a*). Both turns also match in their high pitch register. This instance of prosodic matching is employed with a second pair part, in this case a reply to a question. Hatch's doubts concerning the truth value of the book in question may explain the animated prosodic and verbal design of his question *who the heck is it*. It is possible that such animation calls for a similar prosodic pattern from the subsequent speaker. Mark's choice of a strongly animated prosody in his turn *I've no idea* is a repetition of Hatch's prosodic design, both in intonation contour and pitch register.

After a pause of half a second, both Mark and the host begin to speak simultaneously. The pause is potential evidence that Mark had intended to give up the floor after the prosodically orienting reply. Hatch also treats the end of Mark's orienting turn and the following pause as a transition relevance place. This shows that both speakers treat the prosodic orientation as a turn-ending activity.

A second example comes from the recording of a radio phone-in programme in Minneapolis, the host is Barbara Carlson, the caller is Tim. Peter, whom Carlson addresses in her first turn, is the producer of the programme:

(2)

**Tim good morning**

- 1 BA: YES peter?  
 2 (.)  
 3 LINE TWO;  
 4 you want me to go to LINE TWO,=  
 5 TIM.  
 6 good MORning.

- 7 -> TI: <<h> 'HI `BARbra,>  
 8 -> BA: <<h> 'HELL`o TIM,>=  
 9 TI: <<l> haven't tAlked to you in a LO::NG TI:ME.>

The turns in question are lines 7 and 8 in the transcript, where Barbara Carlson copies Tim's contour on *hi Barbra* in her turn *hello Tim*. Both contours contain a rise-fall-rise movement, with a first rise on the onset syllables (*hi*; *hell-*), a fall on the following syllables (*barb-*; *-o*) and a rise at the end of the intonation unit (*-ra*; *tim*). Again both turns are produced in high pitch register. This matching of intonation contours can be visualized in the frequency analysis in Figure 2.1.

This instance of prosodic matching occurs in a telephone opening sequence which Barbara Carlson has opened with her turn *Tim good morning* (lines 5–6). Instead of joining in with the prosodic design of this utterance, a falling pitch movement, Tim produces a new contour (line 7). His new and non-orienting intonational pattern contextualizes his turn as the beginning of a new greeting sequence, rather than a second pair part following Barbara's potential first greeting.<sup>5</sup> This makes a second greeting from Barbara Carlson conditionally relevant: Tim's distinctive rising-falling-rising contour, produced in a high pitch register, seems to trigger the expectation that it be followed by a similar pitch

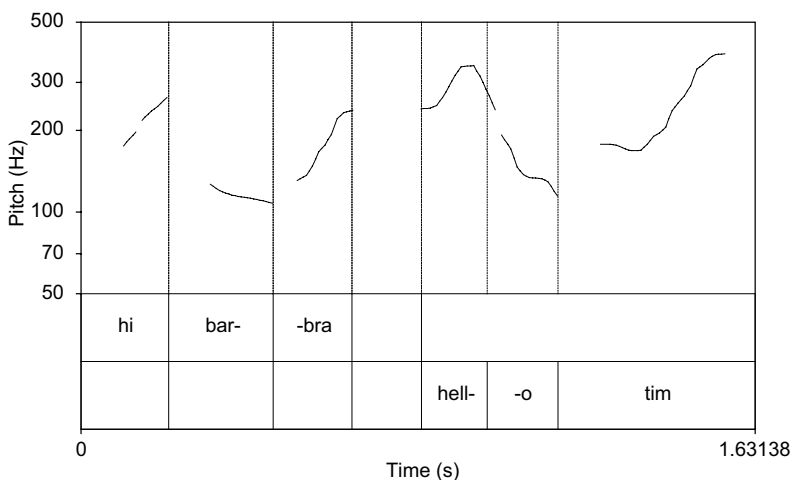


Figure 2.1 Prosodic matching of intonation contours

pattern and register. Both are matched in Barbara Carlson's subsequent turn (line 8).

It is important to note that Carlson chooses the same contour, but not the same verbal material in her return greeting: instead of Tim's *hi* she says *hello*. This choice gives her the opportunity to match the number of syllables in her turn with those used by Tim. The disyllabic greeting token *hello*, combined with the monosyllabic name *Tim* matches the three syllables in Tim's previous turn, that is the monosyllabic greeting token *hi* and her disyllabic name, pronounced *Barbra*.

Using the same prosody with a different choice of words is interactionally distinct from repetition in both domains, verbal and prosodic. The data corpus holds a comparable example, taken from the Manchester radio phone-in programme 'Brainteaser'. Dave Ward is the host, Gary the caller:

(3)

Hi Gary<sup>6</sup>

- |   |        |                                    |
|---|--------|------------------------------------|
| 1 | DA:    | flrstly to BOLTon.                 |
| 2 |        | and GArY mcDONald.                 |
| 3 |        | ˆHI ˆGArY,                         |
| 4 | -> GA: | <<all> ˆHI!>                       |
| 5 | -> DA: | <<all + nasal> ˆHI!                |
| 6 |        | how ARE ya.>                       |
| 7 | GA:    | nOt so bad THANKS,                 |
| 8 | DA:    | ˆGOOD.                             |
| 9 |        | whereabouts in BOLTon do you work. |

Similar to the above example, Dave produces a first greeting (*hi Gary*) after having introduced the caller to the listening audience (lines 1–2). To this, Gary responds with the same greeting token as Dave, *hi*. Prosodically, the two turns do not match. Dave produces a rise on his onset *hi*, followed by a fall on the subsequent accent *ga-* and then another rise on the unaccented syllable *-ry*. Gary's *hi* contains a rise-fall, and is produced as a very short syllable, that is with high speech rate.

It is to this turn that Dave orients, matching both his contour and speech rate in his next turn *hi* (line 5). He uses the same short rising-falling contour, with the addition of nasal voice quality. By this time, the same greeting token has been used three times, as opposed to extract (2), where the three greeting turns contain three different greeting tokens (*good morning*, *hi*, *hello*). While Barbara Carlson's first turn

not only greets but also introduces the caller, Dave Ward has already mentioned Gary in his opening turn (line 2), such that his turn *hi Gary* can indeed be interpreted as a first greeting.

Another difference lies in the function of the hosts' third greeting. Although there is no change in the choice of words, David's second use of *hi* does more than just greet back. It takes on an element of non-seriousness which is communicated through the nasalization, and thereby conveys a meta-communicative stance. There is a light sense of mockery in David's third use of the token, which seems to refer to Gary's previous turn *hi*. A possible explanation for this ironic stance is Gary's deployment of a greeting which neither prosodically orients to Dave's turn, nor repeats the personal address form (line 3): while Dave addressed Gary by his name, Gary does not do so, which in combination with the unusually quick, and non-orienting prosodic delivery is unconventional. Amongst participants there seems to exist an expectation that a second greeting follows the pattern of the first, both in prosodic delivery and in verbal form. This discrepancy possibly triggers Dave's ironic repetition.

Gary's non-orienting second greeting also seems to make a third greeting token relevant. Thus, Dave's light sense of irony on his prosodically orienting greeting could be a subtle comment either on the way in which Gary said *hi*, that is in a very fast, almost clipped fashion, or on the fact that he has indeed already greeted Gary, but has not been treated as if he had done so.

A sequential difference between the two extracts lies in the development after the third greeting from the host. In (2), Tim good morning, there is a speaker change after Barbara's last greeting (line 9, *haven't talked to you in a long time*), whereas in (3), Hi Gary, Dave continues with his own turn (*how are ya*).

#### *Prosodic matching of pitch step-ups*

Another parameter which speakers have been found to match frequently is the pitch step-up, that is a sharp rising movement on one syllable followed by a steep drop in pitch on the same or next syllable. A recognizable matching of pitch step-ups does not necessarily have to involve the same absolute Hertz value. We perceive an orientation as soon as both speakers cover roughly the same pitch range between the bottom and top value of the step-up movement, relative to the participants' voice range.<sup>7</sup> There are 76 unambiguous instances of pitch step-up matchings in the data corpus. One example is the following recording of a radio phone-in programme with Leo Laporte as host on the first night

of the 1991 Gulf War:<sup>8</sup>

(4)

**Dumb**

- 1 LE: <<1> DUStin on the line from Antioch;=  
 2 YOU'RE on the giant sixty eight knbr.>  
 3 DU: you GOT me.  
 4 LE: GOT you dustin,  
 5 DU: how ye DOin lEO,  
 6 LE: thAnks for CALLing.  
 7 GOOD.  
 8 DU: uh i've an oPINion question for you.  
 9 LE: <<all+1> aRIGHT;>  
 10 DU: is (.) the s sad↑DAM hussEin.  
 11 is he is he PLAYing naIve?  
 12 or is he just STU[pid.  
 13 LE: [is he jUst DUMB.  
 14 DU: <<laughs>>  
 15 LE: bOY BEATS ME.  
 16 -> he's ↑NOT dumb;  
 17 <<all> i'll tell you something;>  
 18 -> DU: <<h> ↑NO he's[↑NOT dumb;>  
 19 LE: [he's NOT DUMB.  
 20 -> DU: he ↑cAn't be DUMB i mean,  
 21 LE: but[he is  
 22 -> DU: [the ↑POwer he has.  
 23 -> LE: he ↑MIGHT be crAzy, (.  
 24 [uh:.  
 25 -> DU: [↑HITler was crAzy,  
 26 -> LE: he ↑MIGHT be crazy,  
 27 uh: you have the mA:n is living in a BUNker, (.)

Leo's first pitch step-up occurs in an answer to an earlier question from Dustin (lines 11ff). His response contains a step-up on the syllable *not* in line 16 (*he's not dumb*). Dustin orients to this by producing two matching step-ups (line 18) in his agreeing turn *no he's not dumb*, and two additional ones in subsequent turns (lines 20 and 22).

The second part of Dustin's utterance (line 18) is overlapped by Leo's repetition of his own material, however without the earlier pitch step-up (*he's not dumb*, line 19). In the immediately following turn (line 20),

Dustin begins to elaborate. Although Dustin is in the process of delivering a turn, Leo comes in with a continuation of his previous utterance (*but he is*, line 21), again without the step-up, which Dustin by this time has produced three times. Dustin does not allow Leo to interrupt, however, and continues, again with a pitch step-up (*the power he has*, line 22). Following this, Leo orients to the pitch step-ups again, in his line *he might be crazy* (line 23). The impression from this point onwards is of a pitch step-up being passed back and forth between the two speakers (lines 25–26).

It seems that by joining in the string of pitch jumps, Leo succeeds in regaining the floor, which he has lost earlier in the course of his answer to Dustin's question. This type of alignment with a specific prosodic form in the turn of another speaker is different from other types of competition for the floor. Interruptions, for example, have been said to involve higher loudness and pitch from the illegitimate incomer, and higher loudness only on the side of the speaker who legitimately holds the floor (French and Local 1986). In the above sequence, Leo manages to return to his role of primary speaker by aligning prosodically with his co-participant in continuing the list of pitch jumps, rather than through the prosodically non-aligning higher and louder delivery typical of other fights for the floor.

In addition to the prosodic matching that is created by passing back and forth a particular prosodic design, other forms of alignment can be found in this extract. Dustin's reply to Leo's opening is not a conventional greeting token but the untypical *you got me* (line 3). It establishes an informal stance between the two participants, which Leo takes up in his reply *got you Dustin*. The verbal repetition of the unconventional and informal greeting creates familiarity between the two from the very beginning of the conversation. For an additional instance of an orientation in pitch step-up see extract (15), Shaken, below (p. 60), on prosodic non-matching.

#### *Prosodic matching of pitch register*<sup>9</sup>

In contrast to the single syllable that is being matched in the pitch step-ups, matching of pitch register covers a more extended stretch of talk, denoting a second participant's repetition of overall high or low pitch range. Couper-Kuhlen (1996) has shown that participants are acutely aware of each other's pitch register to the point that they distinguish between relative and absolute matching in cases of quoting and mimicking the speech of others. Participants also match their pitch register in several other conversational environments, as the extracts below will show. The corpus holds 64 clear cases.

A first instance comes from a family dinner conversation. Beverly is planning to travel to Australia, a trip that her sister Martha and brother-in-law Walter have taken before. Lines 12–18 refer to a bag which an Australian relative has given Martha and Walter to bring Beverly back as a present. By the time the transcript begins, the bag has been referred to several times in the conversation, and Beverly seems to have it in front of her:

(5)

Nice

- 1 BE: do you have to have a HEALTH certificate. h.  
 2 (1.1)  
 3 MA: yes [you  
 4 BE: [you de  
 5 MA: no they they you get pro˘VIDed with that,  
 6 when you go IN.  
 7 BE: OH.  
 8 DA: If you can WALK, (.)  
 9 you're HEALthy.  
 10 BE: .h.h.h.h.h  
 11 (-)  
 12 -> <<extra h> Oh Isn't ↑that NI:CE ↓though.>  
 13 (.)  
 14 -> MA: <<extra h> YE:S;>  
 15 WA: VErY nice.  
 16 ((dishes))  
 17 -> MA: <<extra h> there you ˘ARE you see;=  
 18 -> i carried it ˘A:LL the way BACK [FO:R YOU:,>  
 19 WA: [cause it's a constant  
 20 damn NUisance;  
 21 that you're you're suddenly called upon for  
 PASSports or.  
 22 BE: YEAH;  
 23 WA: called upon for TICKets.

Line 12 shows Beverly opening up an insertion sequence concerning the bag. The verbal praise, *nice*, is not in itself very enthusiastic. It is the various contextualization cues that give the utterance its weight: the high falsetto pitch register displays great animation, and the discourse marker 'oh' re-establishes the present as an item worthy of

renewed attention, in spite of it's having been around for a while, physically and conversationally.

Martha signals agreement after a micropause (*yes*, line 14), not only with the verbal content of Beverly's turn, but also with the enthusiasm behind it. She matches her pitch register with Beverly's and also speaks in a falsetto voice. Again, as in extract (4), pitch matching co-occurs with an agreement. Walter also agrees, but does not adapt his register (line 15). However, as if to make up for the lack of enthusiasm in his prosodic delivery, he inserts the intensifier *very* on the lexical level.

After a 2-second pause, during which we hear only eating and clattering noises, Martha continues to speak at a high pitch in her next utterance (lines 17–18), which initially seems rather unmotivated. Why should she choose to continue her alignment in pitch register after an elongated silence? A possible interpretation lies in the interactional stance of the insertion sequence. The previous sequence had been started by Beverly in a serious key,<sup>10</sup> with her question whether one needs a health certificate to travel to Australia. Martha treats this question as a request for information and responds (lines 3, 5 and 6). Beverly acknowledges this as news, and displays slight surprise (*oh*, line 7). Subsequently, Beverly's husband Daniel comes in with a sarcastic comment about the presumed laxity of airport staff in giving out health certificates (lines 8–9); the comment gains sarcastic weight from the fact that all four conversationalists are pensioners. This change in key from seriousness to sarcasm receives a reaction only from Beverly (line 10). Her laughter is very hoarse, showing her to be rather appreciative of the joke. Nobody else reacts.

Beverly's topic change to the bag (*isn't that nice*), and its extreme pitch register introduces a new key again. She does not continue Daniel's sarcasm concerning the casual handling of health certificates, but neither does she return to the seriousness of the conversation before Daniel's comment. Her choice of key is a light one, possibly functioning as a bridge between the earlier seriousness and the subsequent sarcasm. Her enthusiasm for the present, displayed through the high pitch register, is an important part of this bridging move.

By joining in this high register, Martha signals that she also is taking part in the insertion sequence, and that she is co-participating in the key that Beverly has chosen. Walter, on the other hand, does not join in. He does not take up the high register, but continues with the earlier, more serious talk about documents required at the airport (lines 19–23).

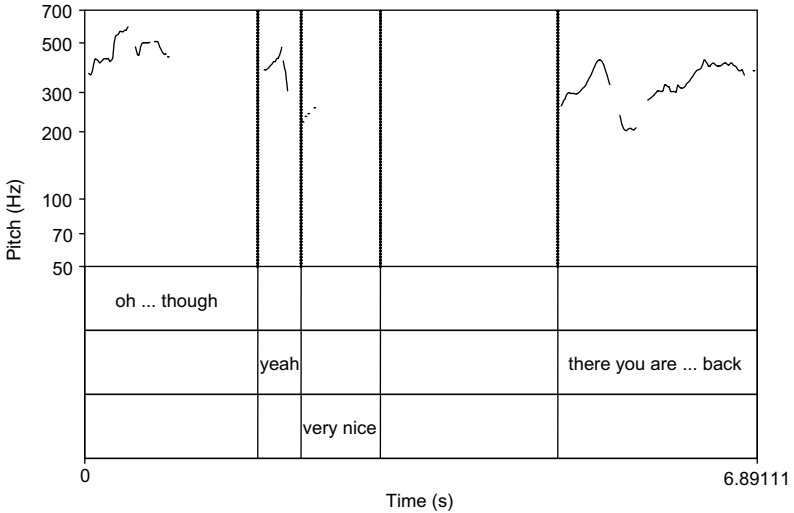


Figure 2.2 Prosodic matching of pitch register

A different interpretation altogether could suggest that Martha's prosodic orientation to her sister's pitch register, and the alignment it potentially communicates, neutralizes a comment which might otherwise be taken as a reproach (*there you are you see I carried it all the way back for you*). The frequency analysis in Figure 2.2 shows the two sisters' matching of pitch register. Walter's turn *very nice* does not provide a satisfactory reading, while Martha's utterance *for you* occurs in overlap with Walter's *cause it's*, and has therefore been omitted.

A further instance of pitch register matching is the following. Anne, a caller to Barbara Carlson's phone-in programme, has tried to launch a complaint about organizations which offer courses to prepare high school students for their college entrance exam. Carlson does not agree with the notion that this is something to complain about:

(6)

**I don't either**

- 1 BA: <<h> do you know what I would DO as a PARENT,
- 2 AN: hm;
- 3 BA: and I have been a pARENT;>
- 4 .h I'd sEND the ch- uh CHILD to one of those cOURses.=
- 5 =because i DO thInk;

- 6 .h that they KNOW:: the type of questions that are On  
 7 that s a t s- c- s- course,  
 8 or uh that s a t TEST,  
 9 .hh a:nd u:h i think it's imPORTant for your kids to do as  
 10 wEll as they cAn.  
 11 AN: .hh we-  
 12 BA: [and-  
 13 AN: [I aGREE;=  
 14 but dON't you think it's Interesting that that the KIDS;  
 15 THEY think the kids maybe don't 'KNOW as much?  
 16 -> BA: <<h+rising> I don't think they ↑DO.>  
 17 -> AN: <<h+rising> I don't ↑EITHer.>  
 18 BA: I DON'T think they DO.  
 19 PRIVate schOOLs -  
 20 PUBlic schOOLs -  
 21 it DOESn't make any difference.=  
 22 i think the klds can ALways be mUch more .h highly  
 23 Educated.

This instance of prosodic orientation seems to occur with a straightforward agreement sequence (lines 16–17): Anne's turn (line 17) contains the same high pitch register and rising intonation contour as Barbara Carlson's previous utterance (line 16). Her agreement might be prosodically designed in this way because she, too, does not think that kids know enough, although she draws different conclusions from this fact than Barbara Carlson.

However, a second interpretation is also possible. Previous to the transcribed extract the two speakers have been disagreeing for a while over the necessity of additional courses for children, and it therefore seems odd for Anne to agree so strongly on a subject which she found debatable before. The impression of a strong agreement arises from the interplay of prosodic matching (high register plus rising intonation contour) and verbal repetition (*I don't*). It seems that rather than being motivated by strong agreement, Anne's enthusiastic prosodic delivery is triggered by Carlson's immediately prior prosodic extreme. The dynamics of prosodic orientation possibly override an otherwise conversationally expectable next turn from Anne, which could have taken the form of a slight disagreement, or at least a modification of Carlson's turn.

#### *Prosodic matching of loudness*

The previous sections have been concerned with types of prosodic matching which involve pitch. In this section we now turn to prosodic

matching of loudness. The data corpus holds 19 definite cases. The following example comes from a Minnesotan radio show, in which the two hosts Don Vogel and Mitchky are engaged in a playful teasing sequence about their respective skills at being radio hosts:

(7)

**Let's talk about you**

- 1 DV: <<all> would you TALK a minute;=  
 2 I have to look for my Other NOTES here.>  
 3 MI: AIRIGHT,  
 4 i was BORN: the septEmber of nine[teen ninety-  
 5 DV: [ <<f+h> no  
 DON'T give  
 6 us when you were BORN [for cryin out loud;  
 7 MI: [alRIGHT,  
 8 DV: uuuuuhaaa  
 9 (-)  
 10 [keep GOin;  
 11 MI: [no i'll just lEt you GO [buddy,  
 12 DV: [keep GOin;  
 13 MI: if you're gonna DIctate what i TALK about,=  
 14 then YOU just (-) .hh  
 15 DV: it's RAdio.  
 16 come ON;  
 17 MI: [YOU just ( ) buddy,  
 18 DV: [let's GO EH,  
 19 MI: [YOU just ( )  
 20 DV: [let's `GO EH,  
 21 let's ↑TALK about some'pn Interesting.  
 22 -> MI: <<f+h> let's tAlk about YOUR FAILure to be  
 23 -> prepared for this rAdio show.  
 24 -> SHALL we?  
 25 -> [ <<extra f+h> HOW many years have you bEEn  
 26 -> in this BUSIness?>  
 27 -> DV: [ <<f+h> let's tAlk about 'YOU;  
 28 -> let's tAlk about 'YOU;  
 29 -> MI: <<extra f+h> sEventeen YEARS,  
 30 -> [and you can't get rEAdy for a SHOW?>  
 31 -> DV: [ <<f+h> hAngin out in HERE;  
 32 -> while I was outSIDE;>  
 33 -> MI: <<f+h> yeah I [was here OUT'SIDE.>

- 34 -> DV: [ $\ll\langle f+h \rangle$  with the 'PEOPLE.  
 35 -> I wAsn't SNObbish.  
 36 -> I was out here with the PEOPle.  
 37 -> so THERE.>  
 38 (-)  
 39 how about THAT eh,

From line 22 onwards the two speakers can be seen to match their prosody both with regard to loudness and pitch register across several turns. They are teasing each other with mutual accusations: Mitchky accuses Don Vogel of not being prepared for the show, Don Vogel in turn accuses Mitchky of being snobbish, and not being 'out there with the people'. The orientation sequence starts with Mitchky's TCU *let's talk about your failure to be prepared for this radio show shall we* (lines 22ff). He speaks in a noticeably higher pitch register than before, and also slightly louder. His next TCU, *how many years have you been in this business* (lines 25–26), rises to an even higher loudness and pitch. Don Vogel comes in in overlap, speaking also louder and higher in pitch than in his previous turns (lines 27–28). In the ensuing sequence, the two speakers match their loudness, with Mitchky remaining at a higher pitch register than Don Vogel throughout.

The prosodic matching in this instance seems to be a cue for both speakers to signal that they are engaged in a playful argument. This sequence is representative for a large number of instances in the corpus where prosodic orientation is employed in conversational play. Prosodic orientation is of course only one of several characteristics of such sequences, another one being verbal repetition, which is also employed in the above extract. A further instance of orientation in loudness occurs in a conversation among three friends, two North Americans and an Irishman:

(8)

**Can't imagine**

- 1 TO: that that that's the e<sup>↑</sup>SSential reason that the the wElsh  
 2 were LAW abiding;  
 3 and uh the Irish were NOT.  
 4 (.)  
 5 -> JA: <<p> can't i<sup>ˆ</sup>MAGine.>  
 6 (.)

- 7 -> TO: <<p> can't iMAGine.>  
 8 JA: mhmhmmhmmh  
 9 TO: but that is the e<sup>↑</sup>SSential reason why why why the welsh-  
 10 but the wElsh is <sup>↑↑</sup>VERY widely spoken.

Tom is engaged in talking about the history of the Gaelic language. Janet and Anna, his two co-participants, continuously interrupt him with non-serious comments such as 'say something in Gaelic', thereby introducing a more playful key. In this instance, Janet's short comment (line 5), in which she says she cannot imagine the Irish not being law-abiding, is an instance of light sarcasm addressed to Tom and his being Irish. It is delivered quietly, as is Tom's repetition of her phrase (line 7). The matching of loudness can be seen in the wave form in Figure 2.3.

Janet's turn is designed as a humorous aside, both in content – it has nothing to do with the history of the Gaelic language – and in prosodic make-up – the quiet voice. Tom's response aligns with the aside characteristic both lexically by repeating Janet's turn, and prosodically by adopting the same loudness. Thus he acknowledges her turn as an aside, collaborates in it, and then returns to his previous topic (lines 9–10).

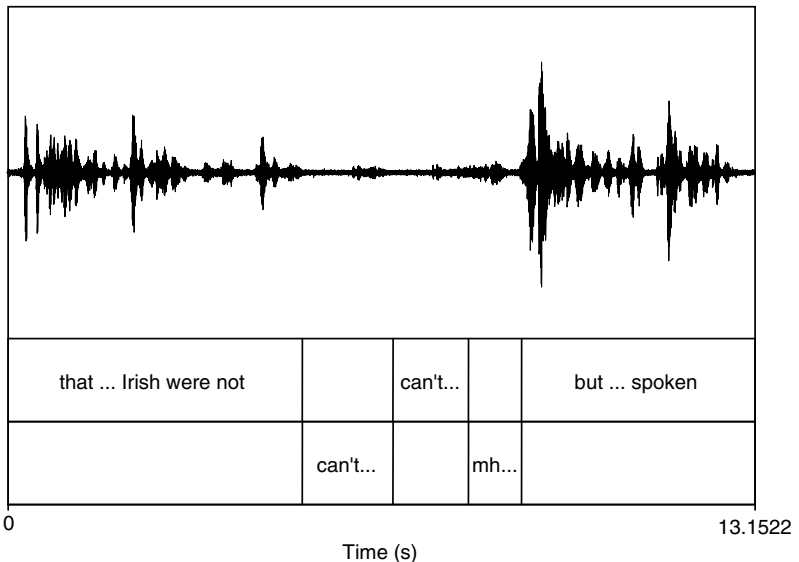


Figure 2.3 Prosodic matching of loudness

However, there is a lack of prosodic matching with respect to other prosodic parameters in this sequence. Janet's intonation contour is high-rising and then falling, whereas Tom's remains low and then falls further down. After Janet's humorous comment and use of wide pitch range, Tom's alignment could have been delivered more emphatically, both prosodically by also using a wider pitch range, and lexically, by doing slightly more than repeat, especially after Janet's playful chuckle (line 8). This shows that different formats of prosodic orientation offer participants variations in the degree to which they align themselves with previous speakers' utterances.

#### *Prosodic matching of speech rate*

The corpus contains 28 clear cases of participants' matching of speech rate, that is the number of syllables articulated per second. The following extract contains orientation to both fast and slow speech rate. It comes from the 1991 Gulf War phone-in programme with Leo Laporte. Lowell has called in to enquire whether the government can be expected to start drafting soon:

(9)

#### **Local representative**

- 1 LE: but again to quote the: selective service at least the: uh  
 2 -> <<all> Local repre↑SENTative;=  
 3 -> NO.>  
 4 (0.5)  
 5 -> LO: <<all> oh thAnk you very MUCH.>  
 6 LE: are you DRAFT AGE?  
 7 -> LO: <<len> I am 'jUst 'tUrning TWENTy.>  
 8 (0.6)  
 9 -> LE: so that must be a <<len> PLEAsant PROspect> for you.  
 10 -> LO: oh it's it's <<all> pretty ↑GOOD;> he  
 11 -> LE: well i: <<all> let's HOPE it doesn't come to that  
 12 lowell.>  
 13 -> LO: well <<all> THANK you.>  
 14 -> LE: <<all> THANK you.>

Leo's turn (lines 1ff) sums up his response to Lowell's question concerning drafting, and ends in fast speech rate (*local representative no*, lines 2–3). Lowell does not reply for 0.5 seconds, but when he does, he matches his speech rate with Leo's (line 5). The prosodic orientation occurs with a turn in which the caller thanks Leo, a turn which ideally

should have followed Leo's turn without a pause in order to match Leo's established speech rhythm.<sup>11</sup> The prosodic and conversational alignment achieved through the matching of speech rate can be heard to make up for the potentially dispreferred pause (line 4).

Lowell's response *i am just turning twenty* (line 7) to Leo's question *are you draft age* (line 6) occurs at a noticeably slower speech rate than before, which together with its intonation contour communicates a sarcastic tone with the implication that Lowell is indeed of the right age to be drafted. This time Leo takes some time to reply. After a pause (line 8), he aligns with Lowell's slow speech rate, and also with the sarcastic conclusion that Lowell's age opens up a *pleasant prospect* for him (line 9). From this point onwards both speakers return to the fast speech rate of their earlier interaction for certain parts of their turns. Lowell agrees with Leo in line 10, and Leo expresses his sympathy (lines 11–12). A sequence of prosodically orienting *thank yous* (lines 13–14) closes the call.

No frequency analysis or wave form helps to illustrate speech rate, however it is possible to extract the exact amount of time for each stretch of talk. In every line with either allegro or lento passages, the number of syllables in the respective stretch of talk have been counted and divided by the exact time in which they were spoken (Table 2.1). For example line 5 *oh thank you very much* is produced in 0.77 seconds and contains six syllables, which gives a speech rate of 7.79 syllables per second (s/s). These numbers only give a rough impression of our perception as certain syllables are more phonetically time consuming than others.<sup>12</sup> For comparison, Leo's first utterance in line 1 is given as a relatively unmarked speech rate.

Table 2.1 Prosodic matching of speech rate

Line	Text	Syllables	Seconds	Syllables per second
Line 1	but again to quote the selective service at least the uh	15	2.77	5.42 s/s
Line 2–3	local representative no	8	0.96	8.3 s/s
Line 5	oh thank you very much	6	0.77	7.79 s/s
Line 7	I am just turning twenty	7	1.26	5.5 s/s
Line 9	pleasant prospect	4	0.9	4.4 s/s
Line 10	pretty good	3	0.44	6.81 s/s
Line 11	let's hope it doesn't come to that lowell	10	1.09	9.17 s/s
Line 13	thank you	2	0.31	6.45 s/s
Line 14	thank you	2	0.3	6.6 s/s

The table confirms the auditory impression that for example lines 2–3, *local representative no*, are produced very fast in comparison to line 1, *but again to quote the selective service at least the uh*; or that the phrase *pleasant prospect* in line 9 is indeed spoken at a slow rate compared to lines 11–12, *let's hope it doesn't come to that lowell*.

#### *Prosodic matching of voice quality*

Voice quality is often considered a paralinguistic rather than a prosodic parameter of speech. However, it is at times used intentionally – one can ‘put on’ a particular voice quality which need not be an inherent dimension of one’s voice. In the data it has been discovered to be a parameter with respect to which speakers orient to each other, and therefore it is described along with the more traditional prosodic parameters. There are 13 cases of clearly noticeable matchings of voice quality in the corpus. A first example comes from a Minnesotan radio programme, the hosts are Barbara Carlson and Peter Theo:

(10)

#### **I am wild**

- |    |        |   |
|----|--------|---|
| 1  | BA:    | .hh n- a- <<h> MY fEELings get HURT!                |
| 2  |        | YES sirEE.>   |
| 3  |        | when the .h editorial board of the SOUTHERn TRIBune |
| 4  | ->     | <<becoming harsh> goes After me,                    |
| 5  | ->     | <<harsh+h+f> I:: A::M ↑W:I::LD.>                    |
| 6  | -> PE: | you're <<harsh+h+f> ↑OUTRA::::GED.>                 |
| 7  | BA:    | <<h> OH- >  |
| 8  | PE:    | you and MOLLY YARD.                                 |
| 9  | BA:    | <<p+breathy> YES;;                                  |
| 10 |        | JUST OUtraged.>                                     |
| 11 |        | .hh hello PHIL?                                     |
| 12 | PH:    | hello BARbra?                                       |

This is an instance of strong alignment between two participants. Barbara Carlson describes her feelings after receiving bad press in a harsh voice (*I am wild*, line 5), and her co-host Peter Theo aligns with her expression of emotion by offering an equally strong term (*you're outraged*, line 6) in an equally extreme voice quality.<sup>13</sup> Line 4 shows Barbara to begin adopting the harsh voice, while her next turn (line 5) is produced entirely with extreme harshness, high pitch register and increased loudness. The way in which she designs her voice is iconic of the wild state which she is describing: it sounds rather wild itself. By aligning

with her prosodically and verbally, Peter Theo acknowledges her state of mind and joins her in the iconic expression of it, so that the two speakers are engaged in a collaborative enacting of being 'wild' and 'outraged'.

It is interesting to compare this form of iconicity to the prosodic design shown in lines 9 and 10. Here, Barbara also uses a rather distinctive prosody. She speaks quietly, but nevertheless intensely in a very breathy voice. This utterance also carries an element of iconicity. It sounds annoyed and frustrated, representative of the kind of voice quality one might expect from someone who is extremely tired. However, this kind of iconicity does not underline the verbal content of her utterance, it is not another impersonation of an 'outraged' voice. Rather than being iconic of the semantic content of the utterance, the iconicity of this turn lies in the attitude and emotive state which the prosody conveys about the utterance.<sup>14</sup> A second example for matching of voice quality is (11), which comes from a North American radio phone-in programme. The host is Herb Homer, a tax advisor, who talks to caller Catherine about her daughter and son-in-law:

(11)

**Other things**

- 1 CA: well ↑thEY're YOU::NG,  
 2 and they're newly WE:D,  
 3 and they really didn't KNOW.  
 4 -> HH: <<1+creaky> they're (.) you mean their MINDS are on  
 5 -> OTHER thIngs.>  
 6 (-)  
 7 -> CA: .hh <<1+creaky> WELL e:rm;> (-)  
 8 mAYbe YES;  
 9 mAYbe NO.  
 10 HH: hehehe

Catherine is engaged in a list of reasons why the young couple does not know much about financial issues (lines 1–3). Herbert, probably with reference to her phrase *and they're newly wed* (line 2), teases her by concluding that *their minds are on other things* (lines 4–5). He does so in a very low pitch, which increases the impression of a teasing aside. The sexual implication of the comment is untypical for this programme and seems to come as a surprise to Catherine, for which the pause (line 6) can be seen as an indicator. Her response is an embarrassed *well erm*, in

a voice that noticeably reaches down to the very bottom of her voice range (line 7). Her prosodic design is one in which she orients to Herbert's voice, interestingly not only in its low pitch register, but also in its creaky voice quality. In Herbert's case, the creakiness is part of his male voice (line 4), and is therefore a quasi-permanent characteristic of his speech (Abercrombie 1967: 91). In hers, it is one she has to make an effort to produce. The orientation to the male voice contextualizes an understanding on Catherine's part that for a sexual joke a male voice may be more appropriate. A last example of matching voice quality is taken from the Gulf War phone-in programme.

(12)

**Hi Leo**

- 1 LE: <<all> marie on the line from paCifica;  
 2 YOU'RE on the giant sixty eight knbr;  
 3 -> <<becoming breathy> thAnks for CALLing marie.>>  
 4 -> MA: <<p+breathy> HI lEo.>  
 5 -> LE: <<p+breathy> HI.>  
 6 MA: I just had a cOmment about the: um PRoTesters,

The prosodic orientation occurs once more in the course of a telephone opening. Leo's voice begins to become breathy during his first turn addressed to his caller Marie (line 3). His frequently stated aim of the radio show is to create a forum for people to share their views and fears about the ongoing war, which explains the personal stance he takes towards many of his conversations. The breathy voice quality in this turn carries an element of complicity; it is not a voice one would typically expect to be used between strangers. However, against the background of the unsettling political atmosphere, the expression of which is the subject of this programme, familiarity with complete strangers seems justified. The breathiness may also show Leo's orientation to a female caller.

Marie aligns with this prosodic expression of familiarity and matches Leo's breathy voice (line 4). Her voice is extremely breathy and in addition her part of the opening is very quiet, which adds to the impression of hushedness. Leo aligns with her in his next turn (line 5) by not only matching his voice quality but also his loudness to hers. Following this collaborative alignment, Marie turns to the reason for the call (line 6).

#### *Prosodic matching of phonetic sound production*

A last prosodic parameter which participants can be seen to match is individual sound production. In many phonological approaches this

phenomenon would be classified as segmental, and thus would not be included in prosodic analysis, which is traditionally limited to the suprasegmental aspects of speech. However, the phenomenon itself – a matching of a first speaker's vocal parameter by a second participant – is not different from the above-described forms, and is therefore included here as a further type of prosodic matching.<sup>15</sup> The most prominent example comes from the same family as in (5). They are once more talking about their Australian relative, who is a musician.

(13)

**Had it out<sup>16</sup>**

- 1 MA: the LAST- (.)  
 2 no i think it was the time beFO:RE. (.)  
 3 that we were THERE, (-)  
 4 she presented me with a tape that she'd made of her  
 5 own PLAYING on the ORgan,  
 6 BE: MM,  
 7 MA: and er (-) of Old australian SONGS.  
 8 (1.3)  
 9 erm (-) i dOn't think there's any VOcals on it though,  
 10 it's oh the old hOmestead and stUff like THAT.  
 11 (1.0)  
 12 erm  
 13 (1.5)  
 14 and i mUst (.) i'm SORRY to say I've; (-)  
 15 it's tucked away in the DRAWer;  
 16 in my BEDroom;  
 17 -> and i've never even had it ^OUT.  
 18 -> BE: ^OW.  
 19 -> MA: <<acc> well i HAD ONCE.>  
 20 when i was: (-) working in the BEDroom;  
 21 i DID have it out once;  
 22 BUT-  
 23 (-)  
 24 er THAT might be of interest to some people,  
 25 (-)  
 26 but Anyway.

The relative and her self-composed music have been the topic of the conversation for quite a while, and the music has been described by

Martha's husband as 'a bit of a dirge'.<sup>17</sup> Now Martha introduces the news that she actually has a tape of their relative's playing (lines 1–5). Beverly's recipient token *mm* (line 6) is delivered with orienting intonation to Martha's previous rising contour (line 5). Subsequently, Martha displays several forms of hesitation in her ongoing turn, such as *er* and a pause (line 7). This tone group is syntactically, prosodically and semantically the end of the current TCU, offering the possibility of a speaker change. However, none occurs. After a 1.3 second pause Martha goes on to describe the tape (lines 9–10). Another 1 second pause (line 11), another hesitation marker from Martha (line 12), another 1.5 second pause (line 13), and still no one else comes in to take the floor. There seems to be an obvious unwillingness on the part of the other participants to talk about the tape, let alone ask Martha to bring it out and play it. Lines 14–17 seem to be a verbalization of this disinterest on Martha's part. She, too, has never been interested enough to listen to it. Martha's sister Beverly signals surprise at this (line 18). She does so by using a verbal item that is not routinely used as a recipient token of surprise: *ow*. The conventional token for surprise would have been 'oh' (Heritage 1984; 1998). However, *ow* seems at least in part to have been triggered by Martha's last syllable *out*. Whether this is a conscious orientation on Beverly's part or not, the result is a verbal item that is much more associated with an expression of sudden pain, 'ouch', than one of mere surprise. Martha seems to treat it as such. Her next turn is a contradiction of her previous words at a high speech rate: *well I had once* (line 19). However, her following assertion about her actual listening (lines 19–22) is again only met by a pause, and so is her appeal *so that might be of interest to some people* (line 24), to the effect that she eventually closes down the topic (*but anyway*, line 26).

The prosodic matching of phonetic sound production in this case is not necessarily designed by Beverly for her recipients. Possibly certain sounds project other sounds, as proposed by Sacks (1995, Lectures of 19 February, 4 March, 11 March in Winter 1971), who speaks of sound-sequence relationships or sound-sequence patterns between words which contain similar sounds. Jefferson (1990) discovers the third position of a list construction as a place for frequent acoustic consonance. This phenomenon seems to occur at a cognitive level below that of prosodic planning, that is speakers may be even less aware of it than they are of orientations in other parameters. However, as extract (13) seems to show, it can affect a

conversational sequence in a fashion similar to other kinds of prosodic matching.

### **Prosodic non-matching**

In all instances of prosodic matching, conversationalists display their awareness and acknowledgement of the prosody of others by copying one or more aspects of their prosodic delivery in their next turns. The following data extracts show that participants may also orient prosodically to a previous speaker's turn by using marked non-alignment with that speaker's prosody. The current data corpus holds 15 clearly perceptible instances.

From the analyst's perspective it is a greater challenge to show prosodic orientation when incoming participants' prosody differs from that of the prior speaker, than when they repeat a previous pattern. The latter phenomenon lends it itself easily to description and analysis, as the mirroring of previous prosody is easy to spot. This is the case not only because of its obvious repetitive character, but also because it is a perceived deviation from conversational expectations according to which each speaker is engaged in different conversational activities, and thus employs different prosodic patterns. When prosodic orientation occurs in the form of prosodic contrast to a previous participant's turn, the analyst must decide whether the new prosodic pattern is indeed a form of orientation, in which an incoming prosodic pattern is designed to be different with respect to prior material, or a non-orienting, unmarked continuation of talk.

The most prominent occurrences of non-matching are those in which a first speaker's turn is designed as a prosodic extreme, and a following turn by another participant is produced as the opposite of that extreme, for example, a very loud remark followed by a quiet reply, or high pitch followed by low pitch. In instances of increased loudness followed by unmarked loudness, or high pitch followed by a mid-range pitch level the aspect of orientation is more difficult to detect and prove, as the second, potentially orienting turn does not display any openly prosodic signs of backward reference to previous prosody. However, a possible implication from this study is that in some sequential environments a matching of prosodic design is expected, and thus a next turn which does not join in the prior speaker's prosodic realization can be analysed as noticeable, and non-matching. Example (14), below, contains such a debatable case, along with a clear case of two prosodic extremes. For this book only extracts in which one extreme is met by the other are interpreted

as prosodic orientation. The following extract comes from the same family as (13):

(14)

**Taller**

- 1 BE: I go well over uh on thee on the Other side of ten  
 2 and a half STONE.  
 3 what do YOU do.  
 4 ((dishes))  
 5 (->) MA: <<f> i'm eLEVen,>  
 6 (->) BE: well 'I must be a [bout that,  
 7 [((dishes))  
 8 [( )]  
 9 -> MA: [<<h+f> i'm ↑TALLer than `YOU,>  
 10 -> BE: <<l+p> I knOw you ARE,>  
 11 I shOULdn't BE as much as that.

Lines 9 and 10 illustrate an instance of non-matching pitch register and loudness. The two sisters Martha and Beverly are talking about their weight, a subject which has proven delicate earlier in the conversation. Now Beverly reveals her weight and asks Martha about hers (lines 1–3). After a brief pause Martha responds (line 5) with a rising intonation contour which may imply continuation. However, Beverly treats it as a completion point and takes the floor. She makes an interactionally aligning comment (*well I must be about that*), playing down the difference between her weight and her sister's. Following this, Martha interrupts Beverly in a loud and high voice, justifying her greater weight by the fact that she is taller than her sister (line 9). Beverly confirms this in a low and quiet voice (line 10).

The distinct non-matching of prosody despite the verbal agreement between the two women produces an almost comic effect. In contrast to Martha's loud and high pitched comment, Beverly's delivery creates the impression of a low monotone, and thereby of someone who has heard this argument many times before. Beverly does not seem to acknowledge the importance of Martha's explanation for her excess weight. As the beginning of Martha's turn occurs in overlap with previous talk from Beverly, only the loudness can be visualized in a wave form (Figure 2.4).

Another reading of this example could treat Beverly's non-matching of prosodic design as an aligning move: had she copied Martha's marked

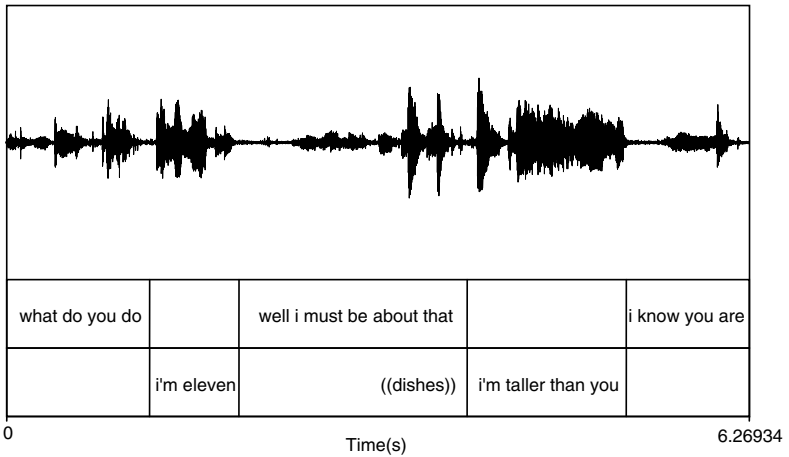


Figure 2.4 Prosodic non-matching

prosody, she could have been heard as joining in the treatment of Martha's weight as marked, and requiring justification.

Earlier in this extract, the turns *I'm eleven* (line 5) and *well I must be about that* (line 6) could also be heard as non-matching, if one were to extend the notion of non-matching orientation to cases of marked prosody followed by unmarked prosody. Beverly does not take up the increased loudness of her sister's previous turn, but remains at her original level. Subsequently, Martha does not join in Beverly's quieter voice, but goes on raising her loudness and pitch register even further (line 9). In this sense of 'non-matching', neither Beverly nor Martha match their loudness to that of the other, even though it is marked. However, because the non-matching in these cases involves a prosodically unmarked continuation by the second speaker, rather than a more deliberately designed marked opposite, we will not consider them to be prosodic orientations here. However, future research might show that with respect to certain prosodic parameters and conversational practices, correspondence between speakers within a sequence is the routine, and an incoming participant who does not join in those parameters shows a noticeable absence of orientation. Possibly, loudness is such an orientation-triggering parameter. A further instance of prosodic non-matching is taken from the 1991 Gulf War phone-in programme.

(15)

**Shaken**

- 1           TE:    if I walk into a 'SUPERmarket;  
 2                    .hh is the plAcE gonna be blOwn to blts with mE  
 3  ->            and this baby ↑IN there.  
 4  ->    (1.1)  
 5  ->    LE:    <<l> YOU don't have to wOrry about thA:t i don't  
 6                    thInk.>  
 7  ->    TE:    uh hu↑↑he: <<h> but i'm so i'm so NERvous;>=  
 8                    and i mean this whOLE thIng has got me .hh you  
 9  ->            know just <<breathy> Absolutely (.) ↑SHAKen.>  
 10 ->   LE:    yeah it's ↑TERrible.  
 11          TE:    you know i was WATCHing Ophra;

Teresa, the caller, has voiced a fear that terrorists might attack civilian areas in the USA. Her intonation reaches a high pitch in line 3. In contrast, Leo's response is a very low pitch level after the onset in lines 5–6. The pause of 1.1 seconds between the two utterances is interesting and potentially significant. However, the sense of hesitation, which the pause possibly communicates is not confirmed by Leo's following utterance (lines 5–6) both in content (*you don't have to worry about that I don't think*) and prosody (low in register, and falling still further), which is in stark contrast to Teresa's. She reacts to this soothing utterance with a rather high laugh and an ensuing expression of her current emotions. From her in-breath (line 8), her speech takes on a breathiness that cumulates on *shaken*, with an additional step-up on this word. Leo matches this step-up in his next turn *yeah it's terrible* (line 10).

Teresa is expressing fear and anxiety. It is Leo's job as radio host to calm her down, as he cannot possibly agree with her on the air, and thereby risk encouraging widespread fear of terrorist attacks, when the country's atmosphere is already unsettled. His first strategy is doing the prosodic opposite of what Teresa has done: in a low voice he tries to soothe her by telling her not to worry, which contrasts with her high pitched expression of concern. Her reaction to this is to show even more nervousness, both in verbal content and prosody. Leo now takes a different route and designs his ensuing utterance in partial alignment with hers. He matches her prosody by repeating her step-up in pitch, and agrees with her on the frightening nature of the situation. This second strategy of prosodic alignment is successful in diverting the conversational topic away from expressions of anxiety, and towards a narrative about how Teresa spent the previous day.

### Prosodic complementation

A third form of prosodic orientation is prosodic complementation, a practice which is limited to the parameter of pitch: a first speaker has produced a contour which in itself is complete, but which we expect to be followed by a specific second contour from the next speaker. Both contributions constitute complete turns, respectively. However, while the first participant's turn signals turn completion prosodically, syntactically and pragmatically (Ford and Thompson 1996), the second contour seems to complement the first, so that the two together form a prosodic pair. In all 18 instances in the data corpus, prosodic complementations co-occur with adjacency pairs and with verbally repetitive patterns. The typical intonational design of such contours is a terminal rise, followed by a terminal fall. A first example comes from a dinner conversation among friends, one of whom (Janet) has just served dessert:

(16)

#### Rhubarb

- |    |        |                      |
|----|--------|----------------------|
| 1  | AN:    | <<creaky> aw:::>     |
| 2  |        | ↑RHUbarb.            |
| 3  | JA:    | ´RHUbarb,            |
| 4  |        | and STRAWberry.      |
| 5  | AN:    | <<creaky> aw::: [::> |
| 6  | MA:    | [( )]                |
| 7  | ->     | OUR rhUbarb?=        |
| 8  | -> JA: | =↑OUR rhubarb.       |
| 9  | -> AN: | ´yOUR ´OWN ´rhUbarb? |
| 10 | -> JA: | ´mY ´own `RHUbarb.   |

The turns in question are lines 7–10. Mark, Janet's partner, asks whether the rhubarb comes from their own garden (*our rhubarb*), and Janet confirms this (*our rhubarb*). Mark's question steps up to a high pitch, while Janet's answer begins with a high onset and steps down considerably across the two syllables. This pitch movement can be visualized in the frequency analysis in Figure 2.5. Janet's syllable *rhu-* does not produce reliable values, as it overlaps with background noises.

Following this complementing pair of intonation contours, Anna asks whether the rhubarb is indeed Janet's own (*your own rhubarb*, line 9), and Janet confirms again (*my own rhubarb*, line 10). In this adjacency pair, Anna's contour rises on every syllable throughout the intonation unit.

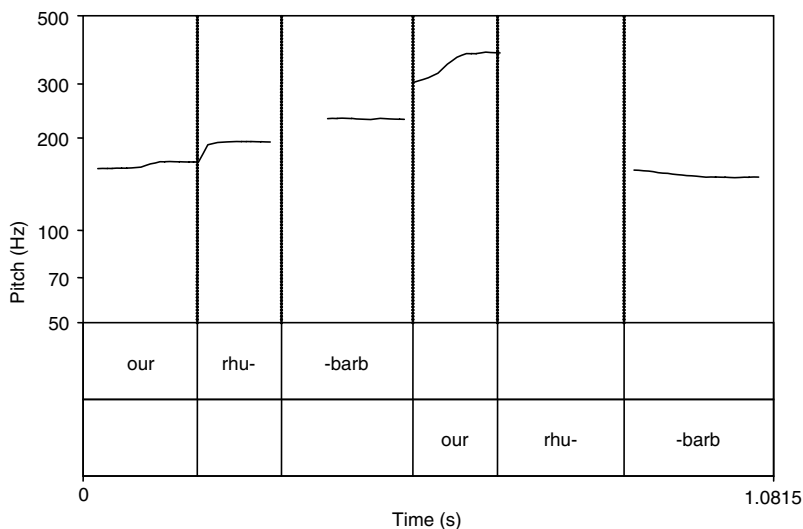


Figure 2.5 Prosodic complementation (Rhubarb)

The following turn similarly rises on the onset (*my*) and on the syllable following it (*own*), but falls on the nucleus and tail (*rhubarb*).

The two questions, which are both requests for confirmation, are produced without any grammatical interrogative markers, but realized only via rising intonation. The answers gain their status by verbal repetition, matching of stress patterns and intonational complementation.

Asking for confirmation, followed by confirmation from a second participant, is the typical format for prosodic complementation in the present corpus. Another example is (17), which comes from a conversation with the same set of participants as (16):

(17)

**South Carolina**

- 1 JA: and now south carOLINA or sOMething.
- 2 -> AN: YEAH?
- 3 -> JA: YEAH.
- 4 -> MA: HUH?
- 5 JA: i hAve the address upSTAIRS.

Again, a terminally rising contour, this time on one syllable, is followed by a terminally falling one (lines 2–3). The same lexical item (*yeah*) is

used both to ask for confirmation and to provide it. Line 4 shows Mark to be contributing another rising contour, this time on the repair-initiator *huh*. The following terminally falling turn (*I have the address upstairs*) does not seem to orient to Mark's previous *huh*, however, which shows that not all combinations of the structure terminal rise + terminal fall can be considered prosodic orientations. In all cases in the current corpus, prosodic orientation of this kind co-occurs with partial or complete lexical repetition, and a relatively small number of syllables in the turns.

Asking for confirmation is not the only sequential context in which prosodic complementation is found.<sup>18</sup> The following data extract comes from the Manchester radio phone-in programme 'Brainteaser'. Caller and host are in the process of closing the conversation:

(18)

**Hi di hi**

- |   |     |                          |
|---|-----|--------------------------|
| 1 | DA: | O:kay,                   |
| 2 |     | THANK you for coming On, |
| 3 | CA: | O[kay;                   |
| 4 | DA: | [hi-                     |
| 5 | ->  | <<h>HI di `↑HI::;>       |
| 6 | ->  | `HI di ↑ `HI:: -         |
| 7 | DA: | <<h>bye `BYE::;>         |
| 8 | CA: | <<h>BYE;>                |

Dave, the host, opens up the closing in lines 1–2. Part of Dave's closing routine is the expression *hi di hi* (line 5), which originates from a television sitcom of the same title. In it 'Hi di hi' was a ritualized saying that was always responded to by another 'Hi di hi'. Therefore it can be considered a first pair part which strongly projects a particular response.

With respect to intonation, the first *hi di hi* is a high register rising pattern, falling slightly on the last syllable. Still, the prominent pitch movement is the high rise (Figure 2.6). This prosodic design triggers the expectation that the complementing contour will carry similarly animated pitch, and end in a falling movement. Cathy produces such a contour (line 6) by rising on the first *hi*, rising even higher up to a pitch step-up on the second *hi*, and stepping down to level pitch on the same last syllable. The two final pitch values are musical tones, F and D.

Cathy's fall on the last syllable *hi* is not a typical final fall-to-low, but it is stylized through the musical interval. This form of stylization is not

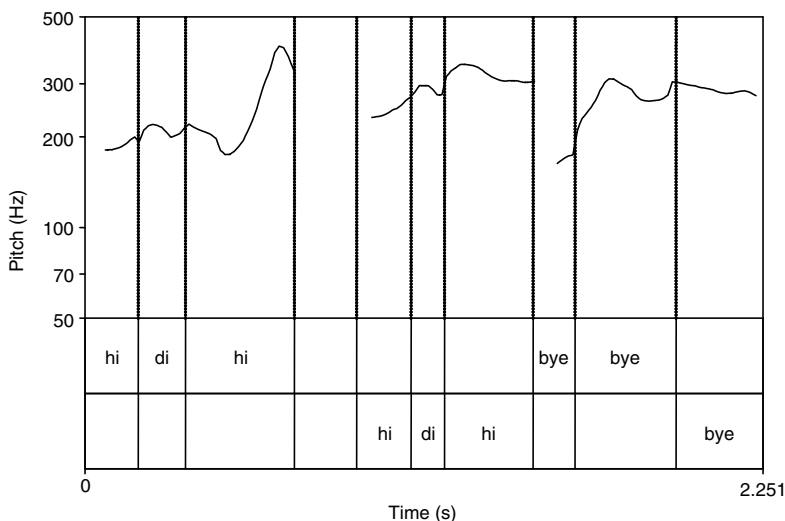


Figure 2.6 Prosodic complementation (Hi di hi)

uncommon in conversational closings and is treated in more depth in Chapter 3. The conversation ends with another prosodically orienting adjacency pair (lines 7–8).

### Summary

In the previous sub-section, a conversational practice has been presented in which participants show orientation to the prosodic design of a prior speaker's turn with respect to pitch, loudness, speech rate, voice quality and sound production. Three forms of prosodic orientation have been described: prosodic matching, in which a second speaker mirrors a previous participant's prosodic pattern; prosodic non-matching, where participants produce two prosodic opposites; and prosodic complementation, in which one pitch contour, typically a rise, is followed by a second one, typically a fall from another speaker, and the two complement one another. In addition to these three types of prosodic orientation there is a fourth, very large group of orienting practices which will be investigated under the term 'prosodic continuation' in Chapter 4. More forms may, of course, exist, but may not have appeared in this particular data corpus.

Prosodic orientation reveals to the analyst a participant's acknowledgement of a prosodic pattern used by a co-participant. It is therefore

the prosodic variant of interactional 'orientation' in the conversation analytic sense, in which 'speakers display in their sequentially "next" turns an understanding of what the "prior" turn was about' (Hutchby and Wooffitt 1998: 15).

## Interactional environments for prosodic orientation

In a next step prosodic orientations will be analysed according to where they occur in an ongoing sequence and what they accomplish in their sequential environment. The following sections show that prosodic orientation co-occurs with a large number of conversational actions, all of which involve either a second pair part or some other form of return move. We will first take a closer look at this backwards-looking tendency of prosodically orienting turns, by presenting a selected number of instances in which this becomes particularly apparent. Subsequently, prosodic orientations are analysed according to their sequential function. The majority of prosodically orienting next turns occur as single-unit turns and are followed by a speaker-change. A small number of instances do not end a turn but they do end a conversational action, that is the responsive action performed in the prosodically orienting TCU is not continued into the next TCU, but completed within the span of the prosodic orientation. Many prosodic orientations occur in non-serious interactional environments, but since this collection of instances overlaps in part with the corpus of collaborative stylizations presented in Chapter 3, their discussion is postponed until then.

### Prosodically orienting responses

A common interactional environment for prosodic orientations are numerous forms of responding moves, which because of their replying character all show various degrees of backward reference. The current data collection includes conversational actions such as confirmations, answers to questions, return greetings and farewells in telephone openings and closings, *thank-yous*, acknowledgements, repair initiations, list continuations, assessments-as-seconds, news receipts and disagreements.

#### *Confirmations*

Confirming next turns make up the largest number of prosodic orientations in the corpus. The following extracts contain only those confirmations which do not follow a direct question, as answers to questions are presented in the next sub-section. The confirming turns below are either

not elicited by a previous speaker, or they are elicited by a non-question format. A first instance of a prosodically orienting confirmation is the following telephone conversation. Two female friends, both native speakers of American English, are talking about Margy's husband, Larry, and his work assignments:

(19)

Lynch

- 1 MA: and then he has e:r (.) this uh college PARK.  
 2 which is up by FULLert.  
 3 and it's it's [connected with the  
 4 -> ED: [<<f> ↑OH;  
 5 -> ^thAt's ↑LYNCH.>  
 6 (-)  
 7 -> MA: <<p+breathy> ↑YEAH.>  
 8 -> ED: <<h>gOd it was in the ↑↑PAPer.>  
 9 -> MA: <<decresc> well that's lArry's ↑↑STOrY.>  
 10 (-)  
 11 ED: is that LARRY'S?  
 12 MA: that was larry's ^STOrY;  
 13 ^YEAH;  
 14 he WROTE it;

Margy is in the process of listing several of her husband's current projects when Edna recognizes one of them. She signals the news receipt at a non-completion point (*oh*, line 4), and with a pitch step-up. Subsequently, she identifies the project (*that's lynch*, line 5) with another pitch step-up on the nucleus syllable. After a micro-pause, which is possibly due to Edna's interruption, Margy confirms Edna's turn: *yeah* (line 7). Her prosodic design is markedly repeating Edna's on the parameter of the step-up, but is also markedly different from it in loudness and voice quality. Whereas Edna's turn is rather loud and without any change in quality, Margy speaks in a quiet and breathy voice. Another matching of pitch step-up occurs in the following two turns, where Edna produces an even higher step-up on *paper* (line 8), and Margy confirms that what Edna saw was indeed *Larry's story* (line 9).

In both instances a certain backward-looking tendency is a feature both of the responding actions performed by the prosodically orienting turns (lines 7 and 9), and of the prosodic orientation itself. Thus, the two characteristics seem to mutually motivate one another: backward-orienting actions seem to invite a backward-orienting prosodic design,

while a prosodic orientation to a previous turn emphasizes the second turn's backward reference.

The following extract comes from the same telephone conversation as (19). The conversational topic is in the process of changing from an acquaintance with eight children to Edna's decorating work in the kitchen:

(20)

**Buzz**

- 1 ED: that makes me <<h+f> TIRED RIGHT NO:W.>=  
 2 [(as a)  
 3 MA: [<<p>↑m::.>  
 4 ED: we're PAINTing like mAd in the KITchen;=  
 5 [a:nd -  
 6 MA: [oh ARE you,  
 7 ED: and Everything's working out sO PRETTY here [you  
 8 know;  
 9 MA: [OH::: -  
 10 -> Isn't that <<l+creaky> GOOD.>  
 11 -> ED: ↑YEAH.  
 12 .hhh and I just thought i'd give you a BUZZ - =  
 13 i should have cAlled you sOOner but I don't know  
 14 where the WEEK WE:NT,

This extract contains an instance of prosodic non-matching. Earlier in the chapter we explained that it can be an analytical challenge to decide whether a next turn which neither matches nor continues previous prosodic patterns is an orientation in the form of a prominent non-matching, or a non-orientation. However, in the above extract it seems justified to speak of a prosodically orienting non-matching. Margy's response is a positive assessment (*oh isn't that good*, lines 9–10) following Edna's previous positive assessment of her own decorating situation (*and everything's working out so pretty here you know*, lines 7–8). Margy's turn (line 10) is a steady declining pitch contour across the intonation unit, and the nucleus syllable is so low in pitch that Margy's voice takes on a creaky quality. In contrast to this extreme, Edna's next turn is a high pitch step-up on the confirmation token *yeah* (line 11). She continues speaking but introduces a new sequence by giving her reason for the call.

Another location for prosodically orienting confirmations is the turn space following help with a word search (cf. Chapter 4, pp. 190ff).

One such instance is the following, taken from a dinner conversation among two North Americans:

(21)

**Garage**

- 1 AL: turn the LIGHT on in the; (.)  
 2 -> JA: gaRAGE?  
 3 -> AL: gaRAGE.

Alissa's prosodically complementing turn (line 3) confirms Jane's prosodic, verbal and syntactic completion *garage* (line 2) as an accepted end to her previous utterance (line 1). Her confirmation also involves a verbal repetition of the completing item *garage*, which underlines the backwards-looking nature of her turn. As the recording breaks off at this point, we do not know how the sequence continues.

*Answers to questions*

Answers to questions are another broad interactional environment for prosodic orientations. In the following, answers to *wh*-questions and *yes/no* questions are presented. A first instance of a prosodically orienting answer to a *wh*-question is extract (1), *Who the heck*, reproduced below:

(1)

**Who the heck**

- 1 DH: well-  
 2 YEAH;  
 3 ALRIGHT then.  
 4 let me ASK you.  
 5 if it Isn't HESS,  
 6 -> <<h> ↑who the `heck `IS `it.>  
 7 -> MA: <<h> ↑i've `no `I'DE`A.>  
 8 (0.5)  
 9 [well you sEE-  
 10 DH: [but I mean how HOW can you persUADE somebody;  
 11 to spend dOnkey's years (.) in PRison;  
 12 withOUT sort of kicking up and saying; (.)  
 13 hang ON a minute,  
 14 I'm nOt HESS.

Previously (p. 36), this answer to a *wh*-question was analysed as a prosodic orientation involving prosodic matching of intonation contour and pitch register. Mark repeats Dick Hatch's extremely animated prosodic design (line 6) in his own reply (line 7). The orienting answer is followed by a pause of 0.5 seconds, and subsequently by two simultaneous turns which both treat the previous question/answer sequence as closed: Mark's fragment *well you see-* (line 9) is not a continuation of the answer but the beginning of a new TCU. Similarly, Dick Hatch begins a turn (lines 10ff), which shows that he, too, is treating Mark's prosodically orienting turn as complete.

With respect to *yes/no* questions, a common interactional environment for prosodically orienting answers is the turn space following a first pair part which is not designed in the grammatical *yes/no* question format, but which is treated as such by the next speaker. Instances of this type of answer are (16), *Rhubarb*, (17), *South Carolina* and (18), *Hi di Hi*, all of which involve prosodic complementation. (16), *Rhubarb*, is reproduced below:

## (16)

**Rhubarb**

- 1 AN: <<creaky> aw:::>  
 2 ↑RHUbarb.  
 3 JA: 'RHUbarb,  
 4 and STRAWberry.  
 5 AN: <<creaky> aw::: [:>  
 6 MA: [( )  
 7 -> OUR rhUbarb?=  
 8 -> JA: =↑OUR rhubarb.  
 9 -> AN: 'yOUR 'OWN 'rhUbarb?  
 10 -> JA: 'mY 'own `RHUbarb.  
 11 MA: (i suppOse i'll have) ICE TEA.

Previously (p. 61), we showed that the first pair parts in lines 7 and 9 are analysable as *yes/no* questions because they are treated as such by the next speaker. The analysis of this treatment is based on the prosodic design of the second pair parts (lines 8 and 10): the low final fall contextualizes these turns as replies to the preceding high rising turns. The prosodically orienting design enhances the strong tie between the adjacency pair parts. Answers to questions are second pair parts whose typical sequential placement already suggests a deeply-rooted connection between the second and the first utterance. Prosodic orientation as it

appears in the above examples seems to contribute to this link between adjacency pairs by signalling that a next utterance is rooted in the preceding turn even in the prosodic domain.

### *Telephone openings and closings*

During openings and closings of telephone calls backwards orientation is again a strong feature of the second turn. Pitch register and intonation contour are matched frequently; other types of prosodic matching include voice quality, pitch step-up, speech rate and loudness. Extract (2), Tim good morning, reproduced below, is a typical example:

(2)

#### **Tim good morning**

- 1           BA: YES peter?  
 2           (.)  
 3           LINE TWO;  
 4           you want me to go to LINE TWO,=  
 5           TIM.  
 6           good MORning.  
 7 -> TI: <<h> 'HI `BARbra,>  
 8 -> BA: <<h> 'HELL`o TIM,>=  
 9           TI: <<l>haven't tAlked to you in a LO:::NG TI:ME.>  
 10          BA: <<h+held>hOw are thIng:s in the LAUND>ry  
 11          business.

This extract contains matching of intonation contour and pitch register. Previously we pointed out that Tim's greeting (line 7) is not designed as a second pair part to Barbara Carlson's *Tim good morning* (lines 5–6), but constitutes a new first pair part in itself. This interpretation gains plausibility from the prosodic design of Tim's greeting: it does not prosodically match Barbara's prior turn. Neither does it match with respect to word order. While Barbara's turn (lines 5–6) first addresses her co-participant, *Tim*, and then offers the greeting, *good morning*, Tim (line 7) puts the greeting token first, and then addresses Barbara. In her subsequent prosodically orienting return greeting Barbara complements Tim's pattern by matching not only her intonation contour but also the verbal structure greeting token + name of addressee (*hello Tim*, line 8). Subsequently she gives up the floor to Tim (line 9), which shows her prosodically matching turn to be strongly backwards-looking in character. It does nothing more than latch onto a first pair part the conditionally relevant second pair part, in this case the return greeting.

Prosodic orientation is also overwhelmingly present in telephone closings. One instance is (18), *Hi di hi*, reprinted below:

(18)

**Hi di hi**

- 1 DA: O:kay,  
 2 THANK you for coming On,  
 3 CA: O[kay;  
 4 DA: [hi-  
 5 -> <<h> HI di  $\uparrow$ HI::;>  
 6 -> CA:  $\uparrow$ HI di  $\uparrow$ HI::-  
 7 DA: <<h>bye  $\wedge$ BYE::;>  
 8 CA: <<h>BYE::>

This closing is initiated by David and Cathy respectively at the beginning of the extract (lines 1–3). Subsequently, David offers his first *Hi di hi*, followed by Cathy (lines 5–6), with both turns forming a prosodically complementing pair. Following it, the actual closing sequence (lines 7–8) involves matching of intonation contour and pitch register. Openings and closings are inherently collaborative in nature, and they are two of the most structured sequential locations in a telephone call. With the routine actions required from both speakers comes a high potential for orientation in prosodic delivery, which signals a close link between the two turns, and thus separates them from the preceding or following talk as independent sequences.

#### *Acknowledging next turns*

A further interactional environment for prosodic orientations is the wide range of next turns which acknowledge or accept a previous utterance. Like all earlier instances they include as one of their core characteristics a backwards orientation to the previous turn. A first example involves a minimal response token. It is taken from a Minnesotan radio programme with host Joe Sucheray and Cathy, his guest, who is renowned for making prize-winning pickles. Joe has asked Cathy to describe a winning pickle:

(22)

**Crisp**

- 1 -> CA: a WINNING pickle is one that is CRISP,  
 2 -> JO: right,  
 3 -> CA:  $\uparrow$ VERY flavourful,  
 4 -> JO: alright,

- 5 -> CA: and SNAPS when you to- blte into it?  
 6 -> JO: uhu,  
 7 CA: and is 'JUST Excellent.

Cathy lists the characteristics of a winning pickle in intonation contours which all end in a rise (lines 1, 3 and 5).<sup>19</sup> Sucheray repeats this rising contour in his backchannelling responses *right* (line 2), *alright* (line 4) and *uhu* (line 6). All three responses acknowledge the previous TCUs and allow for continuation from the co-participant. Minimal responses typically signal an acceptance of the current floor distribution; the holder of the ongoing turn is confirmed in his/her right to speak by the recipient. Prosodically orienting minimal responses carry an additional aspect of backwards reference, through the repetition of the previous turn's prosody. In the corpus, all prosodically orienting minimal responses of this continuing nature orient primarily by matching of intonation contour. Other acknowledging next turns carry slightly more interactional weight than mere retrospective orientation and projection of more talk from a co-participant. See for example extract (23), taken from a family dinner conversation. The participants are talking about the practicalities of Beverly's prospective journey to Australia, and, related to this, a present which an Australian relative has sent her:

## (23)

**Nice of her**

- 1 MA: Anyway you'll find it as EASy as PIE.  
 2 (1.0)  
 3 EASy as PIE dear.  
 4 -> BE: now ↑Isn't that NICE of her to SEND that though.  
 5 -> MA: ↑M:::..  
 6 (2.7)  
 7 she's a DEAR.  
 8 (-)  
 9 BE: HM:..  
 10 DA: even if it was (2syll)  
 11 [(1syll)  
 12 BE: [<<laughing>wOn in a RAFFle;>

Beverly (line 4) produces a contour which consists of a pitch step-up on the onset syllable (*is*) and a steady declination across the intonation unit with a slight reset on *send*, followed by more declination down to a final fall. This steadily falling contour is repeated in Martha's next turn. Her

high onset and the lengthening of her *m* (line 5) make her turn a response which carries stronger prosodic orientation than the minimal responses in extract (22). Rather than orienting to the terminal intonation pattern alone, this acknowledging turn orients to the whole overall contour of the previous intonation unit, except for the slight reset which Beverly produces on the stressed syllable *send*, and which is not expectable in Martha's turn which contains only the monosyllabic *m*. After a long pause of 2.7 seconds, Martha verbalizes her acknowledgement and confirmation of Beverly's assessment of their relative's behaviour (*she's a dear*, line 7). This lengthy silence makes the prosodically orienting turn interpretable as a free-standing TCU, after which Martha would have allowed for a change in speakership.

The prosodic differences between (23), Nice of her, and (22), Crisp – the orientation towards the overall contour in (23) in contrast to orientation towards only the final pitch movement in (22) – seem to be responsible for the difference in interactional function. While the acknowledging next turn in (22) is a minimal response signalling mere reciprocity, the lengthened *m* in (23) displays a combination of acknowledgement and confirmation from the incoming speaker, which gives it stronger interactional force.

#### *Assessments-as-seconds*

Interactants frequently use prosodic orientation with assessments in second position, typically of a positive nature, and especially in the form of short monosyllabic exclamations such as 'wow', 'mm' or 'good'. By assessment in second position we mean an assessment which is made immediately following, and referring to a first turn by another speaker. Such assessments-as-seconds have the same backward reference as all other conversational practices in this group, and thus seem to invite prosodic orientation. One such instance is the following extract, taken from Barbara Carlson's radio show. She is in the studio with Jean Keffler, the chairman the Board of Regents of the University of Minnesota, and the discussion centres on a large sum of money which the university has claimed from the local government:

(24)

#### **A lot of money**

- 1        JE:    <<all> WAIT a minute;=  
 2            WAIT a minute;>  
 3            a HUNDred and eighty-thousand dollars is a BIG deal in  
 4 ->        <<len> ↑ANy (.) BODy's (.) ↓BOOK.>

- 5 -> BA: ↓GOOD.  
 6 JE: OKAY?  
 7 BA: i'm CERTainly glad she said THAT.  
 8 I thOUGHT she was gonna say it <<h> WASn't a big  
 9 deal.>

Jean Keffler's prosodic design on the climax of her turn (line 4) involves a slower speech tempo than her previous talk. She strongly stresses the accented syllables, which are divided by micro pauses. The pitch movement is a step-up on the onset syllable (*an-*), while the following syllables carry a declining pitch, the last syllable *book* falling to a pitch below the range Keffler has used in this interaction so far. Carlson's assessment *good* (line 5) repeats the steeply falling pitch movement, also on a monosyllabic word. The prosodic matching strongly emphasizes the positive assessment. The sense of emphasis is increased by the rhyming vowel sound /ʊ/ in *book* and *good*.

The following extract holds an instance of a prosodically orienting assessment which contains slightly more verbal material. The conversationalists are Leo Laporte with his show during the 1991 Gulf War, and caller Heather:

(25)

**Energy policy**

- 1 LE: EAsy to have HINDSight.  
 2 -> <<len> but WHY: dIdn't we: revIse> our energy  
 3 -> policy TEN years ago when we <<len> ↑KNEW: (.)  
 4 -> <<l> this is gonna HAPpen.>>  
 5 -> HE: <<len> thAt's a VErY GOOD QUESTion;>  
 6 [an i WISH i knew the Answer to that.  
 7 LE: [and i HOPE-  
 8 i hOpe to GOD –  
 9 that CONGRess,  
 10 GOES back there,

Lines 2–4 show Leo to be slowing down in speech rate for certain parts of his turn (*but why didn't we revise* and *knew this is gonna happen*). Heather orients to this speech rate and also speaks slowly at the beginning of her next turn (*that's a very good question*, line 5). She then continues at an unmarked rate. Interestingly, Leo interprets Heather's prosodically orienting TCU as complete and begins his next turn in overlap with her continuation. Prosodic orientation strengthens the

positive nature of a second participant's assessment and creates a close tie between the two turns. Repeating a previous speaker's prosody is a way for an incoming participant to signal alignment beyond the verbal material, and in addition to the approving nature of the assessment. Prosodic orientation also typically signals turn-yielding, as later subsections of this chapter will show.

*News receipts: 'Oh' and related exclamations*

Prosodic orientations are repeatedly found to co-occur with news receipts, again a type of response which involves a high degree of conversational 'looking back'. The prosodically orienting news receipts in the current data corpus are all prefaced by 'oh' (Heritage 1984; 1998; Flowe 2002) or related exclamations ('oo', 'ow', 'aa' and one case of 'no'), with the exclamation itself typically carrying the orientation in prosody. A first example comes from Minnesotan radio host Freddy Merts, who gives his callers the opportunity to 'talk to a real life lesbian'. He is on the phone with Sharon:

(26)

**Men**

- 1 FR: you've NEVER had a man in your LIFE.  
 2 SH: <<h> NO NO not no,>  
 3 -> uhm I've been sexual with ↑`MEN be↑`FORE.  
 4 -> FR: [↑`OH.  
 5 SH: [YEARS ago.  
 6 but uhm i made a comMITment.

Sharon's utterance before Freddy's news receipt carries two pitch step-ups, on *men* and *-fore* (line 3), both followed by a steep fall on the same syllable. Freddy's *oh* (line 4) matches this pitch movement. Sharon's continuation shows that she had not completed her turn, at least not syntactically, while Freddy gives no sign of wishing to continue after his prosodically orienting surprise token.

Another news receipt occurs in Barbara Carlson's radio programme. Hollywood correspondent Ron is reporting on a number of actresses who have been found to work as callgirls in their spare time:

(27)

**Callgirls**

- 1 RO: <<cresc> several ACTresses who we knOw;  
 2 <<h> who Inbetween ↑MOVie ro:les,

- 3 -> have BEEN those ↑↑CALL`girls.>>  
 4 -> BA: ↑↑OO.  
 5 (-)  
 6 they must be in [pretty good SHAPE.  
 7 RO: [so –  
 8 we are really blowing the LID off TINseltown tomorrow.

The prosodic design of Ron's turn progresses towards a climax (lines 1–3): he continually increases his loudness, and from line 2 also his pitch register, with a first pitch step-up on *movie* (line 2) and an even higher step-up on his final nucleus *call-*, followed by a steep fall on *-girls*. This last pitch step-up and fall is repeated by Barbara Carlson (*oo*, line 4). After a macro-pause she continues with unmarked and non-orienting prosodic design. News receipt as an action is strongly linked to previous news delivery (Freese and Maynard 1998; Local 1996). The instances of prosodically orienting news receipts in our data routinely involve a matching of pitch step-up, which means that the preceding news telling has already contained a step-up. It may be the case that news deliveries are especially prone to strong final pitch peaks, which act as an ideal prosodic design for the news climax at the end of such a turn, and which invite a prosodically orienting news receipt.

### *Disagreeing*

Our examination of matching of loudness in this chapter (p. 46ff) showed that the interactional work carried out by a prosodically orientating turn does not necessarily have to be conversationally aligning with a previous turn and speaker. An extract in which this is particularly apparent is (7), *Lets talk about you*. The sequence, although not interactionally aligning, occurs in a non-serious environment, and the participants seem to be staging a mock-fight. Many other instances of prosodically orientating non-aligning actions contain serious, non-playful disagreement. One such instance is the following telephone conversation between Edna and Margy. Edna has just suggested going out to a restaurant with Margy and her mother:

(28)

#### **Dutch**

- 1 MA: <<h> it's a GOOD DEAL.>  
 2 -> ED: <<l> i'll 'tAke you `BOTH up.>  
 3 -> MA: <<f+h> 'NO:;  
 4 -> we'll 'A:LL 'GO: `DUTCH.>

- 5                    [(     )  
 6 -> ED:        [<<f> 'NO: 'WE: 'WON'T.  
 7                    because uh ma- does your MUM like to SHOP at la  
 8                    GRAND [and stuff,  
 9            MA:                [YES;  
 10                  OH YES.

Margy's turn *no we'll all go dutch* (lines 3–4) can be heard as prosodically orienting to Edna's preceding turn (*I'll take you both up*, line 2). Edna speaks at a low pitch level and moderate loudness, but Margy's incoming turn is high in loudness and pitch register. Thus Margy's disagreement is accompanied by non-matching prosodic delivery. A second prosodic orientation occurs when Edna in turn disagrees with Margy (line 6). Margy (lines 3–4) speaks not only very loudly and very high, she also produces a marked intonation contour: the first intonation unit, *no* (line 3), is a long rising movement on the monosyllable; the following tone group (line 4) begins with an unaccented word, but from the onset onwards contains three strongly accented and lengthened syllables. The first two are produced each with an individual rise, *all go*, while the nucleus *dutch* falls down to low. In overlap with more talk from Margy, Edna comes in with almost the same prosody (line 6): in a loud voice, which is not only orienting to Margy, but can also be attributed to her competitive incoming, she produces three strongly accented syllables, the first two of which are lengthened and rising (*no we*), and the last one falling to low (*won't*).

Both instances show disagreement, but the first contains prosodic non-matching, while the second involves prosodic matching. Prosodic non-matching is an iconic representation of the non-matching of opinions between the two participants, and therefore a prosodic pattern which serves to underline the difference between two turns. Prosodic matching refers back to the previous turn by taking up some of its most prominent prosodic elements, while the verbal material in the turn conveys strong rejection of the previous turn. Such prosodic matching in the face of non-matching interactional goals places the second turn on an equal footing with the first by displaying the same degree of prosodic animation, and thus possibly of determination. In both cases, the prosodic orientation underlines one aspect of the disagreeing turn sequence: non-matching orientation highlights the interactional discord, while matching prosody accentuates the equal degree of disagreement.

**Turn yielding prosodic orientation**

When it comes to the sequential placement of prosodically orientating TCUs, the corpus shows that they typically co-occur with either turns or actions which are presented and treated as complete by participants. This is apparent from the fact that the majority of prosodically orienting TCUs in the data collection are followed by a change in speakership: after a participant has delivered a prosodically orienting response, the floor goes back to the previous turn-holder. See for example (2), Tim good morning:

(2)

**Tim good morning**

- 1 BA: YES peter?  
 2 (.)  
 3 LINE TWO;  
 4 you want me to go to LINE TWO,=  
 5 TIM.  
 6 good MORning.  
 7 -> TI: <<h> 'HI `BARbra,>  
 8 -> BA: <<h> 'HELL`o TIM,>=  
 9 TI: <<l> haven't tAlked to you in a LO::NG TI:ME.>  
 10 BA: <<h+held> hOw are thIng:s in the LAUND>ry  
 11 business.

In this instance, both the first turn, Tim's *hi Barbra*, and Barbara's prosodically orienting second pair part, *hello Tim*, stand alone and give up the floor to the co-participant in immediate succession. In Tim's case, this is hardly surprising, as he is allowing turn space for a second pair part from Barbara. However, Barbara, too, does not continue after her SPP. Both speakers treat her turn as complete: Barbara by showing no sign of turn-holding, Tim by coming in to speak without hesitation. Another representative example is (19), Lynch, reproduced below:

(19)

**Lynch**

- 1 MA: and then he has e:r (.) this uh college PARK.  
 2 which is up by FULLert.  
 3 and it's it's [connected with the  
 4 -> ED: [ <<f> ↑OH;  
 5 -> 'thAt's ↑LYNCH.>  
 6 (-)

- 7 -> MA: <<p+breathy> ↑YEAH.>  
 8 -> ED: <<h> gOd it was in the ↑↑PAPer.>  
 9 -> MA: <<decrec> well that's lArry's ↑↑STOrY.>  
 10 (-)  
 11 ED: is that LARRY'S?  
 12 MA: that was larry's ^STOrY;  
 13 ^YEAH;  
 14 he WROTE it;

Edna's news receipt (lines 4–5) is followed by Margy's prosodically orienting confirmation *yeah* (line 7) after which she does not continue but allows the floor to return to Edna, who also treats Margy's *yeah* as a transition relevance place and takes the floor (line 8). Her turn *god it was in the paper* is another prosodic orientation to the previous turn, in which she produces a further pitch step-up (*paper*). Again, the end of this turn is treated by both participants as a location for turn taking. The next turn carries still another prosodic orientation, which is followed by a pause (line 10), and then a speaker change (line 11). All in all this extract shows three free-standing prosodically orienting turns (lines 7, 8 and 9), which are treated by interactants as a place for turn transition.

The following extract contains two prosodically orienting answers to questions. Host Leo Laporte and his caller Tyler, a high-school teacher, are talking about violent protesters on the streets of various Californian towns and cities during the 1991 Gulf War:

(29)

**High school**

- 1 TY: they're con↑FUSED;=  
 2 and they dOn't have any i i↑DEA; (-) .h  
 3 about ↑WHY <<l> they feel like wAlking out.>  
 4 [any ' mO:re than just to go jOIn the CROWD.  
 5 LE: [what-  
 6 -> <<all> whAt `GRADES do you teach.>  
 7 -> TY: <<all> I teach `HIGH school.>  
 8 LE: ha ↑hOw are you DEALing with the kids.=  
 9 <<all> are you are you TELLing,  
 10 are you TALKing,  
 11 have you disCUSSION groups - (-)  
 12 [<<acc> do you wha- >  
 13 TY: [.hhh  
 14 -> LE: <<all> whAt `CLASSEs do you teach.>>

- 15 -> TY: <<all> I teach `ENGLISH.>  
 16 LE: Okay.  
 17 TY: .h a:nd we we DO:-  
 18 <<all> we sit around> and TALK em; (-)

In this excerpt the same pitch pattern (lines 6 and 14) is matched twice (lines 7 and 15) in a similar WH-question-answer sequence. Both Leo and Tyler produce a steady declination line from the onset onwards (*what* (lines 6 and 14); *I teach* (lines 7 and 15)), a prominent fall on the nucleus (*grades* (line 6); *high* (line 7) / *class-* (line 14); *eng-* (line 15)) and a final fall across the tail (*do you teach* (line 6); *school* (line 7) / *-es do you teach* (line 14); *-lish* (line 15)). The perception of Tyler's incoming turns as prosodically orientating to Leo's is not only due to their repetition of intonational design, but also by an orientation in speech rate: both Leo (lines 6 and 14) and Tyler (lines 7 and 15) speed up their talk for the respective tone groups. Furthermore, both responses repeat the lexical item *teach*.

The first orienting sequence (lines 6–7) follows after a lengthy turn from Tyler in which he has offered his interpretation of the protesters' motives. Leo's first question (line 6) is a rather blunt topic change to which Tyler replies with his short prosodically matching answer (line 7). It is designed as turn final, and Leo treats it as such by taking the floor immediately afterwards (line 8). In lines 8ff Leo attempts to elicit more information about Tyler's *dealing with the kids*. He does so by using several syntactic question formats, some complete, some fragmented: *how are you dealing with the kids* (line 8); *are you are you telling* (line 9); *are you talking* (line 10); *have you discussion groups* (line 11); *do you wha-* (line 12). Tyler's inbreath (line 13) projects a potential reply, but Leo inserts another question: *what classes do you teach* (line 14), to which Tyler responds, treating this last question with priority over previous ones. Only later does he reply to Leo's earlier questions (lines 17ff).

Although it seems to be Leo's intention to elicit a longer turn from Tyler in which he elaborates on his teaching, Leo does not succeed immediately in this aim. His last TCU *what classes do you teach*, with its higher speech rate and straightforward intonational and syntactic format in contrast to previous fragmented formats, seems to make a short, orienting reply relevant. Leo complies with Tyler's turn completion by acknowledging with *okay* (line 16), before Tyler comes in to expand on his teaching practices (lines 17ff). Thus the turn yielding property of the prosodically orienting response seems to be respected by both speakers before the clearly elicited longer response can be delivered. Another

instance of turn yielding prosodic orientation comes from Barbara Carlson, who is on the phone to Mick:

(30)

**Good dad**

- 1 BA: well you DO have two children,=  
 2 an-  
 3 MI: yeah.  
 4 -> BA: <<breathy+p> it 'SOUNDS like um you're a 'gOOD  
 5 -> ↑'DAD.>  
 6 -> MI: <<breathy+p> 'Oh ↑'THANK you.>  
 7 BA: it sounds;  
 8 ↑THANK you for um (.) SHARing that STORy.  
 9 .hh uh we apprEciate um our LISTeners,  
 10 because it's very DIFFicult.

Barbara's contour on her compliment (*it sounds like um you're a good dad*, lines 4–5) contains several pitch rises, one on her onset *sounds* and another one on the penultimate syllable *good*. The rising movement reaches a climax in the pitch step-up on the nucleus syllable *dad* and falls down to low on that same syllable. Mick's reply is prefaced by a rising *oh*, after which it shows the same step-up followed by a falling movement on *thank you* (line 6). More orientation occurs in terms of voice quality and loudness as Mick matches Barbara's breathy and quiet speech. The prosodically orientating *thank you* following a compliment has the same backward-looking quality described for the responding moves as we noted earlier (pp. 65ff). Mick does not project any further talk, but his prosodically matching turn is an autonomous action. Barbara treats it as such by taking the floor and tagging onto her previous turn the right-dislocated *it sounds* (line 7) before continuing with a *thank you* of her own (line 8).

A further instance of a prosodically orienting turn ending is the following, taken from a telephone conversation between two US American speakers, Mike and Bart. The extract below occurs very shortly into the call:

(31)

**Party**

- 1 BA: gOOD to HEAR my man.=  
 2 whAt's ↑UP.  
 3 MI: well i tAlked to joAnne ROGers uh long

- 4           DISTance last night?  
 5       BA:   uh hu?  
 6 -> MI:   .hh and uh (.) shE said that you guys were having a  
 7 ->       ↑PARty friday.  
 8       (-)  
 9 -> BA:   that's co↑RRECT.  
 10 -> MI:  well uh i wasn't clued ↑IN on thA:t,  
 11       (-)  
 12 -> BA:  <<all> you ↑↑WEREN'T;>  
 13       MI:  NO and;  
 14           i thought maybe you didn't want me to COME or  
 15           some[thing].  
 16       BA:       [oh  
 17           MIKE.  
 18           yOU know better than THAT.

Lines 6–7 in this extract show Mike to be eliciting confirmation. His turn carries a pitch step-up on the nucleus *part-*, Bart's reply contains one of similar pitch on its nucleus *-rect* (line 9). The participants are dealing with a potential face threat, as Mike confronts Bart with the fact that his friends are planning a party without having invited him (lines 6–7). Bart's responding turn confirms this after a macro-pause (line 8). The silence in line 8 is a dispreferred option after Bart has implicitly been allocated as next speaker by Mike's previous turn (line 6). The verbal confirmation *that's correct* carries little forward projection: it does nothing more but confirm Mike's assumption, while the prosodic matching underlines this element of backwards reference. As in previous extracts, the prosodic orientation is instrumental in passing the floor back to the previous speaker. Bart thereby treats Mike's turn as one to which a confirmation is a sufficient reply, ignoring an implicit request for elaboration.

However, Mike's reply continues the prosodic orientation. In his following turn *well uh i wasn't clued in on that* (line 10) he repeats the pitch step-up, and thereby passes the floor back to Bart. After a pause Bart himself applies the same strategy again (line 12). He produces a further pitch step-up on his last syllable *weren't*, which is noticeably higher than previous step-ups, and takes his voice into falsetto. Thus he not only orients to, but exaggerates Mike's prosodic pattern; he also increases his speech rate. Nevertheless, he is still 'doing' prosodic orientation by continuing the pitch step-up, thereby passing the floor back to

Mike, who now responds without prosodic orientation and thus breaks up the established pattern of short matching turns (lines 13ff).

The instances presented in this section have all shown prosodic orientation to be involved in turn-yielding. Although we have only shown cases of prosodic matching, other forms of prosodic orientation also frequently co-occur with turn endings; see for example (15), Shaken, (16), Rhubarb, (17); South Carolina, (18), Hi di hi.

It seems that prosodic orientation is frequently treated by conversationalists as a complete prosodic form. This perception of completion may lead to its treatment as a marker of finality in other interactional domains, such as turn structure. So far, the functional potentials of prosodic orientation are backwards reference and turn completion; the following section shows that completion is often an element of prosodic orientation even in cases where it is not followed by a speaker change.

### Action-closing prosodic orientation

Although most prosodic orientations co-occur with turn-yielding, a small number of prosodically orienting next turns do not end in turn-taking, although they are followed by a change in conversational action or topic. One environment for prosodically orienting action boundaries is the end of an extended prosodically orientating sequence. A representative instance is (4), Dumb, reproduced here:

(4)

#### Dumb

- 1 LE: <<1> DUS<sup>t</sup>in on the line from Antioch;=  
 2 YOU'RE on the giant sixty eight knbr.>  
 3 DU: you GOT me.  
 4 LE: GOT you dustin,  
 5 DU: how ye DOin lEo,  
 6 LE: thAnks for CALLing.  
 7 GOOD.  
 8 DU: uh i've an oPINion question for you.  
 9 LE: <<all+1> aRIGHT;>  
 10 DU: is (.) the s sad<sup>↑</sup>DAM hussEin.  
 11 is he is he PLAYing naIve?  
 12 or is he just STU [pid.  
 13 LE: [is he jUst DUMB.  
 14 DU: <laughs>

- 15 LE: bOY BEATS ME.  
 16 -> he's ↑NOT dumb;  
 17 <<all> i'll tell you something;>  
 18 -> DU: <<h> ↑NO he's [↑NOT dumb;>  
 19 LE: [he's NOT DUMB.  
 20 -> DU: he ↑cAn't be DUMB i mean,  
 21 LE: but [he is  
 22 -> DU: [the ↑POwer he has.  
 23 -> LE: he ↑MIGHT be crAzy, (.)  
 24 [uh:.  
 25 -> DU: [↑HITler was crAzy,  
 26 -> LE: he ↑MIGHT be crazy,  
 27 uh: you have the mA:n is living in a BUNker, (.)  
 28 uh:: with a MA:ZE,

After his last prosodically matching TCU (line 25) Leo continues his turn, returning to an unmarked prosodic design and starting a new conversational activity, an account of Saddam Hussein's perceived living arrangements (lines 26ff). He also changes the syntactic pattern. While the preceding prosodically orienting turns largely contain the construction NP (*he, Hitler*) + AUX (+NEG) + ADJ (*dumb, crazy*) (lines 16, 18, 19, 20, 23, and 25), with one exception (*the power he has*, line 22), Leo continues his turn with the phrase *you have the man is living in a bunker*, a clear break with previous syntactic structure. A second instance of an extended prosodically orienting sequence is (7), Let's talk about you:

(7)

**Let's talk about you**

- 1 DV: <<all> would you TALK a minute;=  
 2 I have to look for my Other NOTES here.>  
 3 MI: AIRRIGHT,  
 4 i was BORN: the septEmber of nine [teen ninety-  
 5 DV: [ <<f+h> no  
 DON'T give  
 6 us when you were BORN [for cryin out;  
 7 MI: [alRIGHT,  
 8 DV: uuuuuhaaa  
 9 (-)  
 10 [keep GOin;  
 11 MI: [no i'll just lEt you GO [buddy,  
 12 DV: [keep GOin;

- 13 MI: if you're gonna DICtate what i TALK about,=  
 14 then YOU just (-) .hh  
 15 DV: it's RADio.  
 16 come ON;  
 17 MI: [YOU just ( ) buddy,  
 18 DV: [let's GO EH,  
 19 MI: [YOU just ( )  
 20 DV: [let's `GO EH,  
 21 let's ↑TALK about some'pn Interesting.  
 22 -> MI: <<f+h> let's tAlk about YOUR FAILure to be  
 23 -> prepared for this rADio show.  
 24 -> SHALL we?  
 25 -> [<<extra f+h> HOW many years have you bEEn in  
 26 -> this BUSiness?>  
 27 -> DV: [<<f+h> let's tAlk about `YOU;  
 28 -> let's tAlk about `YOU;  
 29 -> MI: <<extra f+h> sEventeen YEARS,  
 30 -> [and you can't get rEAdy for a SHOW?>  
 31 -> DV: [<<f+h> hAngin out in HERE;  
 32 -> while I was outSIDE;>  
 33 -> MI: <<f+h> yeah I [was here OUT`SIDE.>  
 34 -> DV: [<<f+h> with the `PEOPle.  
 35 -> I wAsn't SNObbish.  
 36 -> I was out here with the PEOPle.  
 37 -> so THERE.>  
 38 (-)  
 39 how about THAT eh,

Once again, an extended sequence of prosodically orienting turns co-occurs with the closing of the conversational action, before the same speaker returns to unmarked prosody (*how about that eh*, line 39). Vogel's meta-comment on the preceding mock fight treats that sequence as closed and shows him to be no longer participating in it. The two instances above show extended prosodically orientating sequences in which the prosodic orientation spans the length of the activity, and both the prosodic orientation and the activity end together.

Earlier (pp. 65ff) we described prosodically orienting responding actions which are typically achieved within the span of only one intonation unit. Those cases, too, may be followed by talk from the same speaker. A first example is an extract from Dick Hatch's radio phone-in

programme, where the caller is Mr. Burgess and the topic is spoilt pet food. Dick Hatch is talking about his own cat:

(32)

**Kids**

- 1 DH: and she she Is part of the ↑FAMily.  
 2 I mean alright no- we're not SILLy about her,  
 3 but I would <<len> CERTainly never GIVE hE:r,>  
 4 because of what i FEEL about her,  
 5 she's pArt of our ^LIVES;  
 6 -> she's ^Older than Any of 'my ↑↑KIDS.  
 7 -> BU: ↑↑Oh `i accEpt that abso↑LUTely.=  
 8 but MY point would be that if we Are talking about  
 9 TINNED PET fOOD;

Mr. Burgess' prosodically orienting turn (line 7) explicitly accepts Dick Hatch's previous line of argumentation. Dick Hatch's intonation contour *she's older than any of my kids* (line 6) begins with an unaccented pre-onset syllable, which is followed by a rising-falling movement on *older*. Across the following syllables the contour rises steadily to a prominent rise on *my* and a high step-up on the nucleus *kids*, ending in a final fall. Mr Burgess' orienting contour (line 7) first repeats the high step-up on his onset syllable *oh*, then falls on *I* and continuously rises again until another step-up on the nucleus syllable *-lut-*, also followed by a final fall. Following the prosodic orientation, Mr. Burgess outlines his own perspective, which contrasts clearly from that which Dick Hatch has described so far: the concessive connector *but* and the following accent on *my point* indicate an upcoming contrast. Thus, the prosodically orienting turn contains and completes the acceptance of the previous utterance, while the non-orienting continuation of the turn turns to disagreement.

Another instance of action-closing following only one prosodically orienting TCU comes from Barbara Carlson's radio show. She has four co-hosts in the studio with whom she argues over the necessity of health checks:

(33)

**Cancer**

- 1 BA: i mean I':ve never had a PROState thank god,  
 2 .hh i mean is THAT uncomfortable?

- 3 CO: yEs it I:S.  
 4 BA: [or is it FUN.  
 5 DA: [oh::;  
 6 [it's NASTy.  
 7 MA: [it's unCOMfortable.  
 8 BA: it's unCOMfortable.  
 9 MA: yes it's NOT;  
 10 it's UGLy.  
 11 BA: <<h> it's UGLy.>  
 12 so you don't like to have THAT done?  
 13 MA: ↑NO.  
 14 DO: but it's NECessary.  
 15 BA: but if you're a ↑MAN;  
 16 you have to have it ↑DONE;  
 17 [( )  
 18 MA: [the only thing only thing worse than ↑THAT;=  
 19 -> <<cresc> is actually getting ´prOstate ↑CANCer;>  
 20 -> BA: <<f> ↑YEAH;>  
 21 so thAt's i mean-  
 22 you know we BOTH BOTH SEXes get something  
 23 that's nOT jUst ↑wONderful.

Mark produces two successive step-ups in his turn *the only thing worse than that is actually getting prostate cancer* (lines 18–19), and increases his loudness towards the end. Barbara Carlson orients to his turn prosodically in her matching agreement token *yeah* (line 20). Following the prosodically orientating agreement, she sums up the previous conversation in her TCU *so that's I mean we both both sexes get something that's not just wonderful* (lines 21–23). Once again, prosodic orientation overlaps with the end of a conversational activity, in this case an agreement, and the non-orienting continuation begins a new activity, in this case a summary.

### Summary

Prosodic orientation typically co-occurs with backward-oriented responding activities such as confirmations, agreements, acknowledgements, answers to questions, assessments-as-seconds, and the like. This is hardly surprising, since the prosodic form itself is an orientation to prior forms and thus paves the way for an interactional alignment. With respect to sequential position, prosodic orientation can commonly be

observed in closing turns or actions. It is treated by participants as a conversational whole, and as one prosodic unit, after which some kind of interactional change becomes relevant. It does not project any further talk.

This is especially relevant when, as is the case in most instances, the orientation covers only the first intonation unit and TCU of the incoming speaker's utterance. The only exceptions so far have been matching of pitch register, pitch step-up and loudness, where conversationalists were found to carry on over longer stretches of talk (cf. (4), Dumb, (5), Nice, and (7), Let's talk about you). Other kinds of prosodic matching, non-matching, continuation and complementation routinely span a single intonation unit.

These findings make for a holistic picture. Prosodic orientation routinely co-occurs with responding actions, which do not project any more talk and which speakers design in order to close a turn or action. In short, prosodic orientation has been shown to be a conversational practice which interactants use to signal both backwards orientation and closure.

## Conclusion

The conversational practice described in this chapter provides empirical evidence that participants in spontaneous interaction employ prosody as an autonomous signalling resource, independent of the verbal, syntactic and semantic domain, perhaps with the exception of prosodic complementation, in which verbal repetition is frequent. Participants' prosodic orientation shows them to be aware of the precise prosodic design of a prior turn; simultaneously, it reveals interactants' ability to manipulate the signalling function of previous prosodic patterns through a variety of prosodically orienting activities, such as prosodic matching, prosodic non-matching and prosodic complementation. As with other contextualization cues, prosody is a domain of talk-in-interaction which is rarely referred back to explicitly by participants themselves, and it is an element which speakers are not held liable for (cf. Auer 1999: 172):

[Prosodic signals] are not 'accountable' in the same way that words are (Garfinkel 1967). Speakers can be held responsible for (that is criticized, blamed, asked to apologize for, and so on) their choice of words, but it is difficult to take them to task for their prosody. (Couper-Kuhlen 2001)

Although it seems that in particular interactional environments the parameters loudness and speech rate can be referred to, as in the example from Local and Wootton (1995) mentioned above,<sup>20</sup> pitch is a parameter which participants seem particularly reluctant to mention explicitly. An extract from a face-to-face conversation between two girlfriends illustrates this fact:

(34)

Voice

- 1 AL: now JOAN talked the whole time=  
 2 -> <<falsetto + extra high + all> in a voice like THIS -  
 3 -> <<higher> HIGH::: alissa i'm so happy to see YOU;>>  
 4 hehe go-  
 5 <<laughing + h> GO::D;  
 6 (-)  
 7 -> .h TURN the VOLume DOWN;  
 8 let me OU:Ta he:re,>

Alissa is engaged in a piece of reported speech, which she delivers in an extremely high falsetto voice and also very fast (lines 2–3). Yet although the distinctive feature of Alissa's representation of Joan's voice is its extreme falsetto pitch register, what she refers to in her reported comment about it is its loudness (line 7), rather than its high pitch.

Prosodic orientation may be a way for conversationalists to get as close as possible to referring back to the prosody employed by other participants. By using prosodic orientation in their utterances they bring a prior speaker's prosody to the surface, call attention to it and place it in a new context. In doing so, they are able to construct a relationship between the previous utterance, whose prosody they are taking notice of, and their own current utterance, which they are modelling on the other speaker's prosody.<sup>21</sup>

From the data extracts considered here, a frequent interactional characteristic of prosodic orientation seems to be the creation of alignment between two turns, and between two participants. If interactants are engaged in conversational actions which are also aligning on other levels the prosodic orientation intensifies the alignment (extract (10), *I am wild*). If an action is not in itself openly aligning it receives an element of alignment from the prosodic orientation (extract (8), *Can't imagine*). This may be due to the additional structuring work which is accomplished through prosodic orientation: in the case of a prosodic matching, the

parallelism which is created formally can represent parallelisms in other domains.

However, alignment is not an inherent part of prosodic orientation as it can also be found in interactionally dissenting sequences (extract (7), *Let's talk about you*; (28), Dutch).<sup>22</sup> Yet, even in those cases participants seem to signal that their second turn is in some way rooted within the first turn, and that they are engaging in the same conversational activity. The structural parallel seems to underline the existence of differences on other levels of talk. In fact, the repetition, continuation or complementation of the prosodic aspect of a first speaker's utterance may foreground contrasting elements in other areas exactly because the contextualizing frame has remained the same. Prosodic orientation thus seems to create a structural bridge between two turns which could not be achieved by verbal material alone. Coming to a better understanding of this bridging function can be a goal of further research.

# 3

## Stylized Prosodic Orientation

### Introduction

The previous chapter presented prosodic orientation in the parameters intonation contour, pitch step-up, pitch register, loudness, speech rate, voice quality and phonetic sound production. All occurrences of orientation in these parameters were of an unmarked kind, that is to say the prosodic design was not itself highlighted by speakers. While the act of orientation can be said to retrospectively draw attention to a previous speaker's prosodic delivery, that first speaker employs his/her prosodic pattern in its routine function for the interactional purpose involved. The prosody is not exaggerated or marked, and it is not brought into the centre of attention. Prosodic orientation also occurs in conversational sequences in which certain prosodic parameters are highly exaggerated, and thus linguistically marked. In those instances, the underlying practice is still that of prosodic orientation, but the additional highlighting of the prosodic pattern underlines speakers' awareness of their own prosodic activity. This phenomenon is described here under the term 'stylized prosodic orientation', and this chapter will show that it is used by participants to accomplish specific interactional goals in addition to those achieved by unmarked prosodic orientation.

The term 'stylization' has been employed previously with relation to prosodic phenomena, and an overview of the literature is provided in the first section of this chapter. The term typically refers to so-called singsong intonation, in which two pitch values are lengthened and held to an extent that gives the impression of a musical interval between two identifiable notes. While such an extension of a prosodic pattern in time is one form of prosodic exaggeration, this chapter presents other forms

of marked prosodic patterns, such as extreme loudness and high pitch register, or unconventional voice quality.

Prosodic stylization is considered to be an interactional resource with which participants highlight their own prosodic design, and thus draw attention to it.<sup>1</sup> The data show that this is a gradual phenomenon. On the one hand, participants may produce extremely stylized sequences in which their highlighting of prosodic patterns is clearly observable; such highly stylized turns can be found in ritualized settings (Couper-Kuhlen 1999a), but the following sections show that instances of high stylization also appear in spontaneous everyday conversation. On the other hand, interactants may stylize their turns less strongly, in which case the highlighting of the prosody is less foregrounded, but nevertheless present.

The following sections approach stylized prosodic orientation from two angles. In a first step, three types of stylized orientations are categorized according to their defining prosodic characteristics, which are musical notes or intervals, marked and exaggerated prosody, or repetition of the same lexical and prosodic item across several turns and speakers. In the second part of the chapter, interactional environments for collaboratively stylized sequences are explored. The phenomenon is shown to co-occur with the display of appreciation, the voicing of imaginary figures, certain conversational routines and structures, and playful sequential interludes.

## **Previous research on stylized prosody**

The literature on stylized prosody to date is scarce and the following discussion includes several studies which do not employ the term 'stylization' for the phenomenon. No previous research investigates the collaborative practice of stylized prosodic orientation. The majority of the work on stylized prosody centres on one specific intonation pattern, the 'call contour', that is the intonation contour with which we typically associate calling someone at a distance, although Ladd (1978) shows that the prosodic form is not inherently linked to the activity of calling. It is routinely realized as a high, held tone, followed by a lower one which is also held. The two pitches give the impression of forming a musical interval. Other forms of stylization, such as highly exaggerated prosody or playful repetition are not considered.

This section presents overviews of the works of Pike (1945), Abe (1962), Liberman (1975), Gibbon (1976), Ladd (1978), Haiman (1989; 1990; 1994), Couper-Kuhlen (1999a, 2004a) and Flowe (2002). Additionally,

singsong intonation, and specifically the call contour, is mentioned in Leben (1975), whose study focuses on possibilities of a written notation for the distribution of tones across the syllables of the chanted phrase. Hayes and Lahiri (1992) compare the 'chanted call' in English with that in Bengali, finding different distributions of pitch levels across syllables. Gussenhoven (1993) analyses instances of the call contour across different word types in Dutch, and finds evidence for a foot-based analysis of stress distribution in that language. Cruttenden (1997: 119f, 161) mentions stylization in the sense introduced by Ladd (1978), that is as a pitch movement which involves levels rather than glides, and which implies a stereotypical meaning. Hirst and di Cristo (1998) follow up the notion of stylized intonation as a stereotypical pattern, or intonation cliché, in their survey of the intonation systems of 20 languages; stylized patterns are mentioned for English, German, French, Dutch, Japanese, Romanian and Thai. Ogden *et al.* (2004) present a stylized intonational pattern in Finnish and show that it is employed by participants to index 'no news'. Their data contain one example of repetition of the pattern by various speakers (p. 307f), possibly an instance of stylized prosodic orientation.

### **Pike (1945)**

One of the first descriptions of the singsong contour can be found in Pike (1945), who calls it a 'spoken chant'. According to Pike, 'its meaning is of a CALL, often with WARNING by or to children' (71, emphasis in the original). Pike also describes another spoken chant: the 'CHILDHOOD TRIUMPH', in Pike's notation:  $^{\circ}2-2-^{\circ}3-1-^{\circ}2-2-^{\circ}3-3$ . 'The meaning of this contour is so powerful that nonsense syllables often replace words, and the implication remains unchanged' (1945: 71). Both spoken chants involve musical intervals, which according to Pike carry a form of meaning in themselves, that is 'warning' for the call contour, and 'triumph' for the children's singsong. Further implications of the two contours are not pursued.

### **Abe (1962)**

Abe (1962) describes various call contours, and distinguishes four different types, out of which he defines two as 'calls proper': 'high-downglide, suspended' and 'upglide, suspended':

I define 'high-downglide' as a pattern that involves a very high pitch of voice and a lower one that follows it. This lower pitch, however, is, so to speak, suspended in mid-air; it never comes down to the bottom of the speaker's range as does the ordinary declarative utterance.

For example, when you speak or rather shout to a person named Johnny who you think is a certain distance away from you or who is out of sight, you start by raising your voice quite high on the first syllable, John, prolonging it for a while, then you pronounce the second syllable ny on a lower level, sustaining it on a level pitch for a long while again, with or without slight terminal rise.

When the speaker uses 'upglide', he starts, this time, on a lower level and raises his voice on the last syllable which is kept level as is type 1 (the high-downglide, B.S.R.). (1962: 519)

From this description, and without any empirical evidence, we cannot be certain whether these two contours are what other researchers later define as the call contour. The first of Abe's types involves two pitches, one which starts on a high pitch and is held there, and one which drops down to a lower pitch level, is also held, and potentially ends in a slight rise. Both syllables and pitch movements are lengthened. For the second type, lengthening is also present, but the pitch movement rises from a low, held tone up to a high level pitch. It is the first of these types which seems to coincide with later descriptions of the call contour, although the possibility of a slight rise at the end points towards a potential difference. In most other studies of the call contour, the two pitch movements are described as forming a musical interval, a description which is strongly supported by the fact that the two pitches are held, and thus give the impression of being sung rather than spoken. This musical aspect is lacking in Abe's account, and his allowance for a final rise at the end of the contour may mean that he has a different, more 'spoken' contour in mind. His second call contour, which also seems to involve a two-level pitch pattern and held intonation on the last syllable, is not described in more detail, and no examples are given for it. It is therefore difficult to decide whether he has a form of singsong intonation in mind.

### **Lieberman (1975)**

The call contour in its typical form is described by Lieberman (1975), who uses the term 'vocative chant':

There is a particular kind of chanted intonation which is used to call to people with whom the speaker is not in eye contact ... The 'tune' of the vocative chant consists of three pitches, of which the first is optional, while the second and third are obligatory. The third pitch is

fixed a minor third below the second ... The relation of the first, optional pitch to the others is not so precisely fixed, although it is always lower than either of those that follow. I think that intervals of either a fourth or a fifth below the following tone are fairly natural. (1975: 30)

Liberman goes on to make generalizations for the distribution of stressed and unstressed syllables across the vocative chant:

The high tone is always associated with the main stress of the text, and with any syllables which intervene between the main stress and the point at which the mid tone is associated.

If there are any syllables preceding the main stress, the low tone is associated with them; if no such syllables exist, the low tone does not occur. If there is a secondary stress in the portion of the text following the main stress, the mid tone is associated with it, as well as with any following syllables.

If the syllables following the main stress are all unstressed, the mid tone is associated with the last of them.

If nothing follows the main stress, then that syllable is 'broken' into two distinct parts, the second of which receives the mid tone. (1975: 31f)

These generalizations are not the result of empirical analysis, and it seems that in natural conversation other possibilities are open to speakers, concerning for example the distribution of pitch on unstressed syllables after the main stress. Liberman makes the point that all native speakers of English are capable of using this chant with the correct stress pattern, even those who are otherwise unmusical (1975: 30). In addition to the vocative chant, Liberman, like Pike (1945), also describes what he calls the 'children's chant' as another intonational, even musical routine:

There is a ditty which is known to all English-speaking children, and therefore to most English-speaking adults. I don't know whether it is more general. It is used for taunting, exulting, singing certain nursery rhymes, and perhaps in other ways. Its most familiar instantiation is perhaps on the taunting nonsense string 'nyah, nyah, nyah, nyah, nyah'. It has both a fixed melody (the intervals being quite exactly defined) and a fixed rhythm. (1975: 32)

For this chant Liberman also gives generalizations which apply to all instances, and which are strongly related to stress distribution. Unfortunately, there are no occurrences of the children's chant in the data corpus for this study, and it will therefore receive no further attention. However, it is a fascinating case of prosodic stylization and would certainly deserve a study of its own.

### **Gibbon (1976)**

Gibbon (1976) describes various kinds of calling contours in great detail, and some aspects of his analysis remain interesting for us throughout this chapter:

In English and many other languages, a number of intonation patterns of a somewhat formulaic nature are characteristically used to constitute calls and related kinds of utterance ...

These contours are phonetically somewhat isolated, and are, partly on this account, rather easy to identify. They are conspicuously different from other intonation patterns found both in conversational and formal delivery; structurally they are also isolated from other patterns since they tend not to co-occur with different patterns in the same dialogue contribution; from the point of view of placement, they tend to occur with formulaic or distributionally relatively isolated items, too (e.g. apostrophically usable items like proper names), though not exclusively; finally, they occur in fairly easily identifiable contexts. (1976: 274f)

Gibbon goes on to distinguish various conversational actions, 'roles' in his terminology, for which the contour is being used. His examples are English and German; his notation involves dashes such as as-, - and', indicating low, mid and high pitch:

#### **A. Hailing:**

(159) ˊCoo-ee!

(160) ˊYoo-hoo! (cf. Wells, 1945 (1972: 138), 'Woman's call to hail a person'; formerly a well-known catch-phrase in a tea advertisement)

(161) ˊHal-lo! (= [ˈha:lo:], German; this formula is not used for hailing in English – cf. the next category below)

#### **B. Calling:**

(162) ˊJohn-nee! (in English, also with rise or level)

(163) Manuˊe-la! (in German, occasionally also with level)

(164) Hel'lo-o! (in English, presuppositionless call, quasi-question to find out if anyone is there; also on telephone; especially characteristic of American English)

C. Greeting:

(165) 'Mor-ning! (English, also with rise or level)

(166) 'By-ye! (Especially American, more recently British English)

(167) 'Mor-gen! (also with level (...))

(168) 'Wieder-sehen! (German; also: 'Wie-der-sehen!)

(169) Her-ein-mar-schiert! (German; also: Her-ein-paz-iert!)

D. Formulaic Shouting:

(170) Where 'are -you?

(171) Come 'o-on! (esp. American English)

(172) 'Dinner's -ready!

(173) 'Com-ing!

(174) 'Va-ter, 'Auf-stehen! (in combination with calling)

(175) Wo 'bist -du?

(176) Ich 'kom-me! (reply to call)

(177) 'Kom-men! (instruction by foreman of gang of labourers to start hauling on rope to raise flag-pole)

(178) 'Schnei-der ... Achtund'zwan-zig ... 'Bre-men ... (listener phoning radio can-I-help-you programme, giving personalia)

E. Talking to babes-in-arms:

(179) Was 'macht er -denn? (also: Was macht 'er -denn? Cf. Example (168); also: Wo 'ist 'er -denn?)

F. Recapitulation:

(180) 'Lau-ter! (German, exhortation in formal gathering – e.g. classroom – to speak louder)

(181) "Jo-hann" hab' ich gesagt! (... with long scope for second part of contour)

(182) 'Auf-hörn! (also iterated; request to speaker or similar performer to shut up)

G. Transaction:

(183) 'Bit-te! (said by girl at till as accompaniment to change-giving)

(184) 'Dan-ke! (said especially by shop assistants)

(1976: 276f)

Gibbon analyses these environments for call contours and concludes:

The function of call contours is to be understood within the overall strategy of securing uptake – in effect, as markers of the speaker's

opinion that uptake is not yet regarded as satisfactorily secured.  
(1976: 287)

Gibbon's work suggests that the call contour is more widely used in German than in English, and that certain uses such as 'recapitulation' are limited to German conversation.

### Ladd (1978)

The first author to call the phenomenon 'stylized intonation' is Ladd (1978), who analyses it as the levelling out of a falling or rising contour. He describes three different stylized contours, the first being the call contour, in Ladd's terms the 'stylized fall'. For him, the main characteristic of this contour is that it is 'in some way stereotyped or stylized' rather than being 'inherently associated with calling' (517). In his discussion of its linguistic use he rejects the assumption adopted by researchers so far that the function of this contour is in some way connected with distance, physical or metaphorical: 'What is signaled by this intonation is the implication that the message is in some sense predictable, stylized, part of a stereotyped exchange or announcement. "Nothing you couldn't have anticipated" it says' (1978: 520).

Ladd presents three arguments as counter-evidence against the calling function of the contour, all of which are illuminating, not only for the specific contour in question, but also for other forms of prosodic stylizations. The first argument to 'show that this intonation is not a device to enhance audibility' involves a discussion of emergency cries such as Help!, quoted below and transcribed in Ladd's original notation system:

(16)

He	Ra	Fi
l	p	r
p	e	e

Surely a person in the position of uttering such a call is vitally interested in being heard, but

(17)

He--	Ra--	Fi—
elp--	ape--	ire—

would not bring worthwhile results. That is, in these cases it is clear that distance and lack of eye contact do not favour stylized intonation.





message seems to be ‘ “I quote” ’ (1994: 20). Quotations which are made in a sarcastic mode signal that a speaker is distancing him/herself from the content of their utterance:

The quotation (or, even better, the slightly mangled misquotation) of clichés is very frequently an overt signal of personal disassociation with one’s message ...

Not only are clichés quotes originating from elsewhere: they are of course recognized by everyone as trite and banal quotes ...

In all these cases ... the sarcasm is somehow making it clear that the words s/he utters are not the sentiment s/he feels. (1990: 198f)

Although Haiman concentrates on cliché utterances such as ‘ “Too bad”, “Never mind”, “Thank you”, “Sorr-ee” or “Oh boy” ’ (1994: 19), he also quotes from films, cartoons and literature instances of stylized intonation which do not co-occur with stereotyped phrases. While Ladd (1978) treats both the call contour and stylization as linked to stereotype, Haiman goes so far as to call stylized utterances ‘dysfunctional’, comparing them to ritual and art (1994: 5). Both the notions of stereotype and of playful ritual will become important later in this chapter as two interactional environments identified for stylized prosodic orientation are conversational routines and playful sequential interludes.

### Flowe (2002)

Flowe’s book *The Form and Function of Prosodic Stylization in Spoken Discourse* (2002) discusses prosodic stylization according to the principles of gestalt theory. Flowe employs the term stylization with respect to a wide variety of prosodically marked patterns, including but not restricted to the call contour:

[The dissertation] asserts that prosodic gestalts obey the same principles of perception as do visual and musical gestalts. The main principles of gestalt perception as described by Max Wertheimer are 1) the principle of similarity, 2) the principle of proximity, and 3) the principle of directionality.

These principles guide the listener’s perception of intricate prosodic gestalt patterns. The dissertation terms such gestalt patterns ‘compound’, ‘nested’, and ‘complex’. They can be larger than, smaller than, or the same size as the intonation unit of traditional prosodic research. (2002: 10)

Flowe distinguishes between prosodic 'highlighting' and 'stylization': highlighting occurs only with parts of larger gestalt patterns, while stylization concerns whole prosodic gestalts. The investigation discovers three gestalt principles according to which the stylized form is achieved, reduction, adjustment and ornamentation, the reduction principle bearing similarities to Ladd's definition of stylization:

The process of reduction involves the suppression or deletion of local irregular variations over the entire gestalt. Such deletion or suppression results in the foregrounding of more global gestalt structures. For stylized gestalts via reduction, aspects of the original gestalt are removed or regularized, but the integrity of more global aspects of the original gestalt is maintained and made more stylized.

Unlike the process of reduction, which removes irregular local variation, the process of 'adjustment' converts irregular local variation into regular local variation. The result of regular local variation is a stylized gestalt. (2002: 118)

Stylization through global ornamentation may occur through two processes: 1) an additional gestalt feature may be laid over a larger gestalt; 2) repeated local variations may bring out a larger gestalt pattern. (2002 134)

Flowe shows the principles of the gestalt patterns at work in visual, musical and prosodic gestalts and discusses instances of prosodic stylization from spontaneous conversation, which are described according to the principles of gestalt theory. Two components of Flowe's investigation of prosodic stylization are relevant for this study. Stylization is treated as a prosodic phenomenon not restricted to the call contour, and the data for its investigation are naturally occurring conversations. Unlike Flowe, this book does not analyse prosodic stylization in the framework of gestalt theory, but regards it as a conversational practice which participants use in a variety of interactional environments.

### **Couper-Kuhlen (1999a; 2004)**

In the introductory abstract for the research project 'Form and Function of Prosodic Stylizations in Communicative Genres'<sup>3</sup> Couper-Kuhlen defines prosodic stylization as 'a reduction of local variation coupled with the simultaneous heightening of global contours in order to constitute intersubjectively recognizable patterns'. She continues:

Prosodically stylized patterns can be melodic, rhythmic and/or dynamic in nature. Prosodic configuration enters into complex

relations with the verbal material which carries it, such that on occasion the two may mutually determine one another. The degree of stylization can vary from maximal, as for instance in strongly ritualized activities, where prosodic configuration begins to resemble song or verse, to minimal, as for instance in conversational lists.

Prosodically stylized configurations can be deployed by a single speaker or by several interlocutors collaboratively. In both cases heightened orientation to prosodic form contributes an expressive or 'poetic' dimension to the communicative event in question.

In this interpretation, prosodic stylization is not inherently linked to the call contour or other chants, nor is it necessarily limited to musical intervals. It is considered a phenomenon which occurs in a number of variations throughout natural conversation. An important aspect of the above definition is the idea of a ' "poetic" dimension', that is an aesthetic element within everyday speech.

Couper-Kuhlen (2004) discusses stylization as a metrical, dynamic and intonational phenomenon in non-routine conversational sequences. She analyses extracts of spontaneous interaction in which the prosodically stylized talk spans no more than one intonation unit. Couper-Kuhlen finds that function and meaning of prosodic stylization is dependent on its interactional context, but that it typically highlights affects and attitudes towards the verbal material with which it co-occurs. Conversational actions which are accompanied by prosodic stylization are varied, examples include assessments and replies to compliments. Typically, they are sequentially in second position and are thus re-actions to prior actions. Some of Couper-Kuhlen's examples show that participants employ prosodic stylization in order to introduce into the conversation a more playful interactional mode, an aspect which will be investigated in depth later in this chapter.

## **Types of stylized prosodic orientations**

This section categorizes instances of stylized prosodic orientation according to their formal prosodic characteristics. Participants have been found to stylize their prosodically orienting turns in three different ways: as musical notes or intervals; as extremely marked prosodic design; and as repetition of the same verbal and prosodic item across several turns and speakers. These types of stylized orientation are not mutually exclusive, and a prosodically stylized sequence may involve any combination of the above phenomena.

**Musical notes or intervals**

One form of stylized prosodic orientation involves a musical note or interval which is embedded in an otherwise spoken conversational sequence. This type includes the call contour, and what Pike (1945) and Liberman (1975) describe as the children's chant. Both are intonational routines which speakers all over the English-speaking world seem to use. The following instances of musical notes and intervals are taken from spontaneous conversational talk, rather than the sequentially more isolated position of calling someone at a distance (cf. Gibbon 1976: 275). A first instance of stylized prosodic orientation involving a single musical note comes from a conversation between two elderly couples. Martha is telling her sister Beverly about pictures of her holiday in Australia:

(1)

**Dark brown**

- 1 MA: an:d I've got some (( )) LOVely PHOto:s,  
 2 that WALter took (.) on the BEACH the:re,  
 3 of .hh KIM and (.) verOnica b:rilliant  
 4 -> <<held on one note> DhA:RK BRO::WN: - >  
 5 -> BE: <<held on the same note> oh:: - >  
 6 -> MA: <<held on the same note> and the SEA: and the>  
 7 SUN;=  
 8 BE: =m  
 9 MA: .hh Anyway.  
 10 and thEn we had this L:OVely LOVely cOld lunch at  
 11 hOme,  
 12 (.)  
 13 that RUTH had organIzed,  
 14 BE: yeah,

Line 4 shows Martha in the process of describing Kim's and Veronica's suntan as *dark brown*. The two syllables are produced as one steadily held tone with some lengthening on *dark*, and extreme lengthening on *brown*. The /d/ in *dark* is strongly aspirated. The held tone can be located somewhere between F and F#, its acoustic value has an average of 179.92 Hz (as can be seen in the frequency table below).<sup>4</sup>

Beverly comes in with a lengthened *oh*, held on the same note as Martha's *dark brown*, and measured at the minimally lower Hertz value of 176.95. Lines 6–7 show Martha continuing this tone with an exact match of 176.73 Hz. She holds the note for most of her turn, *and the sea*

Table 3.1 12 tone equal temp. (12TET) frequency table based on  $A_4 = 440$  Hz ( $C_0$  to  $B_8$  (middle C =  $C_4$ ))

	OCTAVE NUMBER								
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
C	16.35	32.70	65.41	130.81	261.63	523.25	1046.50	2093.00	4186.01
C#	17.32	34.65	69.30	138.59	277.18	554.37	1108.73	2217.46	4434.92
D	18.35	36.71	73.42	146.83	293.66	587.33	1174.66	2349.32	4698.64
D#	19.45	38.89	77.78	155.56	311.13	622.25	1244.51	2489.02	4978.03
E	20.60	41.20	82.41	164.81	329.63	659.26	1318.51	2637.02	5274.04
F	21.83	43.65	87.31	174.61	349.23	698.46	1396.91	2793.83	5587.65
F#	23.12	46.25	92.50	185.00	369.99	739.99	1479.98	2959.96	5919.91
G	24.50	49.00	98.00	196.00	392.00	783.99	1567.98	3135.96	6271.93
G#	25.96	51.91	103.83	207.65	415.30	830.61	1661.22	3322.44	6644.88
A	27.50	55.00	110.00	220.00	440.00	880.00	1760.00	3520.00	7040.00
A#	29.14	58.27	116.54	233.08	466.16	932.33	1864.66	3729.31	7458.62
B	30.87	61.74	123.47	246.94	493.88	987.77	1975.53	3951.07	7902.13

Source: R. Bain, *A Computer-Assisted Approach to the Study of Musical Acoustics*, <http://www.music.sc.edu/fs/bain/atmi98/examples/tuning/top-level.html>

and the, with more syllable lengthening on *sea*. On the last syllable of her intonation phrase, *sun*, her pitch drops slightly to a truncated fall.

Of the three types of prosodic orientation identified in Chapter 2, prosodic matching, non-matching and complementation, this extract is an example of prosodic matching, which is the most frequent type of stylized orientation. Figure 3.1 shows the frequency analysis of the orientation between the held tone on Martha's syllable *brown* and Beverly's *oh*.

Beverly's held *oh* joins in with Martha's tone in lines 4 and 6–7. It seems that the holding of a musical note as Martha does it is uncommon in spoken conversation, and this may be an indication for why Beverly as a co-participant is drawn to orient to it. By contributing to Martha's stylization she shows that she recognizes it as such, and chooses to acknowledge and participate in it. Some of the research on stylized intonation mentions a non-serious, even playful key which accompanies stylized utterances (Haiman 1994), or an element of routine and stereotypization (Ladd 1978; Haiman 1990, 1994). The above extract holds no obvious evidence for either playfulness or stereotypicality, but the speakers are engaged in a collaborative display of appreciation.

The next instance shows two speakers producing a musical interval. The extract comes from the English radio show 'Brainteaser', where

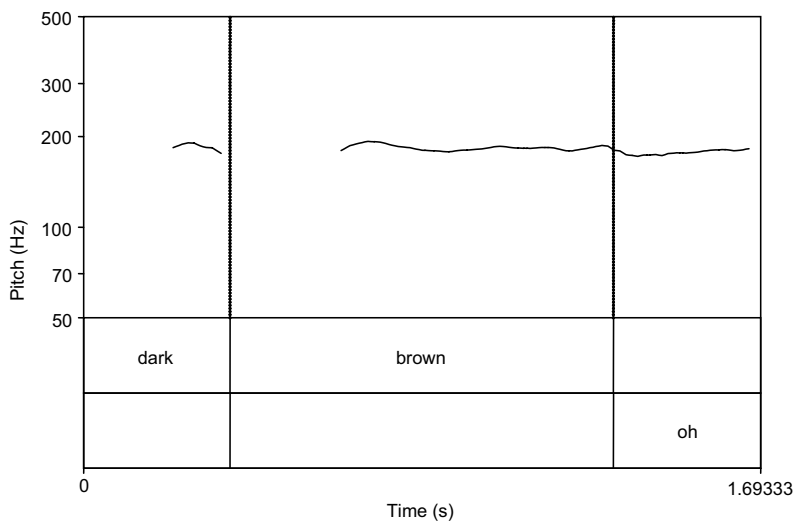


Figure 3.1 Musical note

Dave Ward, the host, and his caller Cathy are in the process of closing the call:

(2)

**Hi di hi**

- 1 DA: O:kay,  
 2 THANK you for coming On,  
 3 CA: O[kay;  
 4 DA: [hi-  
 5 <<h> HI di <sup>^</sup>HI::;>  
 6 -> CA: <sup>^</sup>HI di <<musical interval> HI::->  
 7 -> DA: <<h> bye <<musical interval> BYE::;>  
 8 CA: <<h> BYE;>

It was pointed out in Chapter 2 that Cathy's *hi di hi* (line 6) is itself a prosodically orienting second within the adjacency pair *hi di hi* (line 5) – *hi di hi* (line 6). On the last syllable *hi* she produces a musical interval, a major second, between a rather precise F (348.4 Hz) and D# (306.95 Hz). Dave uses a minor third in his following turn *bye bye* (line 7), but not on the same notes. He begins his second *bye* where Cathy has left off, and on the second syllable falls from a precise D# (311.44 Hz) to

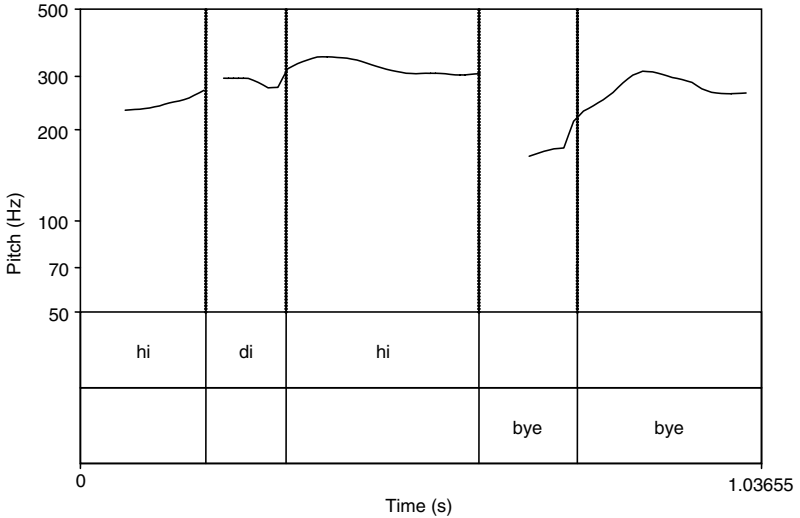


Figure 3.2 Musical interval (Hi di hi)

C (262.16 Hz). The musical intervals have been visualized in a frequency analysis in Figure 3.2. Note that Dave's stylization occurs on his second syllable.

Dave's interval, while involving different musical notes, is a minor third, which is the interval described by previous literature as typical for the call contour (cf. Liberman 1975; Couper-Kuhlen 1999b). The above extract offers further evidence for Ladd's (1978) assumption that this contour does not have to be employed for calling someone at a distance, but also occurs in spontaneous sequential contexts. While lines 5 and 6 were previously analysed as prosodic complementation in Chapter 2, the two musical intervals in lines 6 and 7 are an instance of stylized prosodic matching.

The following extract contains a very clear example of a musical interval in an environment which is typical for this type of stylized orientation: the opening sequence of a telephone conversation. The extract comes from a corpus of private telephone calls:

(3)

**Hi Tom**

1 OZZ: TOM there please,

2 LES: YES,

- 3                    he's UPstai:rs.  
 4                    HANG on ozzie,=  
 5                    i'll GET him.  
 6            OZZ:    THANK you.  
 7            (0.5)  
 8    -> TOM:    he<<musical interval> LLO::;>  
 9    -> OZZ:    <<musical interval> hi TOM::;>  
 10                   I'm On: the lOOkout fo:r someone: to come out on  
 11                   dUty to a scramble on SUNday, (-)  
 12            TOM:    .hhhhh[hhhhhhhhhh  
 13            OZZ:                [if pOssible please -

After the initial telephone opening and subsequent sequence between Ozzie and Leslie, there is a second greeting sequence, now between Ozzie and Tom (lines 8–9). It occurs with a stylized prosodic design, involving an interval of a minor second on Tom's second syllable *-llo* (line 8), and a minor third on Ozzie's reply *hi tom* (line 9). Tom's interval of one semitone can be identified as a fall from what is roughly an E (337.59 Hz) to a precise D# (311.38 Hz). Ozzie's interval of a minor third is a fall from B (246.79 Hz) to G# (206.1 Hz). Like Dave in (3), above, Ozzie is orienting to the fact that the first greeting was done as a stylized prosodic pattern, but while he matches the overall pattern of the musical interval, he does not repeat it; his own interval falls considerably lower than Tom's. Structurally, this sequence represents the minimal form of stylized prosodic orientation, consisting of a succession of two turns, followed by non-stylized talk. Figures 3.3 and 3.4 show the two intonation patterns. Note that in Tom's *hello*, the stylization occurs on the second syllable.

The frequency analysis in Figure 3.3 shows a rising first syllable *he-*, and then gives a clear representation of how small Tom's interval on his second syllable *-llo* really is. The pitch analysis in Figure 3.4 shows Ozzie's *hi Tom*.

A last instance comes from the same family as (1), Dark brown. This time Beverly's children, Sandra and Robert, are also present:

(4)

**Open the door**

- 1            SA:    that's what i was trying to say to ROBERT though;=  
 2                    about buying CHEAP;  
 3                    and and paying the ex^PENsive.

4 .h i mean -  
 5 it DOESn't always work;=  
 6 that having expENSive things;=  
 7 are gonna be BETTer;=  
 8 than the CHEAPer ones.  
 9 (-)  
 10 <<len> DOES it;>  
 11 BE: <<len> oh;>  
 12 -> MA: <<extra high, level> open the DOOR - >  
 13 -> RO: <<singing> (open the) DOO::R RICH[ard>  
 14 -> BE: [ <<singing>  
 15 RICHard>  
 16 hehe  
 17 (1.0)  
 18 RO: wha- what MAKer is Amstrad;  
 19 what what-  
 20 DA: BRITish;

The beginning of the transcribed sequence shows that the participants are talking about the advantages and disadvantages of buying expensive appliances. Previously, there has been talk about the make Amstrad and

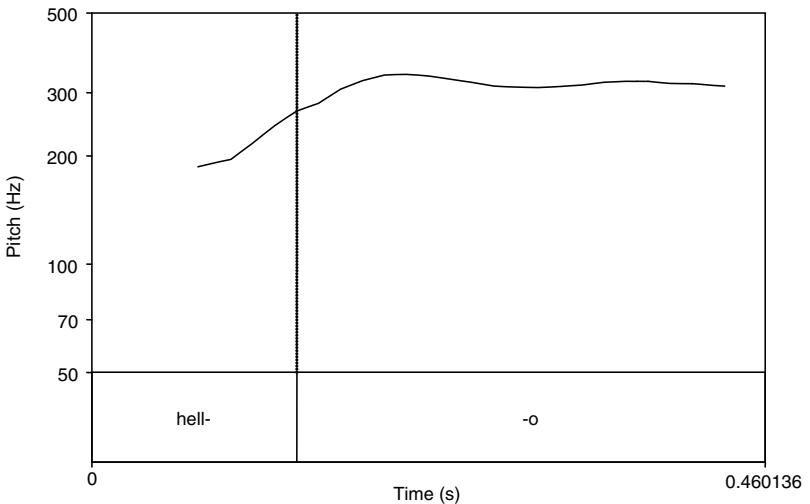


Figure 3.3 Musical interval (Hello)

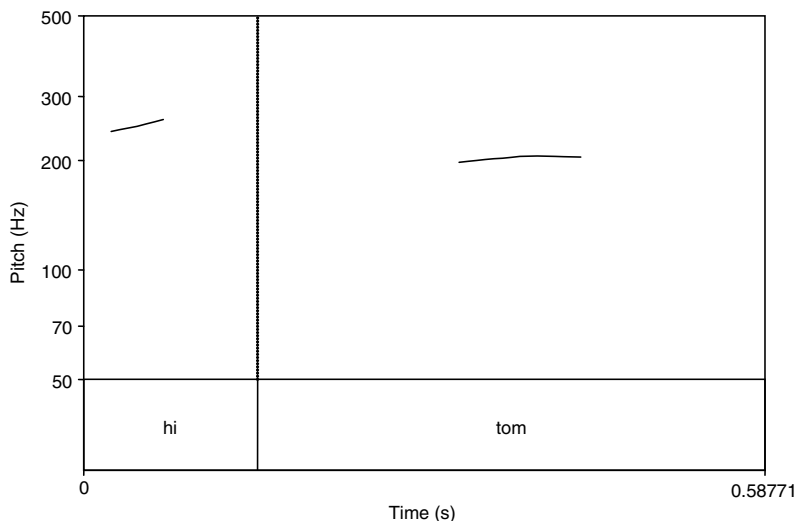


Figure 3.4 Musical interval (Hi Tom)

whether it is *rubbish*. There is no video recording of this piece of data, but it can be inferred that somewhere between lines 9 and 11 someone called Richard is about to open the door, which causes three participants to break into song. Sandra's son Richard is heard joining the conversation shortly afterwards, so it can be concluded with some safety that that he enters the room at this time.

Martha sings *open the door* on a single note (line 12), which can be identified as F, at 347.72 Hz. Robert then begins singing *open the* on a low D (146.07 Hz), and covers a seventh by rising to a C (262.36 Hz) on *door*. As Beverly comes in, she and Robert drop to what is roughly an A at about 224.71 Hz (lines 13–15). When Beverly is in the clear towards the end of the turn, she falls to a low G at 195.82 Hz. Figure 3.5 contains the frequency analysis for the stylized pitch movement.

Interestingly, this short singing sequence is not commented on by the participants before or after its occurrence. Instead, the speakers continue with their conversation about the quality of different technical appliances. Thus, while on the one hand the stylized prosodic orientation highlights and draws attention to a particular moment in the conversation for which the previously ongoing sequence is interrupted, the stylized prosody is on the other hand treated as routine. Participants return to their previous activity immediately after the stylized sequence has been completed.

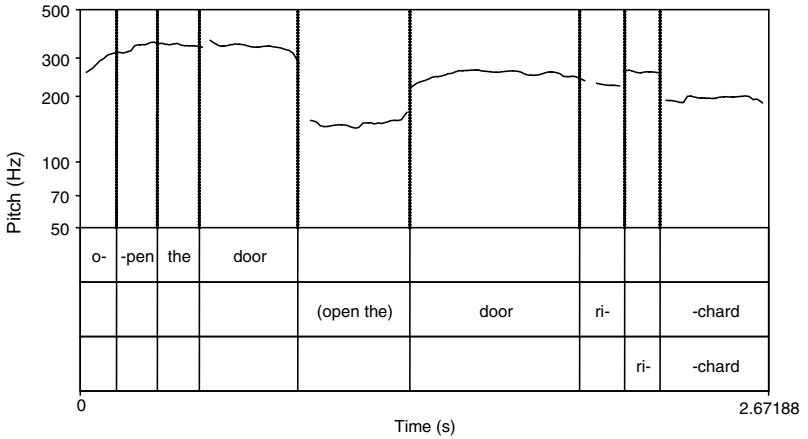


Figure 3.5 Musical interval (Open the door Richard)

### Marked prosody

This section presents instances of prosodic orientation which are considered stylized because they involve some form of marked, even extreme prosodic design. Such marked prosody may be an intonation contour with extreme lengthening, an extremely high pitch register or loudness, or a voice quality which differs noticeably from the respective speaker's ordinary voice. In all instances, participants can be observed to highlight their own prosodic design against other surrounding prosodic patterns. All of the following instances hold a strong element of participants' drawing attention to the prosodic design of the respective utterances, and in some instances a certain non-defaultness, or even non-seriousness is introduced through the stylization. We exclude from the data collection those cases in which participants treat as default what might otherwise be considered stylized prosody. For example, conversations in which increased loudness is the default loudness, or regional accents in which specific intonation contours are routine even if they sound extreme to the non-native ear, are not analyzed as stylizations, and are therefore not discussed here.

#### *Declining intonation contours with lengthening and portamento*

In the data corpus for this study, stylized intonation contours come in one typical form: a long declination line realized as a portamento on

one single syllable. The term *portamento* is borrowed here from the vocal arts, describing a phenomenon in which ‘the voice glides gradually from one tone to the next through all the intermediate pitches’ (Randel 1978: 398). Crystal (1969: 164) also uses the term, specifying a form of *glissando*, a term which refers to a ‘(mode) of transition between strongly and weakly prominent syllables’ (1969: 163). The term *glissando*, like *portamento*, refers to gliding, however, both in Crystal’s work and in music theory with relation to intervening notes which can be heard *individually*, that is ‘a rapid sounding of progressive but distinct tones’ (Thomsett 1989: 172), rather than representing a single gradual movement through all the intervening pitches:

the piano and the harp, which have fixed semitones, can play glissando but not *portamento*; and the voice, members of the violin family and the trombone can produce either type of sliding, although glissando is far more difficult for them. (Sadie 2001, Vol. 10: 14)

Thus, the term *portamento* has been chosen for the long declining pitch movement in which the voice glides through all intervening pitches.

Although many other extreme intonation contours are theoretically imaginable, the long declining *portamento* pattern is the most frequent. A first instance comes from a US-American family who are celebrating their daughter’s birthday. Kendra is in the process of unpacking one of her birthday presents, to which the clue on the birthday card was ‘appease the monster’. The party includes her parents Marcy and Ken, her brother Kevin and her sister-in-law Wendy:

(5)

**Holy cow**

- |    |    |     |  |
|----|----|-----|--|
| 1  | -> | KA: | <<musical interval> OH [‘oh:: - >              |
| 2  | -> | KE: | [<<port> Oh:::;> yeah;                         |
| 3  |    | KA: | we’re TALKin;                                  |
| 4  |    |     | ˈBAKInG MONster.                               |
| 5  | -> | KV: | [<<singing> TOLL:HOUSE MORsels>                |
| 6  |    | MA: | [it’s definitely more than a PAIR and a SPARE. |
| 7  |    | KA: | ↑COOKie mOnster;=                              |
| 8  |    |     | appEA:SE the mOnster;:                         |
| 9  | -> |     | HO::L [Y [ <<port> CO:::W;>                    |
| 10 | -> | KE: | [ <<port> OH[:::;                              |
| 11 | -> | KV: | [ <<port> YAY:::;>                             |

- 12 [HOly COW;  
 13 KA: [cOOkie BAKing set.  
 14 -> MA: [<<port> alRI::GHT;>  
 15 -> <<port> alRI::GHT.>  
 16 -> KA: <<port> mmm:::[::::;>  
 17 -> KV: [RUBB[er <<port> MAI::D;>  
 18 MA: [oh;  
 19 [let me SEE it.  
 20 KV: [<<f> you CAN'T SQUASH it;>  
 21 -> KA: <<port> mmm:::[::::;>  
 22 -> MA: [oh: NEA:T.  
 23 -> KA: [RUBBer <<port> MAI::D;>  
 24 KV: TWELVE [ˈPIEces;  
 25 KA: [yay;  
 26 KV: ((gasp))  
 27 KA: [that's-  
 28 MA: [oh that's-  
 29 -> KA: [<<port> WO::W;>  
 30 KV: oh that inCLUDES all the TEA spoons;

Kendra's first prosodically stylized utterance involves the two syllables *oh-oh* at the beginning of the transcribed sequence (line 1). Ken matches this prosodic design with a lengthened *oh* (line 2), and Kevin stylizes *tollhouse morsels* (line 5). From line 9 onwards all four speakers join in a collaborative sequence of stylized prosodic orientation. Line 9, *Holy cow*, carries a long portamento on *ho-* and *cow*, which is followed by Ken's long and declining *oh* and Kevin's *yay* with the same prosodic design. Lines 14–15 show Marcy to be orienting to the stylized contour with her two uses of *alright*. Kendra produces the same stylization on *mm* (line 16), as does Kevin on *Rubber Maid* (line 17). After a short sequence in which Marcy and Kevin insert comments about the present (lines 18–20), Kendra takes up the contour again on *mm* (line 21), Marcy on *oh* (line 22), and Kevin on *Rubber Maid* (line 23). After that, the stylized sequence seems to fade out, the pattern occurs only once more on Kendra's *wow* (line 29).

The sequence as a whole does not lend itself to frequency analysis because of the background noise caused by the unwrapping of the present, and the extensive overlap between speakers. However, two turns can be extracted, which show the lengthened declining portamento line. Figures 3.6 and 3.7 show Kendra's first *mm* in line 16 and her second *mm* in line 21.

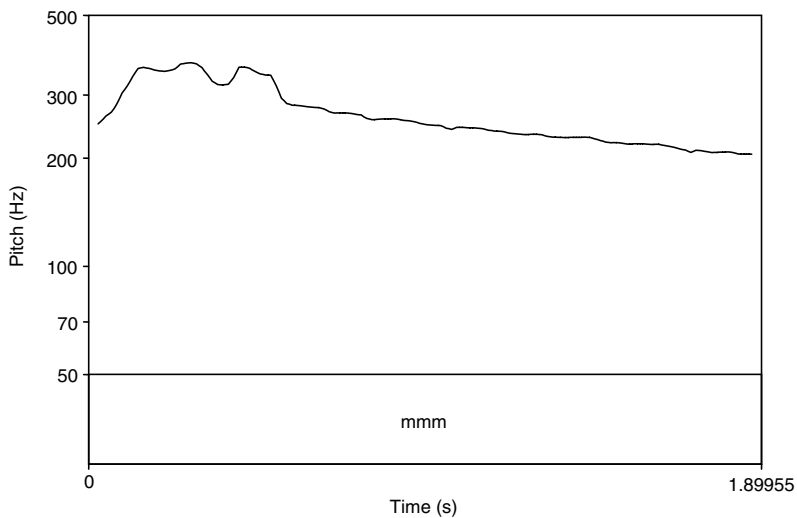


Figure 3.6 Portamento (*mm*, 1)

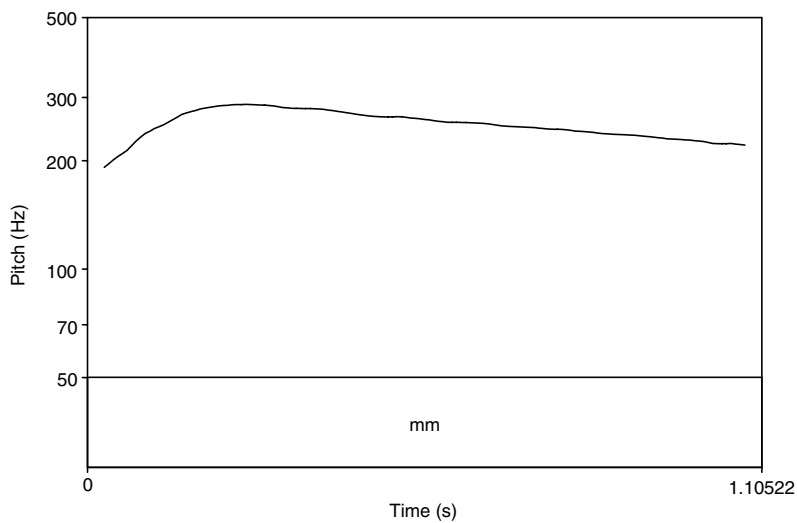


Figure 3.7 Portamento (*mm*, 2)

The above sequence shows that one portamento contour may trigger many more. Most of the items which carry the pattern are semantically weak forms such as *oh*, *yay*, *alright*, *mm* and *wow*, with the exception of *holy cow* and *rubber maid*. The participants seem to enjoy producing the same extreme contour again and again, matching their prosodic pattern and thereby showing their appreciation of the birthday present.

Another example of a declining intonation contour with lengthening and portamento occurs in a telephone conversation between a young couple, Jeff and Jill. Jill has undergone a pregnancy test, the result of which has been negative:

(6)

**Oh honey**

- 1       JE: so was THAT all the DRAMA?  
 2       JI: that was the ↑DRAMA;  
 3             and that was the susPENSE,  
 4       .h and that was the reLIEF,  
 5       and that was the ECStasy.  
 6       (-)  
 7       JE: <<h> REALLY?>  
 8       JI: uHU?  
 9       (.)  
 10 -> JE: .h <<port> OH::;>=  
 11 ->     <<port> HONEY::;>  
 12 -> JI: ehe <<port> hO::;>  
 13 -> JE: little <<port> B:UNNy::;>=  
 14       is going through the whOLE wIde SPEcTrum of  
 15       eMOtIons;

The beginning of the extract shows the two participants closing down Jill's story about her pregnancy test, which she introduced earlier as *drama*, *suspense*, *relief* and *ecstasy*. By framing her potentially life-changing experience so poetically, she is distancing herself from it (cf. Haiman 1990: 198), thus making it clear that there is nothing for Jeff to worry about. This opens the opportunity for a mock exclamation of pity from him: lines 10–11 show his lengthened falling portamento first on *oh*, and after a reset on *-ney*. Jill giggles and matches the lengthened contour on *-ho*. Jeff repeats the stylized pattern on *-ny* (line 13), lengthening not only the last vowel, but holding also the onset consonant *b-*. Prosodic stylization frequently co-occurs with an element of spontaneous poeticity, and other linguistic resources can of course be employed for this

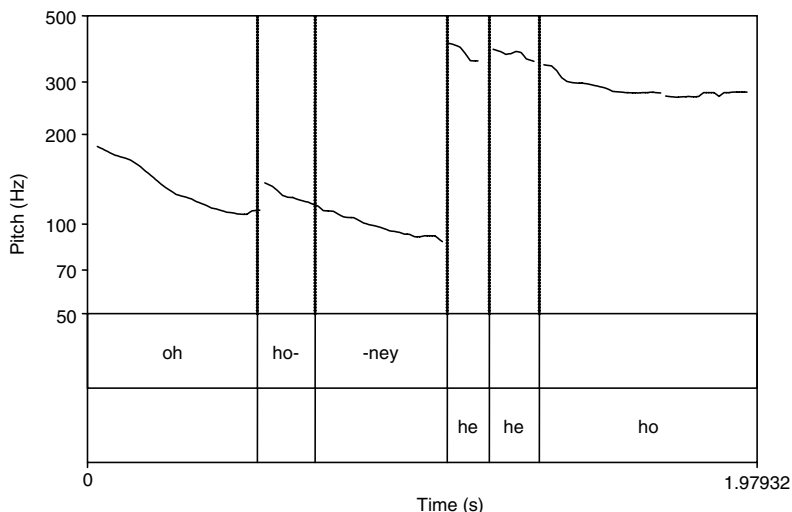


Figure 3.8 Portamento (Oh honey)

aim. Here the lexical choice of *honey* followed by the rhyming *bunny* adds to the poetic effect. Jeff's first stylized turn *oh honey* and Jill's ensuing *-ho* has been visualized in the pitch graph in Figure 3.8.

A further instance comes from a Minnesotan radio programme where the host is Tory Ryder and Nicole Noemi is the guest in the studio. The two women are in the process of making fun of a mayoral candidate for Minneapolis who has been seen eating fast food with a group of children:

(7)

**Corn dog**

- 1 NN: [he'll- it'll be the CORN dog;  
 2 TR: [( )  
 3 [( )  
 4 NN: [offENSE.  
 5 (-)  
 6 -> <<port> ^OO:.....;>  
 7 <<h> would 'FREUD like that?>  
 8 i think 'SO.  
 9 -> TR: <<p+l+port> OO:.....;>  
 10 NN: ↑OO:..  
 11 TR: <<extremely hoarse+l> HEY little boY;  
 12 [hhhehe>

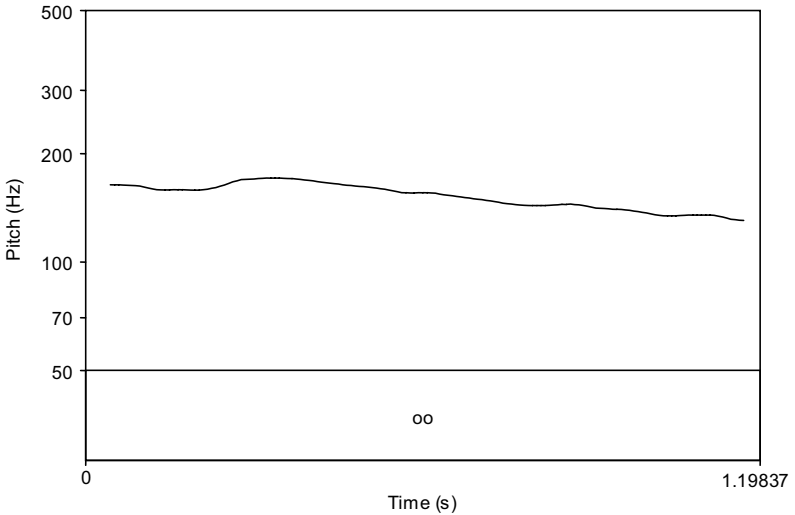


Figure 3.9 Portamento (oo, 1)

Nicole follows her comment *he'll- it'll be the corn dog offense* (lines 1–4) with a highly suggestive *oo* (line 6), and another implication: *would freud like that? I think so* (lines 7–8). Her *oo* is strongly stylized, rising and falling on an extremely lengthened vowel. Subsequently, Tory orients to the stylization. Her *oo* carries a similar intonation contour (line 9), a long falling portamento, but it is spoken more quietly and at a lower pitch than Nicole's turn. Nicole orients with another *oo* (line 10), this time a pitch step-up followed by a steep fall. The pitch graph in Figure 3.9 shows Nicole's first *oo* (line 6).

Figure 3.10 shows Tory's *oo* (line 9). Both pitches are held for roughly one second, a long time in naturally occurring prosody.

A last example involves instances in which the stylized prosodic orientation is slightly modified. The extract comes from the same family conversation as (1), Dark brown. Martha tells her sister Beverly about a special dessert she and her husband ate at a restaurant in Hong Kong:

(8)

**Egg custard**

- 1 MA: <<all> well the GIRL brought us these egg tarts;>  
 2 they came in PAI:RS,  
 3 [.hhh  
 4 BE: [m;

- 5 MA: and they were Only about SO ROU:ND,  
 6 BE: mm,  
 7 WA: (( ))  
 8 -> MA: and (-) F:ILLED with the most deL:I[cious;  
 9 BE: [ <<all> whAt  
 10 PAstry,>  
 11 MA: Y[ES::.  
 12 WA: [egg CUSTard it was.  
 13 -> BE: <<h+port> ↑ah:::;>  
 14 -> MA: the most deL:Icious EGG CUST[ard.  
 15 -> BE: [ <<port> mm::;>  
 16 -> MA: and the P:Astry outSI:DE [was;  
 17 -> BE: [ <<port> mm::;>  
 18 (-)  
 19 -> MA: SO L:IGHT;  
 20 (.)  
 21 it was (.)  
 22 well i i i STILL think i've nEver tasted such a lovely  
 23 (.)  
 24 lovely egg TART as that;

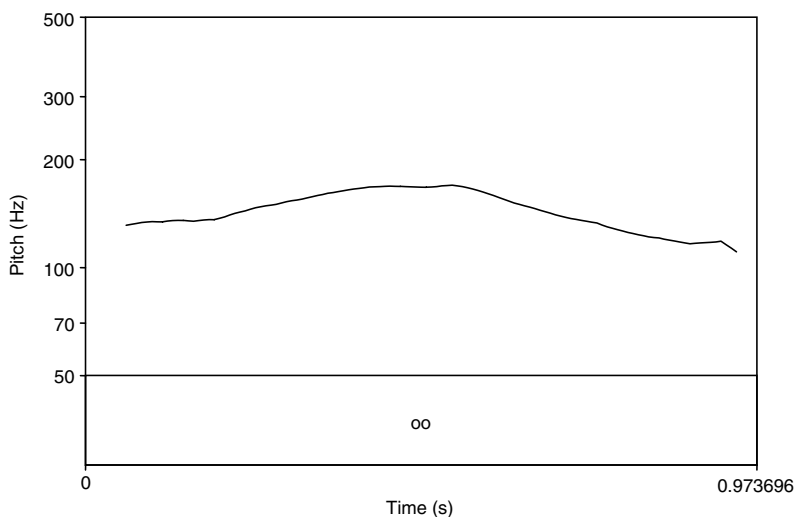


Figure 3.10 Portamento (oo, 2)

In this extract it is only one participant, Beverly, who produces a lengthened falling portamento contour. In phonetic orientation to this, Martha stylizes her turns by holding and lengthening individual sounds, rather than pitch contours. She begins to do so in her turn *and filled with the most delicious* (line 8): both the /f/ (*filled*) and the /l/ (*delicious*) are held for a marked length of time. After a brief inserted sequence, Beverly comes in with her news receipt token *ah* (line 13), starting very high and then slowly falling to a mid-low level. Overall her turn is produced in a high pitch register. In overlap with this lengthened turn Martha comes in with a partial verbal repeat *the most delicious egg custard* (line 14) in which the /l/ is lengthened. In overlap with her last syllable (*-ard*) Beverly produces her appreciative *mm* (line 15) with a lengthened and slowly declining pitch contour. Martha's continued enthusiasm over the dessert is displayed through phonetic holding of /p/ (*pastry*) and /aɪ/ (*outside*, line 16). Beverly once more replies with a stylized marker of appreciation, *mm* (line 17), which carries a long falling portamento contour. A last stylization occurs at the end of Martha's turn, where she holds the consonant /l/ (*light*, line 19).

This extract shows one participant to be employing the declining intonation contour with lengthening and portamento, while another participant holds both voiced and voiceless consonants (l, f, p), and in one instance a vowel (aɪ) without a declination in pitch. Thus, prosodic orientation occurs here in the temporal dimension in terms of lengthening, but not in the dimension of Hertz values.

#### *Marked pitch register with marked loudness*

While (8), *Egg custard*, in the above section shows that individual aspects of a prosodic stylization may be oriented to and not others, the declining intonation contour with lengthening and portamento generally occurs as a cluster of prosodic features. Another frequent co-occurrence between stylized prosodic parameters exists between pitch register and loudness.

Especially in teasing sequences in which participants playfully yell at each other, pitch register is often raised simultaneously with loudness. One instance comes from a Minnesotan radio phone in programme in which host Barbara Carlson introduces a new topic for callers and discusses it with studio technician Peter Theo:

(9)

#### **Dilemma**

- |   |        |   |
|---|--------|---|
| 1 | BA:    | there's aNOther mOral Issue that is FACing. |
| 2 |        | ↑NO:T [me,                                  |
| 3 | -> PE: | [<<h+f> a diLEMMa?>                         |

- 4 -> BA: <<h+f> a di↑LEMMa.>  
 5 (-)  
 6 -> PE: <<h+f> ↑YES.>  
 7 -> BA: it is a di↑L:EMMa.  
 8 PE: ↑BIG dilemma.  
 9 BA: NOT Only in dEaTh and dYing,  
 10 PE: aRIGHT,

Barbara announces *another moral issue* (line 1) to which Peter offers the candidate reply *a dilemma* in stylized prosody (line 3) with extremely high pitch register and loudness. Barbara's following confirmation *a dilemma* (line 4) matches both pitch and loudness. After a micropause, Peter continues the stylized orientation with the similarly designed *yes* (line 6). Subsequently, the stylization fades out as Barbara Carlson repeats *a dilemma* no longer at overall high loudness and pitch, but with a pitch peak on the nucleus *-lemm-* (line 7). Similarly, Peter produces a step-up in his next turn (*big*, line 8), but the rest of his utterance *big dilemma* remains fairly unmarked.

This sequence displays a strong sense of playfulness although Barbara and Peter are yelling at each other and despite the fact that the phone-in topic of the day is 'Death and Dying' (cf. line 9). It turns out shortly afterwards that the moral issue which Carlson is referring to is the fact that female friends of hers are living with their boyfriends rather than marrying them. This might be an attempt to introduce a light stance into an otherwise serious programme.

Peter takes up this interactional key and introduces an additional aspect of non-serious talk through his ensuing prosodic stylization (line 3), which is matched and continued by Barbara and himself (lines 4, 6 and 7). A further representative example of marked pitch register and loudness occurs between Barbara Carlson and Mike Veck, owner of the local baseball team:

## (10)

**Badgering**

- 1 MI: uhm (.) Actually there were about FIFTy CARS that  
 2 were that were TICKeted;  
 3 a:nd uh;;  
 4 BA: <all it's nEver gonna [happen aGAIN.>  
 5 MI: [MAyor scheivel-  
 6 that's A:bsolutely rIght;



*Marked voice quality*

A prosodic parameter which has been found to be used individually, without combination with other features is voice quality. Participants can often be seen to orient to each other once one of them has begun to 'put on' a different voice. In the data corpus the main environment in which voice quality is employed for stylized prosodic orientation is direct reported speech, in a form which Couper-Kuhlen (1998) calls 'chiming in'. An instance of stylized prosodic orientation through marked voice quality is the extended version of example (7), Corn dog:

(11)

**Hey little boy**

- 1 NN: [he'll- it'll be the CORn dog;  
 2 TR: [( )  
 3 [( )  
 4 NN: [offENSE.  
 5 (-)  
 6 ^OO:.....;;  
 7 <<h> would 'FREUD like that?>  
 8 i think 'SO.  
 9 TR: <<p+l> OO:.....;>  
 10 NN: ↑OO:.  
 11 -> TR: <<hoarse+l> HEY little bOY;  
 12 -> [hhhehe>  
 13 -> NN: [<<hoarse+l> hhhehe[he>  
 14 -> TR: [ <<extremely hoarse+l>  
 15 -> wanna pLAY with my CORN DOG,  
 16 -> hhhehe>  
 17 -> NN: <<hoarse+l> i'll FRY your CORN DOG baby;>  
 18 -> ehehehe  
 19 TR: <<f+h+all> alRIGHT [alRIGHT alRIGHT;>  
 20 NN: [ <<f+h+all> alRIGHT  
 21 alRIGHT alRIGHT;>  
 22 TR: SO;

After the mayoral candidate's habits of eating corn dogs with children have been commented on in the third person with strong prosodic stylizations from both speakers (lines 11 and 14), they are now given a particular interpretation in the subsequent heavily stylized direct

reported speech sequence. Tory Ryder's *hey little boy* (line 11) is spoken at very low pitch, and in a voice quality so creaky it becomes hoarse. The intended impression created by this voice is presumably that of a paedophilic old man. Nicole matches Tory's laughter (lines 12–13), and Tory's next turn orients to the same prosodic design (lines 14ff). Nicole's turn (line 17) *I'll fry your corn dog baby* is not as drastically stylized but can still be clearly heard as orienting to the prior stylized sequence. Her ensuing laughter (line 18), however, is no longer 'in character': it is unmarked in voice quality, or any other prosodic parameter, which now shows her to be laughing at the previous sequence, rather than still to be participating in it. Both speakers join in a collaborative dismissal of the stylized sequence and what it may have implied by a succession of *alright*-tokens (lines 19ff), which are louder, higher and faster than the previous turns.

### Stylization by repetition

A third way in which participants have been found to orient to each others' prosodically stylized turns is by repeating the same lexical item and its prosodic delivery again and again. The first turn in such an orienting sequence is often not in itself stylized, however, it is taken up and repeated by several other speakers in an exaggerated fashion, by which the whole sequence becomes one of stylized prosodic orientation. This form is different from those introduced in the sections above in that it strongly relies on lexical choice in addition to prosodic design. However, the phenomenon has enough in common with the other types to be described alongside them. A first instance comes from the above-mentioned birthday party (see (5), *Holy cow*). The mother, Marcy, has just complained about a soft drink which has been taken off the market by its manufacturer, which has *made her mad*:

(12)

**Oops**

- |   |     |                      |
|---|-----|----------------------|
| 1 | KA: | how ˈmɑ:d ˈWERE you; |
| 2 | (-) |                      |
| 3 | MA: | <<p> oh> ˈFAIRly,    |
| 4 | ->  | KE: <<p> OOPS,       |
| 5 |     | that [won't work;>   |
| 6 | ->  | KA: [OO:PS,          |
| 7 | ->  | OO:PS,               |

- 8 -> OO:[PS,  
 9 -> WE: [OO:PS,  
 10 -> OO:PS,  
 11 -> [OO:PS,  
 12 MA: [<<h> what's everybody WAIT]ing for;  
 13 WE: don't DO it;]  
 14 MA: you guys are supposed to go HO:ME now.>  
 15 KA: SEE ya.

We have no video recording of this interaction, but Ken's turn *oops that won't work* (lines 4–5) implies that he must be engaged in some non-verbal activity, and that an unexpected failure must have occurred. Already in overlap with Ken's second intonation unit, Kendra also says *oops* (line 6), and subsequently repeats it twice more, each time with lengthening and rising intonation on the vowel. In overlap with Kendra's last *oops*, Wendy begins to do the same, also producing the item three times (lines 9–11). The last *oops* is followed by her utterance *don't do it* (line 13), which shows she is still referring to some sort of non-verbal activity. Figure 3.11 shows the successive pitch movements, the roughly equal pitch height at starting and end points, and the similar pitch span of all tokens. Kendra's first *oops* is excluded from the frequency analysis as it occurs in overlap with Ken's turn *that won't work* (lines 5–6).

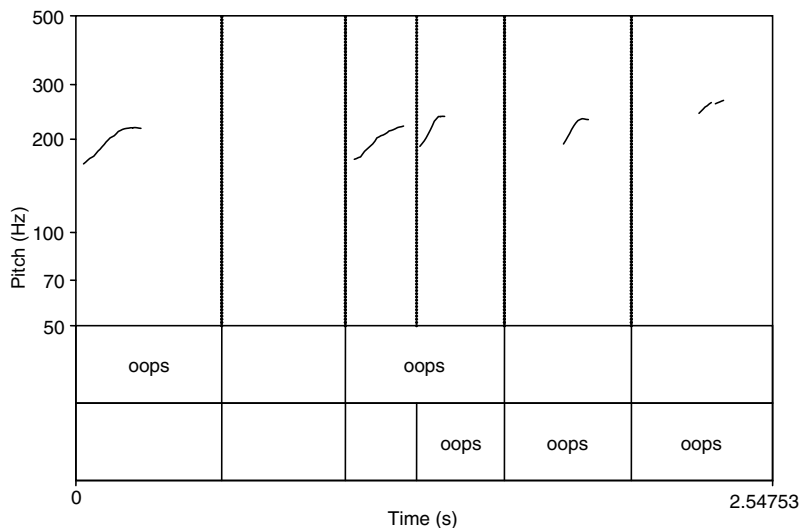


Figure 3.11 Repetition

The verbal item *oops*, which originally functions as a marker of surprise and preceding failure, loses this function as soon as it is picked up and repeated by the other participants. The multiple repetitions show that the interactants are not only orienting to a specifiable action, but also to the phonetic sound of *oops*. They highlight the token in a playful manner by repeating its exact phonetic and prosodic design. It seems that a precondition for this kind of talk, in which all that matters is the sound of individual words, is the absence of any other pressing conversational matters.

Another instance of this phenomenon can be found in the following dinner conversation between three Americans and one German speaker. Alice is talking about the eating habits which she and her German partner Christian adopt when they are in the USA:

(13)

**Ribs**

- 1 AL: so WE been having bArbecue every day.  
 2 <<h> hhhmhm>  
 3 JA: barbecued HAMBurger::s an: -  
 4 AL: .hh NO;  
 5 -> chrIstian insists on barbecued <<all, clipped> RIBS.>  
 6 JA: ^oh;;;  
 7 -> CH: <<all, clipped> RIBS.>  
 8 -> JA: <<f, clipped> RIBS.>  
 9 -> CH: <<all, clipped> RIBS.>  
 10 JA: which-  
 11 TIM-  
 12 TIM likes ribs.

In line 5 Alice mentions *ribs* for the first time. Following a surprise marker from Jane (line 6), Christian repeats the item *ribs* in the same prosodic design: the vowel is clipped and falling rapidly to the bottom of the speaker's voice range (line 7). Following this, Jane repeats the word with the same clipped vowel, and with increased loudness (line 8). In close succession, Christian again produces the term, retaining his original prosodic pattern (line 9). The sequence is closed when Jane begins a turn about her partner Tim, who also likes ribs. As in extract (12) above, the repeated mentioning of the same word creates an impression of participants' orientation to the sound of their speech.

The small collection of examples in the corpus shows that verbal repetitions which form a stylized sequence are typically one word or one

NP long. However, this group may seem difficult to define solely on formal grounds. Most probably, speakers repeat others' talk frequently without an open orientation to its sound, but for interactional reasons, such as managing ongoing non-verbal activity (Merritt 1994), efficient and more fluent production talk (Tannen 1989; Aitchison 1994), learning purposes in child–adult and classroom situations (Merritt 1994), or expression of empathy in therapeutic discourse (Ferrara 1994), to name only a few.

What characterizes all stylized instances in this group is an element of playfulness after the first repetition has framed what is to follow as a playful sequence. In Goffman's (1974) terminology, the first repeat functions as the beginning bracket, the keying device, which signals that the previous, primary activity – that is the first mentioning, such as the first *oops* – is now transformed into play. It is this playful element, together with the more formal features of prosody and lexical choice, which characterize the members of this collection.

### Summary

Stylized prosodic orientation, that is the collaborative highlighting of prosodic delivery, has been shown to appear in three basic forms: as musical notes or intervals, as extreme prosodic design, and as prosodic and verbal repetition. As in the case of unmarked prosodic orientation, additional types of stylized prosodic orientation may exist, but only the three discussed here could be identified in the data corpus as being employed by participants as practices of drawing attention to a specific prosodic design. All cases of stylized prosodic orientation reported above are instances of prosodic matching. Musical notes and intervals in particular seem to invite uptake by a second speaker. This practice is either accomplished through a continuation of a musical note from a prior turn and participant ((1), Dark brown); a string of two musical intervals, such as minor seconds, major seconds and minor thirds ((2), Hi di hi); ((3), Hi Tom); or a sequence of singing ((4); Open the door).

Stylized prosodic orientation in marked prosodic patterns occurs most frequently in clusters of prosodic features, such as the lengthened and declining portamento contour ((5), Holy cow; (6), Oh honey; (7), Corn dog; (8), Egg custard); and the combination of extreme pitch register and loudness ((9), Dilemma; (10), Badgering). The only prosodic parameter which could be found to be stylized in isolation is voice quality ((11), Hey little boy). Stylized prosodic orientation via prosodic and verbal repetition by definition comes as a combination, not of various prosodic

parameters, but of the prosodic and verbal domain of talk ((12), Oops; (13), Ribs). It is not purely dependent on prosody, but it involves among other things matching of pitch contours, duration, loudness and vowel length across speakers and speaking turns.

## Interactional environments for stylized prosodic orientation

The following sections present a number of interactional environments in which stylized prosodic orientations have proved to be particularly frequent. These include conversational actions such as signalling appreciation and voicing imaginary figures; routine conversational structures such as the beginnings and endings of telephone calls; and adjacency pairs such as question–response. The largest group, the prosodically stylized uptake of previous material and its further development in a playful insertion sequence, is presented in the last section.

### Appreciation

Stylized prosodic orientations commonly occur in an environment where one participant presents a conversational or a physical object in a way which makes a display of appreciation from another participant interactionally relevant. Subsequently, other speakers may also come in with signs of admiration.<sup>6</sup> The typical prosodic pattern for such a stylized sign of appreciation is the long, declining portamento contour introduced on p. 111*ff.* As a first instance of stylized appreciation example (5), Holy cow is reproduced below:

(5)

#### Holy cow

- |    |    |     |  |
|----|----|-----|--|
| 1  | -> | KA: | ˆ↑OH [ˆoh:: -                                  |
| 2  | -> | KE: | [Oh:::: yeah;                                  |
| 3  |    | KA: | we're TALKin;                                  |
| 4  |    |     | ˆBAKInG MONster.                               |
| 5  | -> | KV: | [<<singing> TOLL:HOUSE MORsels>                |
| 6  |    | MA: | [it's definitely more than a PAIR and a SPARE. |
| 7  |    | KA: | ˆCOOKie mOnster;;=                             |
| 8  |    |     | appEA:SE the mOnster;;                         |
| 9  | -> |     | HO::L [Y [CO::W;                               |
| 10 | -> | KE: | [OH::::[::;                                    |
| 11 | -> | KV: | [YAY::::;                                      |

- 12 [HOly COW;  
 13 KA: [cOOkie BAKing set.  
 14 -> MA: [alRI:::GHT;  
 15 -> alRI:::GHT.  
 16 -> KA: mmm:::.....[::.....;  
 17 -> KV: [RUBB[er MAI::D;  
 18 MA: [oh;  
 19 [let me SEE it.  
 20 KV: [<<f> you CAN'T SQUASH it;>  
 21 -> KA: mmm:::;;;  
 22 -> MA: [oh: NEAT.  
 23 -> KA: [RUBBer MAI:::D;  
 24 KV: TWELVE [ˈPIEces;  
 25 KA: [yay;  
 26 KV: ((gasp))  
 27 KA: [that's-  
 28 MA: [oh that's-  
 29 -> KA: [WO::W;  
 30 KV: oh that inCLUDES all the TEA spoons [though.  
 31 MA: [<<p> in  
 32 BLUE.>  
 33 KA: <<f> in ˈBLUE;  
 34 that's not my COLor,>

The beginning of the excerpt, Kendra's *oh-oh*, seems to co-occur with her unwrapping and subsequent identification of the present. A first stylized reaction follows immediately from her father Ken (line 2). In the following turns the present is named and referred to by two other participants (Kevin and Marcy), and Kendra recognizes the clue 'Appease the Monster' (lines 7–8). She then produces the first stylized appreciation herself (*holy cow*, line 9), and is joined by every other member of the family except her sister-in-law Wendy, the giver of the present (lines 10–12; 14–17; 21–23). A last stylized admiration token comes from Kendra herself (line 29). The sequence is closed by her mock-complaint about the colour of the baking set (lines 33–34). Another instance of appreciation, this time of a conversational object, occurs in example (8), Egg custard, repeated here:

(8)

**Egg custard**

- 1 MA: <<all> well the GIRL brought us these egg tarts;>  
 2 they came in PAI:RS,

- 3 [.hhh  
 4 BE: [m;  
 5 MA: and they were Only about SO ROU:ND,  
 6 BE: mm,  
 7 WA: ( )  
 8 -> MA: and (-) F:ILLED with the most deL:I[cious;  
 9 BE: [<<all> whAt  
 10 PAstry,>  
 11 MA: Y[ES::.  
 12 WA: [egg CUSTard it was.  
 13 -> BE: <<h> ↑ah:::[:;>  
 14 -> MA: [the most deL:Icious EGG CUST[ard.  
 15 -> BE: [mm::;  
 16 -> MA: and the P:Astry outSI:DE [was;  
 17 -> BE: [m::;  
 18 (-)  
 19 -> MA: SO L:IGHT;  
 20 (.)  
 21 it was (.)  
 22 well i i i STILL think i've nEver tasted such a lovely  
 23 (.)  
 24 lovely egg TART as that;

The way in which Martha presents her description of the egg custard seems designed to elicit admiration from other un-knowing participants. Her lengthening, mostly of consonants (lines 8, 14, 16, and 19) and of a vowel (line 16), displays appreciation of the dessert. Beverly collaborates in the admiring sequence by stylizing the surprise token *ah* as a pitch step-up followed by a long declination line (line 13). Subsequently she joins in the verbal relishing of the food with her lengthened *mm*-s (lines 15 and 17).

A weaker version of a prosodically stylized appreciation marker occurs in example (1), Dark brown, between the same participants:

(1)

**Dark brown**

- 1 MA: an:d I've got some (3syll) LOVely PHOto:s,  
 2 that WALter took (.) on the BEACH the:re,  
 3 of .hh KIM and (.) verONica b:rilliant  
 4 -> <<held on one note> DhA:RK BRO:::WN: - >

- 5 -> BE: <<held on the same note> oh:: - >  
 6 -> MA: <<held on the same note> and the SEA: and the>  
 7       SUN;=  
 8       BE: =m  
 9       MA: .hh Anyway.  
 10       and thEn we had this L:OVeLy LOVeLy cOld lunch at  
 11       hOme,

Again it is Martha who offers a conversational object – the holiday photos – up for appreciation. Her prosodic stylization, the sung note on *dark brown* (line 4), signals her own appreciation of them, and Beverly prosodically orients to the stylized display of admiration by holding the same note with her token *oh* (line 5). The rhapsodizing sequence is closed by the topic-changing token *anyway* (line 9).

### *Summary*

Stylized prosodic orientation is a practice with which participants display appreciation on a local and immediate basis. Its sequential position follows the presentation of an object or conversational item by a previous speaker which is treated as eliciting recognition and praise. The physical lengthening of sounds and syllables has an iconic force which is more directly expressive than a purely verbal description of approval and appreciation. This interrelation between an intonation pattern and an intended display of a particular affect is a clear reminder that certain uses of prosody are, in the words of Dwight Bolinger, ‘part of a gestural complex whose primitive and still surviving function is the signalling of emotion’ (1986: 195).

### **Stylized voicing of imaginary figures**

A second environment in which stylized prosodic orientation is highly frequent is the voicing of imaginary figures, that is of existing or non-existing persons who are not partaking in the current conversation.

The related phenomenon of quoting a previous speaker within the same conversation has been analysed by Couper-Kuhlen (1996), who describes how instances in which participants quote or mimic previous speakers involve matching of pitch register. Klewitz and Couper-Kuhlen (1999), too, have analysed quoting and reported speech, and their study shows that speakers display their attitude towards other speakers’ previous turns in the prosodic delivery of their quotes. It seems that such sequences may involve prosodic orientation, but prosodic stylization can typically only be found in the second speaker’s turn. An example of mimicry

within the same conversation is the following. Dave, host of the phone-in programme *Brainteaser*, poses one of his standard questions to caller Sharon:

(14)

**Boyfriend**

- 1 DA: have you got a BOYfriend,  
 2 -> SH: ↑OO NO;  
 3 -> DA: <<high falsetto > ↑↑OO NO;>  
 4 -> why do you say <<high falsetto> ↑OO NO;>  
 5 [I mean-  
 6 SH: [no -  
 7 DA: why shouldn't you have a boyfriend;=  
 8 you sound a lovely GIRL,

In this extract, Sharon replies negatively to Dave's question *do you have a boyfriend* (lines 1–2). Her turn *oo no* is relatively high pitched, but still well within her pitch range. Dave mimics this high pitch in his next turn (line 3), employing a falsetto pitch register which is definitely non-standard for his vocal range. This sequence shows an incoming speaker mimicking a previous turn via stylized prosodic orientation. However, it is only Dave's turn which is prosodically stylized, while Sharon's contributions before and after his turn are prosodically unmarked within her vocal routine. Thus, while this is a prosodically orienting sequence, the stylization is provided by one speaker alone.

Klewitz and Couper-Kuhlen (1999) use the term 'figure' in order to speak of characters or types of characters quoted in conversation, and the term is used here in the same meaning. Excerpt (11), *Hey little boy*, reproduced below, shows an instance in which an imaginary, rather than a co-present speaker is quoted or mimicked through stylized prosodic orientation from two speakers collaboratively:

(11)

**Hey little boy**

- 1 NN: [he'll- it'll be the CORN dog;  
 2 TR: [( )  
 3 [( )  
 4 -> NN: [offENSE.  
 5 (-)  
 6 ^OO:.....;  
 7 <<h> would 'FREUD like that?>

- 8 <<l> i think 'SO.>  
 9 TR: <<p+l> OO:.....;>  
 10 NN: ↑OO:.  
 11 -> TR: <<hoarse+l> HEY little bOY;  
 12 -> [hhhehe>  
 13 -> NN: [<<hoarse+l> hhhehe[he>  
 14 -> TR: [ <<extremely  
 15 -> hoarse+l> wanna pLAY with my CORN DOG,  
 16 -> hhhehe>  
 17 -> NN: <<hoarse+l> i'll FRY your CORN DOG baby;>  
 18 ehehehe  
 19 TR: <<f+h+all> alRIGHT [alRIGHT alRIGHT;>  
 20 NN: [ <<f+h+all> alRIGHT  
 21 alRIGHT alRIGHT;>  
 22 TR: SO;  
 23 okAY that ↑CANDidate;

From line 11 in the transcript onwards the two participants can be seen to stylize their fictional impersonation of the mayoral candidate. They both take on an extremely harsh voice in low pitch register to adopt a mock-masculine, mock-elderly, mock-paedophilic voice. The fact that their reported speech is entirely constructed possibly enables the speakers to characterize the politician in such an extreme way. By the same token, it is precisely the extreme form of the prosodic design which tells us that the two women are not reproducing a situation which occurred in the real past. The imaginary situation therefore opens up more room for prosodic poeticization.

A slightly different instance of prosodically stylized collaborative voicing comes from Kendra's birthday party (cf. (5), Holy cow and (12), Oops). She has received a baking set and a vacuum cleaner, which triggers the following sequence:

(15)

**Baking cookies**

- 1 KA: <<h> hihih;>  
 2 i can TELL;=  
 3 the FIRSt saturday in my nEW apartment;=  
 4 i'll be CELebrating and i'll go; (.)  
 5 <<all> WHAT am i gonna do;  
 6 WHAT am i gonna do;>



- 10 -> MI: and he's gonna <<h+fff> CAST OFF his STICK.>  
 11 -> BA: <<h+fff> NO:.....;>  
 12 -> MI: and he's gonna <<h+fff> CAST OFF his STICK.  
 13 -> to- hAlleLUjah;  
 14 -> I can SEE.>  
 15 BA: ehehe  
 16 MI: and when he sees MITCHky;  
 17 he'll (.) be (.) SORRY.

The first prosodically stylized turn is Barbara Carlson's double *uh* (lines 8–9), a marker of uptake in an extremely harsh voice quality. Subsequently, in his stylized turn *and he's gonna cast off his stick* with extreme loudness and high pitch register (line 10), Mike Veck impersonates a loud revival preacher proclaiming a miracle. Barbara Carlson matches this turn with another marker of extreme surprise, a very high pitched, harsh, lengthened and loud *no* (line 11). The voicing of the miracle-working preacher is continued with a repetition of Mike's previous turn, *and he's gonna cast off his stick* (line 12), and *hallelujah I can see* (lines 13–14).

This extract shows only one speaker (Mike Veck) doing the voicing, while the other (Barbara Carlson) stylizes her responses to it. Thus this sequence, while being an instance of stylized prosodic orientation, is not one of collaborative voicing.

### *Summary*

Some of the instances presented above bring to mind Ladd's and Haiman's theories of stylization as directly linked to stereotypization, and, in Haiman's case, quoting. Especially examples (11), *Hey little boy*, and (16), *Hallelujah*, match Haiman's description of stylizations as 'utterances which are intended playfully or sarcastically' (Haiman 1994: 19) with the meta-message ' "I quote" '1994: 20). Both extracts (11) and (16) involve participants' voicing of stereotypical figures such as 'paedophilic old man' and 'revival preacher'.

Whereas Haiman concentrates on the sarcastic quotation of clichés and routinized conversation patterns, these instances show that the link between prosodic stylization and stereotype can be extended to the content of the respective turn. Although the participants in the above extracts quote a typified person in a sarcastic fashion, the verbal content of their turns is not itself the main cliché. The defining cliché is created by a combination of the prosodic delivery of their talk and the verbal phrases it contains.

## Conversational structures

The following sections describe two structural environments for stylized prosodic orientation. Firstly, we find that the sequential routines at the beginning and end of telephone calls are common locations for stylization; secondly, we see that a particular adjacency pair, the question/response pattern, is also frequently prosodically stylized.

### *Conversational routines*

Conversational routines lend themselves to prosodic stylization (Ladd 1978; Haiman 1994; Couper-Kuhlen 2004; Ogden *et al.* 2004), and it seems that in sequences which embody a routinized conversational structure stylized prosodic orientations are indeed frequent. Two such environments are the beginning and the end of a telephone call. First, an example of the closing of a telephone conversation which occurs in example (2), is repeated below:

(2)

**Hi di hi**

- 1 DA: O:kay,  
 2 THANK you for coming On,  
 3 CA: O[kay;  
 4 -> DA: [hi-  
 5 -> <<h> HI di ^HI::;>  
 6 -> CA: ^HI di <<musical interval> HI::->  
 7 -> DA: <<h> bye <<musical interval> BYE::;>  
 8 CA: <<h> BYE::>

In lines 1–2 Dave opens up the closing via *okay* and *thank you*, in line 3 Cathy joins in by also offering an *okay*. Subsequently Dave produces the stylized *hi di hi* (line 5), which is met by a similar token from Cathy (line 6). Thereafter the speakers close the call, with Dave stylizing his closing line *bye bye* (line 7). A similar stylization on the same verbal phrase is used in the following extract during an opening. Host Dave introduces his colleague Phil:

(17)

**Hi di hi 2**

- 1 DA: it's YOUNG phil SAYer.  
 2 <<I> HI.>  
 3 PH: =<<I> hello hello hello.>  
 4 DA: <<h> hello.

- 5            how ARE you.>  
 6 -> PH: <<musical interval> hi di ↑HI:;>  
 7 -> DA: <<h> hi di <<musical interval> HI:;>  
 8 ->        ho di <<musical interval> HO:;>  
 9        PH: alRIGHT,  
 10        THANK you;  
 11        did you SEE it tonight?  
 12        DA: i DID.

Phil comes in with a non-standard opening (line 3) by repeating the greeting token *hello* three times in a low pitch register. This may be a prosodic orientation to Dave's low register in the preceding turn (line 2); however, in the following turn Dave does not match Phil's register but greets him in high pitch (lines 4–5). Following this, Phil launches another attempt at a stylized opening, now using the phrase *hi di hi* with a stylized intonation contour (line 6). This time Dave orients to Phil's turn with prosodic stylization, employing two musical intervals, high pitch register and additional lengthening first on the last syllable of *hi di hi*, then on that of *ho di ho*. The first interval gives no satisfactory frequency reading, but the second one on *ho* (line 8) falls from D, around 292 Hz, to roughly a B at 242 Hz, thus producing a minor third. A further instance of a collaboratively stylized telephone opening is (3), *Hi Tom*, reproduced below:

- (3)  
**Hi Tom**  
 1        OZZ:    TOM there please,  
 2        LES:    YES,  
 3               he's UPstai:rs.  
 4               HANG on ozzie,=  
 5               i'll GET him.  
 6        OZZ:    THANK you.  
 7        (0.5)  
 8 -> TOM:    he<<musical interval>LLO::;>  
 9 -> OZZ:    <<musical interval>hi TOM::;>  
 10        I'm On: the lOOKout fo:r someone: to come out on  
 11        dUty to a scramble on SUNday, (-)  
 12        TOM:    .hhhhh[hhhhhhhhh  
 13        OZZ:        [if pOssible please -

Tom comes to the phone and stylizes his first turn with a musical interval (line 8). Ozzie matches this stylization and also produces an interval on his *hi Tom* (line 9). In contrast to the two previous extracts, where the

stylized opening or closing added to an informal, possibly joking character of the interaction, this extract holds little evidence of such a non-serious stance. Even from the small extract of the phone call presented here it is apparent that the ensuing conversation is not going to be without potential complications. Ozzie's reason for the call is a request (lines 10–11), which Tom is not too eager to comply with, as can be seen from his long and audible inbreath following Ozzie's requesting turn (line 12). That Ozzie treats this inbreath in this way is apparent from his following plea (line 13). Thus we find no sign of a playful interactional stance in this stylized telephone opening – at least not on the observable surface of the conversational interaction. One could, however, argue that the stylized prosodic orientation introduces a non-seriousness which is designed interactionally to counteract the potential conflict on the verbal level.

Another routinized conversational action in which prosodic stylization seems to be common is of course calling out to someone at a distance, with its typical prosodic design of the call contour, as we noted in the review earlier in the chapter. Given the nature of our data corpus as a collection of conversations between interactants who are either in the same room, or talking on the phone, there are no instances of calling in this corpus. However, both in calling, and in openings and closings, stylization via musical intervals seems particularly common. The minor third has already been discovered to be a routine interval for the call contour (Lieberman 1975) and it is also present in several of the above examples, such as extracts (2), Hi di hi, (3), Hi Tom and (17), Hi di hi 2. However, conversational routines apparently do not carry a routine stylization such as the minor third, but come in a variety of musical intervals.

With respect to the non-serious element present in many other stylized environments, it seems that conversational routines are not necessarily characterized in such a way. However, Ladd (1978) shows how a routine call may be stylized via a musical interval, but a serious call for help may not (see the review of Ladd's work earlier in the chapter). This suggests that stylization is inappropriate in serious interaction, and thus introduces an element of lightness whenever it is used.

### *Stylized adjacency pairs*

Among the collection of stylized prosodic orientations some adjacency pairs have been found, although none of them seem as strictly routinized as the openings and closings analysed above. Chapter 2 showed that adjacency pairs are a typical environment for prosodic orientation, and it is therefore not surprising that some of them are stylized. One adjacency

pair with prosodic stylization comes from Dave Ward's 'Brainteaser'. The original caller is Alf, but at some point during the phone call his wife Ann has joined the conversation from an upstairs line. Alf is in the process of talking about a show in which he will be performing:

(18)

**Moral support**

- 1 AL: and we doin' (.) the NEW moon,  
 2 (0.5)  
 3 by SIGmund romberg and it's at (RUMley) fOrum.  
 4 DA: Excellent.  
 5 what are yOU playing DEAR,  
 6 (1.0)  
 7 -> AN: <<h+port>↑↑`ME::,>  
 8 -> DA: <<h+port> ↑↑YE- [↑↑`YE::S,>  
 9 AN: [oh i'm just the mOral  
 10 sup`PORT;  
 11 DA: oh y you're just moral sup`PORT [are you,  
 12 AN: [YEAH;

Dave wants to know Ann's role in the opera production (line 5) and she replies with a repair initiation, *me* (line 7). In the conversation so far she has not used high pitch register and her extremely high pitched utterance can be considered stylized. Her pitch height co-occurs with a stylized falling-rising intonation contour, involving lengthening and portamento. Dave offers the elicited confirmation with a simple *yes* (line 8), which is stylized in the same fashion. Considering his male voice, the high pitch register is much more marked for him than it is for Ann. After this short stylized next-turn repair initiation and following repair, Ann provides a reply to Dave's earlier question in an unmarked prosodic format (lines 9–10). Dave, too, continues with another repair-initiation, but without prosodic stylization (line 11).

A second instance of a stylized adjacency pair comes from the young couple Jill and Jeff (cf. (6), Oh honey). They have been talking about a newly discovered group of planets, and are in the process of closing down this topic. Jeff then returns to the earlier topic of the negative pregnancy test:

(19)

**Pregnant**

- 1 JI: <<p>god it's SO inCREDible.>  
 2 (.)

- 3 JE: <<p>it SENDS me OUt there.>  
 4 JI: <<p>wo::w;>  
 5 JE: hehehe  
 6 JI: <<p>oh my g->  
 7 wow that's SO exCITing.  
 8 (-)  
 9 -> JE: <<p+port> OH::;  
 10 -> HONEY::;>  
 11 <<p>yOU're not `PREGnant,>  
 12 -> JI: <<aspirated+port> NO::;>  
 13 (( ))  
 14 JE: yOU were convinced you were PREGnant?

Jeff's return to the earlier conversational item is done in a stylized fashion: he lengthens his syllables *oh* (line 9) and *-ney* (line 10), and produces them with falling portamento. Jill replies to Jeff's following question *you're not pregnant* with an equally stylized *no*, also carrying the long portamento contour and the falling intonation pattern. While the exact verbal and prosodic form of response is not as predictable in the above adjacency pairs as it is in the case of opening and closing sequences, the sequential structure is nevertheless relatively inflexible, with next-speaker allocation being accomplished in the first pair part. Thus, the above instances of stylized prosodic orientation can be argued to co-occur, if not with a predictable verbal routine, then at least with a sequential one.

### Summary

With respect to stylized prosodic orientation in certain conversational structures, both Ladd's and Haiman's notions of routine and stereotype are relevant. Ladd's examples 'appropriate for stereotyped or stylized situations' (1978: 524) are *thank you*, *excuse me* and *good morning*, the latter being the kinds of conversational opening we have encountered in this chapter. Haiman also mentions 'clichés of greeting etc.' (1994: 19) as typical instances of stylization. In the above section, extracts (2), Hi di hi; (17), Hi di hi 2; and (3), Hi Tom contain instances of prosodically stylized opening and closing sequences. The stylized adjacency pairs seem to behave similarly in that they, too, involve a sequential order, even if that is of a vaguer format than that of openings and closings. Still, the routinized structure of the question/response pattern seems to invite stylized prosodic orientation ((18), Moral support; (19), Pregnant).

Ogden *et al.* (2004) show that a particular stylized pitch pattern in Finnish is used to signal that something is routine, and 'no news'. While the findings in this report prove that stylized prosody can

co-occur with routine actions, the same stylized patterns may then be used in other interactions to signal that an otherwise non-routine action is indeed routine.

### Stylized interludes

This last section presents an interactional environment for stylized prosodic orientation which involves a two-part structure: a stylized uptake of a prior conversational item and, resulting from this, a playful, prosodically stylized insertion sequence after which the interactants continue the sequence which has previously been in progress. This playful insertion sequence is referred to here as a 'stylized interlude', a term inspired by Huizinga (1980), who writes concerning the concept of 'play':

As regards its formal characteristics, all students lay stress on the *disinterestedness* of play. Not being 'ordinary' life it stands outside the immediate satisfaction of wants and appetites, indeed it interrupts the appetitive process. It interpolates itself as a temporary activity satisfying in itself and ending there. Such at least is the way in which play presents itself to us in the first instance: as an intermezzo, an interlude in our daily lives. (1980: 9, emphasis in the original)

The term 'interlude' has been chosen because it refers to play as inserted into a less playful, less stylized, more 'ordinary' sequential environment. A first example for this phenomenon is extract (9), Dilemma, reproduced below:

(9)

#### Dilemma

- 1 BA: there's aNOther mOral Issue that is FACing.  
 2 ↑NO:T [me,  
 3 -> PE: [<<h+f> a diLEMMA?>  
 4 -> BA: <<h+f> a di↑LEMMa.>  
 5 (-)  
 6 -> PE: <<h+f> ↑YES.>  
 7 -> BA: it is a di↑L:EMMa.  
 8 PE: ↑BIG dilemma.  
 9 BA: NOT Only in dEAtH and dYing,  
 10 PE: aRIGHT,

The topic which is later prosodically stylized is introduced by Barbara Carlson (line 1) as *another moral issue*. In the subsequent turn, Peter

paraphrases Barbara's turn and produces the first stylization (line 3), *a dilemma*, a prosodically stylized uptake of Barbara's non-stylized previous turn, which functions as the first framing bracket (Goffman 1974) of the interlude. The stylized uptake is done in an interactional stance of light teasing, or light mockery. This stance is already weakly present in Barbara Carlson's turn *there is another moral issue that is facing not me* (lines 1–2), and it is developed in the subsequent stylized sequence. For the whole time of the prosodic stylization the two participants remain with the stylized item – *a dilemma* – which they repeat four times, and it is only after this sequence that Barbara Carlson recycles her formerly aborted turn and syntactic gestalt *not me* (lines 1–2) into *not only in death and dying* (line 9). This continuation is still not entirely serious in key, but it is less playful than the previous interlude and lacking in prosodic stylization.

Extract (10), repeated below, also contains stylized prosodic orientation. It involves Barbara Carlson with her guest Mike Veck (see also (16), Hallelujah):

## (10)

**Badgering**

- 1 MI: uhm (.) Actually there were about FIFTy CARS that  
 2 were that were TICKeted;  
 3 a:nd uh;;  
 4 BA: <all it's nEver gonna [happen aGAIN.>  
 5 MI: [MAyor scheivel-  
 6 that's A:bsolutely rIght;  
 7 mayor schEivel said that [if we RUN into a prOblem,  
 8 BA: [<all and YOU'LL PAY for  
 9 those tickets if it ever happens again.  
 10 WON'T you mike veck.>  
 11 MI: hOH: BOY:. .hh  
 12 BA: YES you WILL.  
 13 i mean if [you're bringing-  
 14 MI: [OH BOY;  
 15 BA: if you're bringing [people out there;  
 16 MI: [does that mean i get to come  
 17 back in the HOT tub [if i PAY for 'em;  
 18 BA: [YES you can  
 19 come bAck in the HOT tub honey;  
 20 [Any time you WANT to.>  
 21 MI: [OKAY;>

- 22 -> BA: [<<f+h>Absolutely;>  
 23 -> MI: [<<f+h+harsh >alRIGHT.>  
  
 24 -> BA: [<<f+h> Any TIME;>  
 25 -> MI: [<<f+h+harsh >i'll DO it;>  
 26 -> BA: <<f+h+harsh>> you'll PAY it ALL;>  
 27 -> MI: <<h+f> y - y-you're BADGERing ME;>  
  
 28 BA: i KNOW i KNOW i KNOW and i LOVE it.  
 29 <<f> are YOU gonna make more sEAts out there ->

In lines 1–3 Mike Veck is in the process of replying seriously to the caller's question. He is interrupted by Barbara Carlson who completes his turn in fast speech rate: *and uh – it's never gonna happen again* (lines 3–4). Lines 5–7 show how Mike had intended to continue his serious, non-playful response, even replying to Barbara's incoming in a serious stance (line 6, *that's absolutely right*). However, he is interrupted again (lines 8–10). This time Barbara makes the provocative demand that he should pay for all the parking tickets if the situation ever happens again. Here Mike gives in to the non-serious key, sighing *oh boy* (line 11), but initially he does so only verbally, and by interrupting and overlapping Barbara's speech in a playfully rude manner, without signs of stylization in his following speech.

The following succession of turns (lines 12–22) is a gradual increase in loudness and pitch register on Barbara's side, while Mike Veck's prosody remains relatively unmarked (lines 14, 16 and 17). After another *oh boy* (line 14) he asks *does that mean I get to come in the hot tub again if I pay for 'em* (Barbara Carlson presents her programme from inside a hot tub, in which her guests have to join her). As Barbara playfully grants his request, calling him *honey* (lines 18–20), his reply *okay* (line 21) is a sign that he finally gives in, both to Carlson's demand to pay for the parking tickets, and to her invitation to join in the prosodically stylized interlude.

Her previously ongoing loud voice, which was un-matched by Mike's prosody, had been enticing him to join the playful sequence. From line 23 he does so, perhaps because it becomes clear that to 'play along' might eventually prove to be the better strategy. As Mike is clearly unwilling to pay for all parking tickets ever issued at his baseball

stadium, but does not want to alienate future visitors by seeming mean, not funny and a spoil sport, a joking agreement in an extreme vocal delivery can be interpreted later as 'only kidding', if he was ever held responsible for statements made on Carlson's programme.

From line 23, *alright*, Mike's prosody changes abruptly. He begins to shout at very high loudness and pitch, and in an extremely harsh voice – possibly impersonating an experience along the lines of 'being tortured.' Barbara has also reached increased loudness and pitch at this point (line 22ff). Mike continues to shout (*I'll do it*, line 25), still in constant overlap, and Barbara joins in this same prosodic design with her turn *you'll pay it all* (lines 26). In an extreme voice involving extra high loudness, pitch and harshness, Mike now yells *you- you- you're badgering me* (lines 27), the last part of this turn in the clear, and therefore suddenly audible in all its extreme. This is the climax of the stylized interlude, after which Barbara closes the playful sequence by returning to a relatively unmarked prosodic design with her turn *I know I know I know and I love it* (line 28), which marks the ending of this particular frame. Subsequently, she moves on to the next question and continues to ask Mike Veck about the parking situation.

A similar analysis is also possible for extract (16), Hallelujah, earlier in this chapter, also from the above conversation where the idea of the miracle is introduced in a non-stylized fashion and then taken up with prosodic stylization. For the time of the voicing sequence, the speakers remain with the miracle topic, before they move on to a non-stylized continuation of the imaginary scenario.

The following extract contains a playful sequence involving the radio presenters Pat, Gene and David. The recording of this conversation begins shortly before the transcribed extract; the participants are discussing a politician who is also called Pat:

(20)

Pat

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 | PA: whAt do you think she was TALKing about.         |
| 2 | wha- whAt kind of [MEETing would that have been.     |
| 3 | GE: [whAt do you think she was                       |
| 4 | S:MOKing.  |
| 5 | PA: whAt kind of MEETing would have [would that have |
| 6 | been.  |
| 7 | GE: [(what can-)                                     |

- 8 PA: [that she was at;  
 9 GE: [Andy dOrkins camPAIGN meeting?  
 10 (-)  
 11 PA: <<l> YEAH;  
 12 exACTly.>  
 13 DA: stOp PICKin' on PA:T.  
 14 (-)  
 15 GE: [this p-  
 16 DA: [not YOU pAt;  
 17 THIS pAt.  
 18 -> PA: <<f+h> 'HI PA:T;  
 19 -> 'it's PA:T.>  
 20 .hhh  
 21 [<<h> ehehe>  
 22 -> DA: [<<h+f> it's the pAt and 'PAT 'SHOW;,>  
 23 PA: hehe .hh  
 24 -> <<asp> it's 'PhA:T.  
 25 -> [it's PhAT.>  
 26 -> GE: [<<asp> ^OH::: yOU guys;>  
 27 hey uhm so-  
 28 OH;  
 29 here's the-  
 30 <<l> I GOTTa find the tEst.>

David tells the other hosts to *stop pickin' on Pat* (line 13), and he specifies after a pause: not the Pat in the studio (line 16), but Pat, the topic of their conversation (line 17). Subsequently, Pat the presenter begins a stylized play-sequence involving her name (lines 18–21), in which she speaks louder and higher than before, and lengthens her two declining intonation contours. David joins this stylized interlude with his turn *it's the Pat and Pat show* (line 22), which he also produces at a higher pitch register and increased loudness. Pat laughs (line 23) and continues her stylization, now with an extremely breathy voice quality (lines 24–25). Gene produces the last stylization of this sequence with his mock-rebuke *oh you guys* (line 26) which is aspirated like Pat's turn, and contains a lengthened fall on *oh*. Again, the stylized interlude centres on an item which has already been introduced. Gene closes the sequence by changing the topic, searching for a test (line 30).

Another instance in which conversational items are taken up and used in a prosodically stylized interlude is the following extract, which

contains (12), Oops:

(21)

**Mad**

- 1 MA: <<1> that made me MA:D.>  
 2 ?: ((knock))  
 3 -> KA: <<1+hoarse+p> MA::D.> hh.  
 4 ?: ((knock))  
 5 -> WE: <<1> i was> <<hoarse+singing> 'SO-`O-´O,  
 6 'MA-`A-´A-`AD;>  
 7 -> [DOO doo doo [DOO doo doo;  
 8 -> MA: i was [MAD in the [HEAD.  
 9 -> ?: ((knock))  
 10 WE: <<all> don't you remember that?>  
 11 ?: ((slap)) ((slap))  
 12 KV: uhuh,  
 13 KA: how ´mA:d ´WERE you;  
 14 (-)  
 15 MA: <<p> oh> `FAIRly,  
 16 -> KE: <<p> OOPS,  
 17 that [won't work;>  
 18 -> KA: [OO:PS,  
 19 -> OO:PS,  
 20 -> OO:[PS,  
 21 -> WE: [OOPS,  
 22 -> OOPS,  
 23 -> [OOPS,  
 24 MA: [<<h> what's everybody WAIT ]ing for;  
 25 WE: don't DO it;]  
 26 MA: you guys are supposed to go HO:ME now.>  
 27 KA: SEE ya.

Previous to the transcribed extract Marcy has been complaining about the unavailability of her favourite soft drink, and her complaint ends in her TCU *that made me mad* (line 1). This prosodically un-stylized utterance is taken up by her daughter Kendra who produces the word *mad* in a low pitch register, a quiet voice and extremely hoarse voice quality. As in previous examples, the first prosodically stylized turn represents the beginning bracket of the playful interlude which follows. Her sister-in-law Wendy orients to and continues the stylized turn *I was so mad* (lines 5–6), which is also extremely hoarse, and sung: *so* carries a rising-falling-rising

melody, while *mad* is sung as a rise-fall-rise-fall. Subsequently, Wendy sings *DOO doo doo DOO doo doo* in precise rhythmic overlap with Marcy's *MAD in the HEAD* (lines 7–8), the beats on *mad* and *head* co-occurring with the accents on the two stressed *DOO*'s. In addition, one of the participants knocks on the table in overlap with the first beat.

Another stylized interlude occurs shortly afterwards, when Ken produces his first *oops* (line 16) which is relatively 'serious' at first as it seems to have some motivation in the physical world (line 17). Kendra and Wendy take up *oops* and both repeat it three times, which again results in a stylized and non-serious conversational sequence. The interlude ends once more when a new topic is introduced. Marcy playfully pretends to throw her guests out before Kendra has received any birthday presents.

### *Summary*

In all of the above prosodically stylized interludes the aspect of taking up and stylizing an item which has already been conversationally relevant is important. Which participant introduces the item seems flexible. In (9), *Dilemma*, the item *another moral issue* is introduced by Barbara Carlson, while the prosodic stylization of *a dilemma* is first begun by Peter. In extract (10), *Badgering*, Mike himself gives his confirmation to pay for all future parking tickets and then begins the stylized interlude. In (16), *Hallelujah*, the idea of the miracle is introduced by Mike Veck, who later begins the stylized sequence shouting *he's gonna cast off his stick*. In extract (20), *Pat*, Dave introduces the potential confusion between the two Pats which is then taken up in a prosodically stylized fashion by Pat, with Dave joining in later. In both instances of stylized prosodic orientation in (21), *Mad/Oops*, the item which is developed in the stylization sequence is first introduced by a different person from the one who later begins the stylization. The item *mad* is introduced by Marcy, who joins the stylization sequence later; *oops* is first produced by Ken, who does not take part in the ensuing stylized sequence. The aspect of taking up something which has already been introduced is possibly not limited to stylized prosodic orientations, but may apply at least to some stylizations which involve only one single speaker. An example is the following extract, taken from Jeff and Jill (see examples (6), *Oh honey*, and (19), *Pregnant*). Jill tells Jeff about the previous night when a good friend of hers stayed at her house:

(22)

#### **Just talking**

- 1           JI: we STAYED up 'til like three thIRty last night.  
2           JE: what are you guys DOing;=

- 3 TALKing or SOMething?  
 4 JI: <<p> ↑just TALKing,>  
 5 JE: ehe .h  
 6 -> ʃJU::ST <<p> tAlking?>  
 7 -> JI: ehehehehe  
 8 -> JE: ʃJU:::ST tAlk 'ing?  
 9 -> JI: ehehehe  
 10 -> JE: ehehehe  
 11 JI: .h we have a lot to catch UP on;  
 12 JE: <<p> I know i know just kidding.>

Jeff wants to know what Jill and her friend were doing staying up until three thirty at night (line 1) and suggests *talking or something* (line 3). Jill confirms this (line 4). Subsequently, Jeff laughs and repeats Jill's words *just talking* with a long rising intonation contour on *just* (line 6). Jill laughs, but does not join in the stylization. In his next turn, Jeff lengthens the rising contour on *just* even more (line 8), and both laugh (lines 9–10). Jill now provides a reason for their long conversations, which Jeff treats as an attempt at justification. He now confirms that he is *just kidding* (line 12), verbalizing retrospectively the non-serious stance of his previous turns. This sequence similarly takes up a conversational item which has been mentioned directly before and continues with this idea for the time of the stylized interlude. Thus it seems that the structure of the interlude is not restricted to stylizations involving two participants.

## Conclusion

All extracts analysed in the last section are subsequent to an already introduced discourse item and/or an already achieved conversational action. Other prosodically stylized sequences may even take up non-verbal, non-conversational items or actions, as the opening of a door (extract (4)), or a birthday present (5). By prosodically stylizing a previously non-stylized item or action participants introduce a new perspective on it. Very often this new perspective is either a non-serious one, or one that reinforces a non-seriousness which was already present in preceding talk. Typically, the beginning and end of such stylized interludes are clearly marked, prosodically, by a change back to an unmarked design, and verbally, by a resumption of a previous topic.

Thus, the aspect of stylized continuation of a prior discourse item also holds for other conversational environments for stylized prosodic

orientation. Appreciation sequences, too, take up a previously introduced item – verbal or physical – and remain with it for the time of the prosodically stylized sequence. However, signalling appreciation does not necessarily qualify as an insertion sequence, as it does not take ‘time out’ from previous talk as the stylized interlude does, and minimally consists of only two turns.

Instances of voicing and mimicry also depend on the idea that the figures to-be-voiced are already known and typically already in the conversational vicinity of the stylized turns. Here the stylized sequences can constitute an insertion, although in some instances the voicing covers a stretch of talk too short to be called an interlude. Still, both stylized appreciation and voicing present clearly defined sequences, whose beginnings and ends are marked prosodically, and often verbally.

Conversational structures, too, bear similarities. Both instances of stylized adjacency pairs above – (18), Moral support, and (19), Pregnant – are bracketed off from previous talk by pauses, and in both cases previous material is taken up and developed further. In (18), the first stylization occurs with a repair initiation, in (19), the previous topic of pregnancy is reintroduced by the first stylized turn. However, neither of the adjacency pairs stand out as a playful aside, both are integrated into previous and subsequent talk with respect to their interactional key.

Openings and closings of telephone calls by their very nature cannot be insertion sequences, as they constitute the beginning or end of a conversation. Yet, with respect to uptake of previously introduced material one could argue that by referring to a well-established conversational routine these practices automatically introduce a known pattern into the discourse and are thus taking up a familiar element of conversation as such.

An aspect of non-seriousness has been underlying many of the above analyses, though not all.<sup>7</sup> In all four interactional environments there seems to be the strong potential for stylized prosodic orientation to introduce a light, non-serious, or even playful key, and although there are important instances in which a key change is not observable, the large majority of stylized prosodic orientations seem to involve a light or even humorous stance. Of the extracts analysed above, there are 17 cases out of 20 in which a playful key can be detected: (2), Hi di hi, (4), Open the door, (5), Holy cow, (6), Oh honey, (7), Corn dog, (9), Dilemma, (10), Badgering, (11), Hey little boy, (12), Oops, (13), Ribs, (15), Baking cookies, (16), Hallelujah, (17), Hi di hi 2, (18), Moral support, (19), Pregnant, (20), Pat and (21), Mad. Therefore we can safely argue that it is highly frequent, if not typical, for stylized prosodic orientations to co-occur with a light interactional modality.

Among the instances of stylized prosodic orientation which do not involve a playful key, two can be argued to co-occur with a certain degree of interactional 'lightness'. They are (1), Dark brown, and (8), Egg custard. Both involve appreciation of something the participants obviously delight in, and one could claim that sheer appreciation with its iconic prosodic display involves a lighter mood. However, there is one type of prosodically stylized sequence in which signs of a playful key are not always present. In openings and closings of telephone conversations, stylized prosodic orientation is extremely frequent, but participants do not always indicate that their talk is framed in a light interactional modality: (3), Hi Tom is an example. However, as the other instances of stylizations in conversational routines, this extract confirms Ladd's (1978) and Haiman's (1994) assertions that prosodic stylization occurs frequently with stereotypical structures.

Thus it seems that stylized prosodic orientation has two main interactional functions. Through interplay with other conversational domains and practices, such as lexical and grammatical choice, pausing, facial expression, gesture and body movement, stylized prosody is employed by participants to introduce a playful conversational key, and/or to signal that an ongoing, stylized activity is to be considered routine and nothing for either participant to worry about.

# 4

## Collaborative Productions: Orientation in Prosody and Syntax

### Introduction

While the forms of prosodic orientation presented in Chapters 2 and 3 are structurally independent of other linguistic domains, this final analytical chapter explores a type of prosodic orientation which always co-occurs with orientation in syntactic structure, and which therefore deserves to be studied independently. Within the framework of prosodic orientation and in addition to prosodic matching, non-matching and complementation, the phenomenon is *prosodic continuation*, that is the completion or extension of a previous prosodic pattern by a second speaker. In the case of prosodic completion a prosodic design is begun by a first speaker, left unfinished, and brought to completion by a second, incoming speaker. Prosodic extension occurs when a first speaker has potentially completed a prosodic pattern, but a second speaker extends that same pattern, rather than beginning a new one, thus co-producing a single prosodic design with the first participant.

The data reveal that this type of prosodic orientation is closely interconnected with the same collaborative practice in the syntactic domain, that is the continuation of a syntactic construction by the incoming speaker. Once more, that continuation may be a completion of a previously unfinished syntactic pattern, or the extension of an already complete construction by an incoming second speaker. While prosody and syntax do not always coincide with respect to completion and extension – that is to say, prosodic completions may be syntactic extensions, for example – the two domains are so obviously related that prosodic and syntactic continuation must be treated as one phenomenon.

This overall phenomenon is the *collaborative production* of prosodic units and syntactic constructions by two or more participants.

The first section of this chapter presents relevant previous research. The second main section defines collaborative productions and attempts to categorize them according to their formal characteristics. The third section claims that collaborative productions are non-competitive incomings into the turn-space of another speaker and should not be considered interruptions. The fourth main section presents interactional environments for collaborative productions, while a fifth section analyses response-tokens as one form of reciprocity to collaborative productions.

### Previous research on collaborative productions

In conversation analytic research, collaborative productions were first mentioned by Harvey Sacks (1995) as 'collaboratively built sentences'. Subsequently, they received a brief mentioning in Schegloff (1984) and they overlap with some of Falk's (1980) 'duets'. The largest contribution to the subject has been made by Lerner (1991; 1994; 1996; 1999; 2002), who calls them 'sentences-in-progress'. Ferrara (1992) speaks of 'joint productions', while Ono and Thompson (1995) treat them as 'co-constructions'. Local (2005) is the only piece of research so far which describes the phonetic design of what he calls collaborative completions.

Additionally, Díaz *et al.* (1996) refer to collaborative productions in connection with the 'collective formulation ... of a problem solution on a joint footing' (1996: 525). For German, the phenomenon is mentioned in Hartung (1998) as a way of displaying irony, in Glindemann (1987) as a form of speaking 'unisono', in Bublitz (1988) as a subcategory of supportive speaker contributions and in Schwitalla (1992) as a form of '*redebegleitendes Sprechen*' (talk-accompanying talk). Helasvuo (2004) investigates the grammar of co-constructions in natural Finnish conversations, showing that incoming completions occur at a variety of syntactic levels. Morita (2002) describes the collaborative completion of sentences with final particles in Japanese.

#### Sacks (1995)

Sacks (1995) considers the main contribution of collaboratively built sentences to conversation to be a social one. For him the syntactic possibility of constructing a sentence together is at the same time a possibility for collaboratively constructing a social unit:

The fact that there is a job that any person could clearly do by themselves, provides a resource for members for permitting them to show each

other that whatever it is they're doing together, they're just doing together to do together. That is to say, if one wants to find a way of showing somebody that what you want is to be with them, the best way to do it is to find some way of dividing a task which is not easily dividable, and which clearly can be done by either one alone. (1995: 147)

According to Sacks, collaborative productions are a way of using syntax as a linguistic resource for establishing a social group within a conversational setting. Linguistic aspects of the phenomenon are not mentioned.

### **Lerner (1991; 1996)**

Gene Lerner's two main articles (1991; 1996) on collaborative productions discuss 'compound turn constructional unit formats', that is two-fold structures which consist of a preliminary and a final component, which are produced by two speakers respectively. The completion of the final component of such a compound TCU is a conventional place for possible speaker change, while 'preliminary component completion', that is the completion of the first part of the two-fold utterance, is typically not a transition relevance place. Preliminary completions allow a recipient to project the upcoming of the final component and thereby to project the next transition relevance place. An example from Lerner is the *if X then Y* construction. Once a speaker has reached the completion of the *if X* component, the following component *then Y* can be predicted to close the format and thereby make an upcoming TRP relevant. According to Lerner, sentences-in-progress occur when second speakers, instead of waiting for the TRP after the final component, come in after the preliminary component has been completed, and produce the final element of the compound turn-structure. In the above case this would mean that when a current speaker produces *if X*, another participant comes in after its completion and produces *then Y*.

Other two-fold formats described by Lerner (1991) are quotations following a *verbum dicendi*, parenthetical inserts which project the continuation of what has come before, lists, disagreements prefaced by *well*, contrasts and the spelling of names in two parts. Lerner (1996) acknowledges that there are 'unprojected opportunities for completion' (1996: 256) which are not occasioned by compound TCU formats but by 'any conversational practice that disrupts the progressivity of talk within a turn' (1996: 257). Such conversational practices are laugh tokens; intra-turn silences caused, for example, by a word search; and word repetitions. However, Lerner does not describe cases of collaborative productions which do not occur either in a compound TCU format or

after some kind of disruptive practice by the first speaker. Lerner's analytical focus is on syntax-for-conversation:

The collaboration of two speakers within what is achieved as a single sentence provides a way to recover features of sentence structure, where those features are not wholly tied to the talk of individual speakers. Sentence production can be seen here as an interactional achievement. The import of this is that the completion of one speaker's utterance by another participant reveals aspects of an interactionally relevant syntax. (1991: 441)

The formats themselves, however, are not all syntactic in nature, but range from pragmatic formats (lists) to semantic relations (contrasts) to interactional activities (disagreement). This lack of distinction between the different linguistic levels obscures the fact that not all format-types are on a par with one another.

Lerner's investigation of turn-sharing does not include prosody. The only reference to a prosodic parameter is to a potential pause between the *if X* and the *then Y* components (1996: 242). Yet it is precisely the investigation of intonation, pitch register and timing that would make it possible to broaden the perspective on collaborative productions from a limited number of 'compound turn constructional unit formats' to a phenomenon which comprises potentially all syntactic constructions and manifold conversational activities. The data used for the present research contains a large number of cases which are neither part of a two-fold format, nor prompted in any other observable manner by the first speaker.

### **Ferrara (1992)**

Ferrara (1992) sets out to examine syntactic and social aspects of 'joint productions'. Yet although the paper repeatedly claims that their existence points toward a notion of the sentence as a 'discourse unit under construction' (1992: 207), its treatment of empirical examples is not an analysis of their syntactical structure, but instead of participant motivation.

Ferrara differentiates four categories of collaboratives: 'Utterance extensions' are additions to an already complete syntactic construction, motivated by a 'respect for the truthfulness of utterances' (1992: 218) in the second speaker. 'Predictable utterance completions' are those in which the second speaker anticipates how the first speaker's turn may continue. 'Helpful utterance completions' are incomings from recipients who wish to assist the current speaker in a word search, a first speaker's

difficulty being commonly signalled by *uh*, or a pause, or both. 'Invited utterance completions' are discourse strategies used by first speakers who disguise their questions as incomplete statements, thereby camouflaging their lack of information as mere hesitation. This way, first speakers can prompt recipients to provide what they themselves do not care to show they lack.

Ferrara's four categories serve well to distinguish a variety of collaborative productions, but they do not present an entirely successful categorization. For example, the incoming part of a collaborative production may be a predictable utterance completion and a syntactic extension at the same time. Similarly, first speakers can invite an incoming completion, which most probably will be considered helpful by both parties. Characterizing collaborative productions as syntactically extending, predictable, helpful or invited introduces categories which hold independently of one another on different, sometimes overlapping domains of talk-in-interaction, such as syntax, speaker-knowledge and speaker motivation. Still, the four categories remain relevant for our analyses in later sections.

### **Ono and Thompson (1995)**

Ono and Thompson (1995) classify their findings according to syntactic considerations alone. 'Co-constructions' can either be additions to, or completions of an ongoing syntactic construction. In the first case, an incoming participant adds material to a previous speaker's syntactically complete utterance, and this addition is accepted by the original speaker. In the second case, the incoming speaker completes a first speaker's incomplete syntactic construction.

Ono and Thompson's study aims to show conversationalists' orientation to abstract 'constructional schemas' (1995: 16), which are described in terms of a syntax for conversation. Possible schemata are NP V NP or NP V NP PP, which incoming speakers employ to complete other participants' turns. According to Ono and Thompson, 'collaborative turn-sequences ... provide evidence for projectable completion points and joint orientation to a notion of "sentence" ' (1995: 11). Their work is exclusively syntactic in orientation and does not include considerations of the prosody or interactional functions of co-constructions.

### **Local (2000; 2005)**

Local (2005) analyses the phonetic design of collaborative completions and finds that incoming material is typically prosodically integrated into the first speaker's turn, especially with regard to loudness and pitch.

'Impressionistically, the overall pitch of the collaborative appears to be regularly matched to the overall pitch height of the preceding talk, making it hearable as a continuation of that talk' (2005: 274). With regard to speech rate, however, Local finds that incoming speech is often produced faster than previous and subsequent talk.

With respect to pitch, the following investigation similarly finds that second speakers integrate their talk into that of a previous participant, and the section below presents a variety of possibilities for doing so. Loudness is not always integrated, as several examples below will show, while speech rate was not found to be a non-integrative factor in the data for this book.

In this chapter the term 'collaborative productions' is used rather than the more frequent term 'collaborative completions' because the investigation has shown that it is necessary to differentiate between two kinds of collaborative incomings, completions of previously incomplete speech, and extensions of completed material. 'Collaborative productions' is therefore employed as the overall term for both phenomena.

## **Types of collaborative productions**

The form of prosodic orientation which occurs in collaborative productions is prosodic continuation, which comes in two varieties. Either a first participant has produced a TCU which is prosodically incomplete, that is it projects more talk from the same speaker, but a second participant comes in and completes the turn by offering a turn-final prosodic pattern; or the first speaker has prosodically completed his/her TCU, but an incoming speaker still designs their next turn as a continuation of the same turn rather than as a turn in its own right, thus extending the first participant's turn. Prosodically, collaborative productions form one recognizable unit, typically a global intonation contour. The second speaker's contribution is prosodically orienting to the prior material in that the incoming part can be heard as a continuation of the previous speaker's prosodic pattern. In addition, collaborative productions form one syntactic gestalt, that is the incoming speaker's material is syntactically continuing the first speaker's turn. Since collaborative productions are produced by more than one speaker, they emerge as a two-part structure. However, this two-part structure need not be predetermined by the grammatical or pragmatic make-up of the utterance itself.

The following excerpt is a representative example from a dinner conversation of an English family. Walter is in the process of telling Beverly

about an Australian acquaintance:

(1)

**Wide Australian**

- 1 WA: one of DAVID's FRIENDS comes from cAME from HEMel  
 2 ↑HEMPstead.  
 3 when he [was (.) THIR↑TEEN.  
 4 BE: [<<h> (↑HASn't he)>  
 5 WA: [or eLEven.  
 6 BE: [<<h> OH;,>  
 7 WA: you would you would NEVer GUESS it from his ACcent  
 8 -> <<I> i mean he's - > (.)  
 9 -> BE: WIDE auSTRALian [now.  
 10 WA: [speaking au[STRALian,  
 11 BE: [yeah.  
 12 WA: with ( )  
 13 BE: m;  
 14 MA: oh yEs like KEIR does of course but,  
 15 (0.5)  
 16 <<h> FUNNily eNOUGH EWAN DOESn't.>

Beverly's collaborative incoming (line 9) is a prosodic and syntactic continuation of Walter's turn *you would you would never guess it from his accent I mean he's* (lines 7–8). Beverly treats Walter's 's as a copula for her predicate adjective *wide australian*. Together the two turns form a complete syntactic gestalt. Walter's prosodic design contains a declining pitch movement from the last stressed syllable accent onwards, into which Beverly integrates her collaborative incoming by refraining from a pitch reset on her first accent. At the same time Beverly's material continues Walter's ongoing conversational action, the characterization of somebody's accent.

In the process of collecting material for this study a limitation on the excerpts considered collaborative productions became necessary with respect to the second speaker's contribution. Only those instances have been included in which the second, syntactically elliptical construction is presented as a continuation of the first participant's construction, prosodic design and conversational action. Those instances in which an elliptical construction occurs as a turn in its own right have not been

included in the collection. See, for example, the following extract:

(2)

**In the party**

- 1 -> MA: a:nd they ha:d i think she said 'TWELVE.  
 2 -> RI: in the PARTY?  
 3 MA: NO.

Richard produces an 'appendor question' (Sacks 1995: 528ff), that is a prepositional phrase which follows another participant's complete utterance and which functions as a question about that utterance, rather than as a continuation of it. Richard's utterance carries the high rising, try-marking intonation typical for appendor questions. It begins with the onset of a new turn, and therefore it is not prosodically linked to the prior material. Such appendors are not considered collaborative productions here, as they have been analyzed convincingly as other-initiated repair (Schegloff *et al.* 1977; Schegloff 1997: 510f), and as such they are syntactic continuations. However, pragmatically they are independent actions by a second speaker accomplishing a conversational goal different from that of the previous utterance (cf. Schegloff 1996a: 76).

The aim of the following two subsections is to categorize collaborative productions according to their formal characteristics. First, they are classified with respect to the first speaker's contribution, which is analysed according to its projection of syntactic and prosodic continuation. Subsequently, a second categorization is suggested which divides incoming contributions from second speakers into syntactic and/or prosodic completions and extensions of previous material.

**Types of projection**

In this section the notion of projection is used as a formal categorizing factor for collaborative productions. Projection in this context refers to a first speaker's incomplete utterance which in some way prosodically, syntactically, semantically and pragmatically foreshadows whether, and if so, how that utterance is going to continue. The term 'projection' is used in a broad sense which includes not only the projection of an upcoming transition relevance place but also the potential form turn-continuation may take before then. Selting (1996: 359) suggests four ways in which an ongoing turn can project an upcoming TRP:

Syntactic projection, which is done by the initiation of syntactic schemata; prosodic projection, which is accomplished by the use of

prosodic means of unit and/or turn holding or yielding; semantic projection, which is realized by the use of particular lexical constructions such as either ... or, first ... second, etc., or by starting to provide a piece of information that needs to be completed; discourse-pragmatic or sequential projection, which is achieved by the formulation of announcements, prefaces or other kinds of initiation of recognizable activity types which are thus being made expectable.

These types of TRP projection can also be applied to the broader notion of projection employed here, which includes not only expectation of an upcoming speaker change but also of how an utterance may continue after certain cues on different linguistic channels have been given.

### *Syntactic projection*

Syntactic projection, which always co-occurs with the pragmatic projection of the turn-sequences so far, has been described by Auer (1996: 59), also with a focus on TRP projection:

During the emergence of a syntactic gestalt, the chances for predicting (correctly) the not-yet-produced remaining part (and therefore, its termination) continually increase. Thus, the production of a gestalt in time starts with a phase of minimal projectability, implying a high load of perceptual-cognitive work on the part of the recipient and of productive-cognitive work on the part of the speaker, and ends with a phase of maximal projectability in which the speaker profits from the quasi-automatic terminability of already activated patterns and the recipient from the low informational load of the remaining utterance.

A format from Lerner (1991) is *if X then Y*, which allows only for a narrow range of possible continuation after the preliminary component *if X* has been delivered. It establishes a frame which requires a specific continuation, and together with the pragmatic content of previous utterances this continuation becomes predictable. See for instance the following extract:

(3)

#### **Renting**

- 1 PA: if you ↑HAD to sell it nOw.=  
 2 =you'd got flfteen THOUsand POUNDS in ↑↑CASH. (1.8)  
 3 -> but if you'd've ↑bEEen RENTing, (.)  
 4 -> BE: <<all> you wOULdn't have [HAD that;>  
 5 PA: [STILL,

- 6 RO: <<p> yeah;>  
 7 PA: you're ↑nOt likely to have saved up flfteen thousand  
 8 pounds,=  
 9 =in three or four ↑YEARS;  
 10 ↑WOULD you.

There are many more such formats, some of them syntactic, others semantic and discourse-pragmatic in nature. Some of them are listed in Lerner (1991; and discussion earlier in this chapter), others occur in the data for this investigation, such as missing syntactic heads which are provided by the incoming speaker. Other formats, such as first contributions ending in *because*, *but* or *which* may not exert the same completion constraint, as those items can be left 'dangling' in certain conversational environments. However, the largest number of formats are individual in nature, such as first speakers' projection of an upcoming exemplification by ending in 'for example', projection of proper names by ending in 'she's called', instructions consisting of several parts, and so on. Non-turn-holding participants constantly orient to the progression of ongoing talk, which enables them to predict its likely continuation at various points in the structure.

### *Prosodic projection*

In addition to syntactic projection, a speaker's prosody may also foreshadow how an utterance is going to continue prosodically. In many ways prosodic projection poses greater challenges to investigation than syntactic, semantic and discourse-pragmatic formats, as it opens up a much broader range of possibilities for continuation on a very local conversational level. Some prosodic patterns seem to call for a specific kind of continuation from a second speaker, as could be seen in instances of prosodic complementation described in Chapter 2. Although prosodic projection operates without the compelling frame of a syntactic construction, it is sometimes possible to speak of a contour which makes a certain type of prosodic continuation particularly probable. The following extract comes from the same conversation from a British family as (1), Wide Australian, above. Patrick is commenting on the quality of British sausages:

(4)

#### **Rubbish**

- 1 PA: but you CA:N use quality meat [for SAUSages.  
 2 BE: [VEAL actually,

- 3 RO: ↑Oh you no you you CA:N,  
 4 and and they DO;,  
 5 [in in GERmany ↑And swITzerland,  
 6 -> PA: [but the but the ma↑JOrity of sAUrage:s,  
 7 -> A::RE,  
 8 [( )  
 9 -> BE: [↑RUbbish.  
 10 (1.0)  
 11 PA: what they CAN'T sELL as ROASTing BOILing,  
 12 BE: that's ↑RIGHT;  
 13 -> PA: ↑FRYing joints.

Patrick sets up a contrast between sausages which contain quality meat and those which do not. By the time he reaches his *but*-clause (lines 6–7) the pragmatic content of his utterance has become quite clear. The prosody of his turn so far opens up a global contour that seems to aim for one particular kind of completion: the last syllable of *sausages* (line 6) is lengthened and ends in rising intonation, *are* (line 7) is lengthened even more, it also receives rising pitch, and it is produced as an intonation unit of its own. The sequence of these two tone groups builds up prosodic ‘tension’ which makes a type of prosodic climax expectable. A candidate for such a climax is offered by Beverly in the form of her high step-up and a steep fall on *rubbish*, a prosodic pattern which seems to have been projected by Patrick’s prosody in lines 6 and 7, and by the contrast expressed on the content level of his utterance.<sup>1</sup> Patrick himself continues with the same prosodic pattern, as can be seen in line 13, where he, too, produces a step-up on *frying*.<sup>2</sup> Syntactically, the projection of Patrick’s utterance so far allows for more than one possible completion. Beverly chooses to insert an NP, while Patrick continues with a *wh*-clause.

The collaborative intonation contour is visible in Figure 4.1, which shows a frequency analysis of the phrase *sausages are rubbish*.

In extract (4) the expressed contrast allows for a steeply falling intonation contour. Another typical environment for prosodic projections is conversational list construction. Couper-Kuhlen (1999a, b) shows how speakers engage in ‘prosodic routines’ when they build a list together. According to Couper-Kuhlen, prosodic projectability of an upcoming list item takes place with respect to pitch height, amplitude and timing. In all these areas a first speaker sets up a pattern that is repeated in at least two list items before a second speaker comes in and offers an additional one. For example, a first speaker may divide list items into intonation

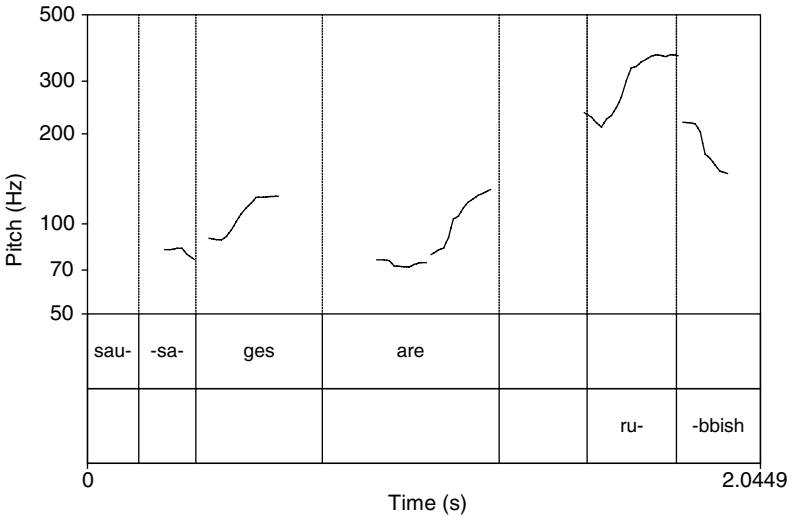


Figure 4.1 Prosodic projection

units and use the same pitch value and an isochronous rhythmic beat on each nucleus. This practice projects the same pitch and timing for a third list item produced by an incoming speaker. An item in a collaborative list can also project a particular intonation contour, as in the following example, taken from a conversation between Jill and her boyfriend Jeff:

(5)

**France**

- 1       JI: it's not <<all> aVAILable here in the united stAtes;  
 2   ->     it's only> in F:RA:NCE,  
 3       (1.0)  
 4   ->   JE: ENGLand,  
 5       JI: and -  
 6       YEAH;  
 7   ->     and SWE:de:n,  
 8       RIGHT.

The contour in question is one that terminates in a slight rise beginning on the last accented syllable and spreading across the remaining unaccented syllables that follow. Irrespective of whether or not Jill had intended to begin a list in line 2, after Jeff's continuation (line 4) a list

emerges which Jill accepts and continues (line 7). The rising contour on *France* (line 2) seems to project another rise (line 4), where the projection of the similar contour co-occurs with the projection of a similar lexical item, in this case a country name. In collaborative list production, what is projected is a replication of certain qualities of the original item. In the above instance both the lexico-semantic field from which the following item is chosen and the prosodic design with which it is delivered are continued:

Lists are characterized precisely by the fact that they are accumulations of like items: they are constructed as members of a class. This is symbolized not only by like syntactic constituency but also can be iconically cued by like prosodic patterning. Identical prosodic treatment in essence says 'This one is like that one' – it is a way of constructing similarity even if it may be verbally lacking. (Couper-Kuhlen 1999b: 20)

Other cases of prosodic projection must remain obscure to the analyst, for example because the data consists of audio recordings only. In the following extract a prosodic prediction is made possibly on grounds of facial expressions and an in-group prosodic repertoire:

(6)

**Baking cookies**

- 1 KE: <<h> hihhi,>  
 2 .h I can TELL;  
 3 my FIRSt saturday in my nEw apartment;=  
 4 I:'ll be CELebrating and i'll go; (.)  
 5 <<all> WHAT am i gonna do;  
 6 WHAT am i gonna do;>  
 7 -> and THEN i'll go; .hh  
 8 -> [<<h+ff> i'm baking COOKie:s - >  
 9 -> WE: [<<h+ff> i'm gonna CLEA::N - >  
 10 <<h> i'm gonna bake COOKies;  
 11 i'll have [FUN.>  
 12 KV: [ALL:RI:GHT;

Although the verbal and semantic content of the two continuations from Kendra and Wendy is not equivalent (lines 8–9), both participants use identical prosody – high pitch, fortissimo and lengthening on the last syllable – after Kendra's inbreath (line 7).

Prosodic projection of the above types involves a particular pattern being projected by a preceding pattern, and sometimes also by other

factors such as pragmatic context or conversational routines. In many of the examples, the projection becomes retrospectively evident to the analyst from the simultaneous production of the second contour by both speakers. Still, cases of clear prosodic projections as they occur in the above extracts are comparatively rare. Instances in which the first speaker's intonation unit signals simply a non-final turn rather than a particular form of prosodic continuation are much more common. The following excerpt is an example. Sandy, an ex-missionary, tells an anecdote from the time during her service in Africa:

(7)

**Hippo**

- 1 SA: and he'd FALLen off the honda; (.)  
 2 and the hippo had (.) TAKen a BITE;  
 3 RIGHT;  
 4 RI: [O:H;  
 5 -> SA: [just Opened its mOUth and;  
 6 -> RI: just took a [CHUNK out.  
 7 EL: [OH::  
 8 SA: yeah.  
 9 <<all> and you see> NORMally they ↑WOULDN't;

Sandy's steadily declining intonation contour on her tone-group *just opened its mouth and* (line 5) projects more declination for what follows, but not the marked prosodic design of previous examples. Richard's incoming (line 6) continues the overall declining intonation contour, bringing it down to a fall-to-low.

*Summary*

Some types of projection lend themselves to a notion of describable formats, most obviously syntactic projection. Other domains of talk such as prosody do not allow for such a strict division into concrete structures. However, such a separation of linguistic channels is of analytical use only. For participants in conversation prosody, pragmatic content, interactional activities and syntax are of course constantly interwoven.

Turn projection may take different forms, and occur to a stronger or lesser degree on different linguistic channels. In (3), *Renting*, the projection is under a strong syntactic constraint created by the *if X then Y* format. The syntactic structure hardly allows for a different continuation, whereas prediction concerning the prosodic continuation must remain rather vague. In (4), *Rubbish*, we get a strong sense of prosodic projection of a certain contour, projecting a climax in the form of a steep pitch fall. This

projection is rather specific, and any other way of prosodic continuation would come as a surprise. Syntactically, however, the construction can continue in various ways, and in fact the two participants make different choices: the incoming speaker treats the preceding *are* as a copula to be complemented by a noun phrase; the original speaker treats it as one to be complemented by a *wh*-clause. In (7), Hippo, the first speaker's projection is mainly of a pragmatic nature, that is a story climax. Both prosodically and syntactically no definite form of projection constraint seems to hold, although of course only certain kinds of continuations are prosodically and syntactically possible.

Lerner's (1991; 1996) notion of possible formats is derived from the idea that first utterances project second utterances and that therefore collaborative productions must be two-fold structures. The data for this book show that this is not exclusively the case. When speakers build an utterance together they make use of many different ways in which that utterance can be divided up prosodically, syntactically, semantically and pragmatically. The fact that two speakers work together in the production of an utterance provides a two-fold structure. However, this does not imply that all collaborative productions are inherently bi-partite linguistic structures in the first place.

### **Completions and extensions**

This section adopts the perspective of the second contribution and distinguishes between collaborative incomings which complete the first contribution, and those which extend it. Ferrara (1992) and Ono and Thompson (1995) both mention these two basic types of collaboratives with regard to the syntactic design of an utterance. In the case of syntactic completion the original speaker begins a construction which is brought to completion by an incoming participant. In the case of syntactic extension the incoming participant adds material to a first speaker's syntactic construction, which is already potentially complete. Completion of a syntactic construction is understood in Auer's (1996: 60) sense, who describes types of syntactic expansions in his discussion of turn-continuations:

A possible syntactic completion point has been reached when a structure has been produced which is syntactically independent from (i.e. does not project into) its following context. (Obviously, such syntactic independence is not to be equated with pragmatic or conversational independence.)

However, the distinction between completions and extensions need not be limited to syntactic gestalts, as it also holds for prosodic contours.

They, too, can be complete or incomplete, and thus be either completed or extended by an incoming speaker. In one case the second participant produces the completion of a global prosodic pattern which was begun and left incomplete by the first speaker. A second type is an addition of material after the first speaker has produced a complete prosodic pattern, with the additional material prosodically designed as integrated into the previous speaker's turn.

In the following, different types of prosodically and syntactically completing and extending collaborative incomings are presented, bearing in mind that completion in one domain must not necessarily mean completion in the other. The combinations found in the data are collaborative productions which are completions, both prosodically and syntactically; prosodic completions which are syntactic extensions; and prosodic and syntactic extensions.

#### *Prosodic and syntactic completions*

Collaborative productions in which the incoming material is a completion of a previously incomplete turn both with respect to prosody and syntax are the most frequent type, representing 75 per cent of the data. Prosodic completion is not treated here as an absolute phenomenon, but as relative to a given speaker's vocal range. Consider for example the following instance from a barbecue among friends. Peter is in the process of recapitulating a comedy programme he saw on television:

(8)

#### **Accurate**

- 1 PE: and he said the ↑Only thing WORSE than sEcond hand  
 2 SMUG uh <<breathy + p> GOD;>  
 3 sEcond hand SMOKE is; .h  
 4 MORal SMUGness.  
 5 ((laughter))  
 6 -> <<p+1> which (.) which is> (.) a<sup>h</sup>GAIN 'REALLY; (1.0)  
 7 -> LE: [<<l> Accurate.>  
 8 AL: [it's [FUunny;  
 9 -> PE: [yeah.

In this extract Peter is searching for the right expression (line 6), and eventually receives help from Lesley (line 7). Neither Peter's prosody nor his syntax is complete. His pitch register is low, and both accents immediately prior to the collaborative incoming, *-gain* and *rea-*, receive minor

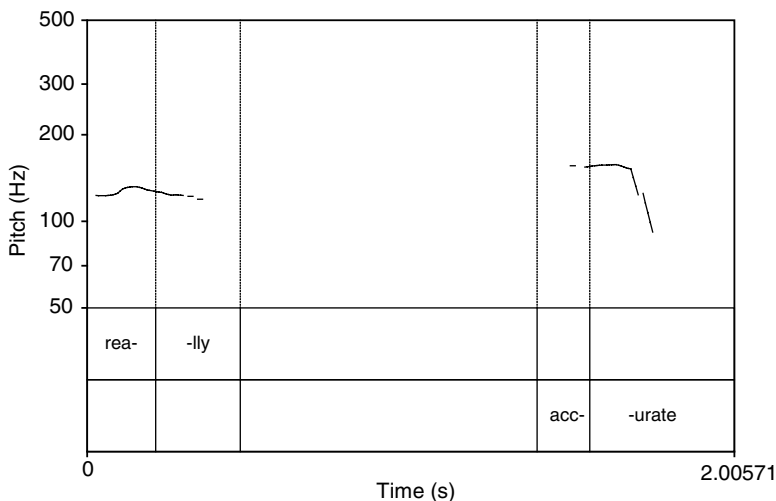


Figure 4.2 Prosodic completion (Accurate)

rising-falling contours. Thus he ends on a fall-to-mid, leaving room for further pitch declination on potential turn ending syllables. Syntactically his construction is still missing its predicate complement at this point. After a pause of 1 second Lesley completes Peter's turn both prosodically and syntactically: her low pitch register matches Peter's, and her intonational fall-to-low completes his declining intonation contour. Her prosodic continuation is also characterized by the fact that her incoming carries no new syllable onset on the first accent, as could otherwise be expected of a new turn in its own right. Syntactically, *accurate* is a predicate adjective complementing Peter's incomplete construction. The prosodic completion can be seen in the frequency analysis in Figure 4.2.

The way in which Lesley prosodically designs her incoming can be described as 'prosodic integration'. This term, which both Selting (1996) and Auer (1996) employ with respect to the prosody of same speaker continuations, refers to the type of prosodic continuation of prior material:

Syntactic expansions as well as any other continuations of the utterance can be packaged in different prototypical ways: 'Prosodic integration' refers to the co-occurrence of the verbal continuation with a simple continuation of the contour without a melodic or other break, 'prosodic independence' refers to the co-occurrence of the

verbal continuation with a new prosodic unit with its own intonation contour which sets it apart from the prior contour and unit by constituting a prosodic break. (Selting 1996: 371)

Local (1992) draws a similar distinction. Participants may prosodically 'continue' or 'restart' a turn after interruptions or insertions from incoming speakers. Continuing is understood as a matching of pitch between the end of the pre-insertion and the beginning of the post-insertion, while restarting involves speakers resuming their turn with a new pitch onset. Auer (1996) distinguishes different kinds of prosodic integration or exposure by pitch, tempo, loudness, pausing and rhythm.

In the above example, *accurate* is integrated in two ways: there is no intonational reset on the second speaker's incoming, which continues the ongoing declination line at the low pitch at which the preceding contour left off. In Auer's terms, this is prosodic integration by pitch via the addition of another accent unit. The incoming is also integrated with respect to overall pitch register.

Most prosodic completions are integrated into the prior contour in the way demonstrated above; see for example (1), Wide Australian, (3), Renting, (5), France, and (7), Hippo. Yet there are some completing incomings which are prosodically prominent, that is the second contribution begins at a higher pitch than that at which the preceding contour ended. However, this does not necessarily make them exposed in the sense of Auer (1996) or independent in the sense of Selting (1996). See for instance (4), Rubbish, and (6), Baking cookies, where the prosodic exposure through high pitch is indeed part of the projected completion of the previous intonation contour. Therefore these incoming contributions, too, are integrated into the previous pattern.

Syntactic completion may be realized in many different ways, as a current speaker may interrupt the progression of his/her syntactic gestalt at various points. The incoming participant has two options for completion. One is to pick up the syntactic gestalt where the initial speaker has left off (cf. examples (1)–(8)); another is to repeat some of the first speaker's verbal material and then continue with the construction. The latter possibility has implications for the interactional validity of certain syntactic boundaries. Fox and Jaspersen (1995) have investigated the syntactic implications of self-repair. They claim that 'in turn beginnings, if repair is initiated after an auxiliary or main verb, the verb and its subject are always recycled together; the verb is never recycled by itself' (1995: 110). Thus they seem to suggest that the syntactic boundary between NP and VP is possibly not a major one, as speakers

are reluctant to recycle the VP alone without its subject NP. From the data for this study this particular claim cannot be supported. However, the strength of other syntactic boundaries can be investigated, such as the boundary between P and NP in a PP. See for example a conversation between the couple Laura, George and a nutrition advisor:

(9)

**Bread**

- 1 LA: I think they have better EAting habits in FRANCE; (.)  
 2 but but to hear YOU talk uh;  
 3 NA: [well mY FRENCH -  
 4 -> LA: [you know they eat they eat a treMENDous amount of  
 5 of of -  
 6 -> GE: [of BREAD.  
 7 LA: [of bUtter uh produc-  
 8 MILK products.

In his incoming (line 6) George repeats the preposition *of* instead of latching the NP *bread* directly onto Laura's incomplete utterance. It seems as if he considers a repetition of syntactic material necessary in order to signal that what he is doing is a continuation of the PP begun by Laura (lines 4–5) rather than a free-standing, unattached NP. He treats the tie between P and NP as not strong enough to hold across two speakers' utterances and therefore in need of being reinforced by a repetition of the preposition *of*.

Another example from a radio phone-in program shows repetition of a first speaker's material at a different syntactic boundary. The radio host is Barbara Carlson, her caller is Heather:

(10)

**Bills**

- 1 HE: we ↑jUst HEARD the other day;=  
 2 about ↑WELLstone by the way bArbra,  
 3 <<all> hE never mentioned this to YOU;=  
 4 but i don't s'pose he WOULD;> .hh  
 5 that hE is one of the ↑THREE ↑LARgest;  
 6 uhm uh (.) intro↑DUcer of ↑BILLS;  
 7 -> uh that uh that um;  
 8 -> BA: [<<f> that SPEND MOney.>  
 9 HE: [well Anyway.  
 10 MOney spending [bills.  
 11 BA: [<<l> Okay;>

Heather begins a relative clause (line 7) but stops after the relative pronoun *that*, due to a word search problem. Barbara repeats the relative pronoun, and completes the relative clause, instead of continuing immediately with a relative clause without COMP. Again, the incoming speaker does not seem to consider the tie between the relative pronoun and the relative clause strong enough to allow for an interpretation of her material as a continuation of the previous utterance without its repetition.

There seems to be a preference for conversationalists to begin completions at certain boundaries rather than at others. For example, second speakers seem to have no problem coming in with a predicate after a copula ((1), *Wide Australian*, (4), *Rubbish*, and (8), *Accurate*), or with a *then*-clause after an *if*-clause ((3), *Renting*). In these instances, incoming participants do not repeat any of the previous verbal material but pick up the construction precisely where the first speaker left off. This is strong empirical evidence for major boundaries holding between those types of constituents. The above participants do seem to mind, however, coming in with an NP after a preposition ((9), *Bread*) and with a relative clause after a relative pronoun ((10), *Bills*). In these cases, they repeat the preposition and the relative pronoun, respectively. Such empirical evidence points in the direction of weaker syntactic ties that do not seem to hold across speaker change. In order to signal that their material is a continuation of what has gone before, participants repeat some of it, before they continue. A thorough investigation of the way syntax is handled by incoming speakers in collaborative productions would offer more evidence for the interactional relevance of syntactic constituents in spontaneous conversation.

#### *Prosodic completions and syntactic extensions*

Prosodic and syntactic aspects of completion and extension do not always coincide, that is an incoming which is an extension on the syntactic plane can be a completion with respect to prosody. See for example an extract from Barbara Carlson's radio show, her caller is Carl:

(11)

#### **Decided to live**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 | BA: so is THAT lIngering or is THAT lIving. |
| 2 | i mean ↑SOME people would sAY,              |
| 3 | THAT is a living ↑DEATH. .h                 |
| 4 | what STEven is going thrOUGH,               |

- 5 is the ↑W::ORST thing .h that could hAppen. .h  
 6 CA: [well-  
 7 BA: [Other people say <<all+p> look at his MI:ND;>  
 8 ↑LOOK <<p> what he's accOmplished.>  
 9 CA: yeah but well: it's prObably a little bit of BOTH;=  
 10 [but he just -  
 11 BA: [mhm,  
 12 -> CA: i mean <<rall> he: still: took the bULL:: by his  
 13 -> ^HO::RNS, (.)  
 14 -> BA: <<all> and decIded to LIVE.>  
 15 CA: a:nd -  
 16 ↑YEAH.  
 17 there's a lot of people who: LAY down and give ^UP;

Barbara asks Carl for his opinion on the question whether Steven Hawking's life is 'lingering or living'. Carl's answer is a hesitant *well it's probably a little bit of both* (line 9), and his hesitation continues throughout his remaining turn (lines 12–13). There is considerable slowing down, lengthening on four syllables (*he, still, bull, horns*), and level pitch until the last syllable, *horns*, on which he produces a slight pitch rise, which projects potential same-speaker continuation. Syntactically, however, the construction is potentially complete. Carl's hesitation seems to offer an opportunity for Barbara to come in with a prosodic completion and syntactic extension. She continues his intonation contour, which she picks up at almost precisely the same pitch level (line 14). Her incoming carries no pitch reset and comes down to a low fall on the last syllable, *live*, which can be heard as a prosodic completion of Carl's turn. Her syntactic extension of his previously complete construction is an elliptical utterance, a sub-clause without a subject noun phrase (NP). The frequency analysis in Figure 4.3 shows that Barbara's *and* continues almost directly from Carl's last syllable *horns*.

However, although the intonation of Barbara's incoming shows intonational continuation of Carl's turn, her speech rate does not match his. Carl has lengthened most of his syllables, thereby creating a slow speech rate. Barbara's syllables are produced without lengthening, and her speech rate is noticeably faster than Carl's. As listeners we get the impression that although Barbara is signalling alignment and non-competitiveness by integrating her intonation into Carl's material, she is taking control of the pace of the call by bringing the turn to completion at a faster tempo.

The analysis of the above example shows that when it comes to prosodic completions of prior turns it is necessary to distinguish between

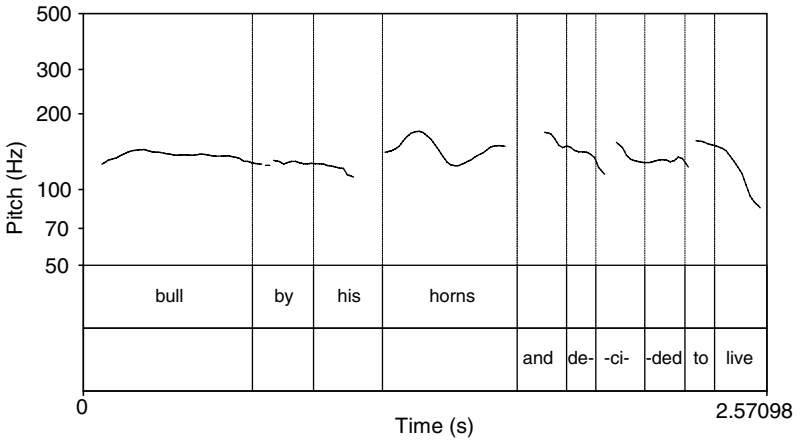


Figure 4.3 Prosodic completion (Decided to live)

prosodic continuation and non-continuation with respect to different prosodic parameters. It is possible to find an incoming to continue a first speaker's turn intonationally, but to be non-continuing in other prosodic dimensions such as speech rate. It seems as if this possibility enables interactants to accomplish different interactional goals simultaneously. Intonational continuation is the prosodic design that characterizes a completion as part of the ongoing turn rather than as an individual utterance; it can therefore signal that an incoming speaker does not intend to take over the floor. Simultaneous non-continuation of speech rate signals a disjunction on these levels of production and enables the incoming participant to shape ongoing turn production without having to illegitimately interrupt the current speaker.

#### *Prosodic and syntactic extensions*

Extensions in both a prosodic and a syntactic sense, that is cases in which a first speaker's material is potentially complete in both respects, and is re-completed by an incoming speaker are rare, which perhaps points towards the strong indication of finality inherent in the combination of syntactic and prosodic termination. Still, collaborative productions of this kind do occur. They are comparable to a type of turn increment described by Ford *et al.* (2002). Increments are defined as 'any nonmain-clause continuation of a speaker's turn after that speaker has come to what could have been a completion point, or a "transition relevance place", based on

prosody, syntax and sequential action' (2002: 16). Turn increments by definition involve a syntactic, prosodic and pragmatic completion prior to the incremental attachment. Regarding the nature of this attachment, the authors distinguish between syntactically free constituents, such as unattached noun phrases (NPs), and extensions. The latter seem to be the single-speaker variety of the phenomenon described in this section. Their prosodic design coincides with that of collaborative productions:

The extensions, which are syntactic continuations of the immediately prior possibly completed turn, would be uttered with the pitch of the first accented syllable at the same pitch as, or lower than, the last accented syllable of the just-completed turn. In contrast, the Unattached NPs, which are not syntactic continuations and which, we have argued, can be interpreted as new conversational actions, may be uttered with pitch reset. (Ford *et al.* 2002: 32)

Again, a distinction between integrated and exposed incomings is possible, but an exposed incoming which is an extension of both a complete syntactic gestalt and a final intonational contour can only be considered to be a marginal case of a collaborative production. The following extract is taken from a private conversation among two friends, Alice and Janice:

(12)

**Bending over backwards**

- 1       JA:    and people ALSO;  
 2            who've never been CLOSE friends of hers;  
 3            but who'd BEND over BACKwards; (.)  
 4  ->       <<l> for this WOMan.> (.)  
 5  ->   AL:   but are TIRED of bEnding over bAckwards.  
 6       JA:   but they still [↑DO.  
 7       AL:                   [m;  
 8           [mhm,  
 9       JA:   [we ↑A:LL still do.

In line 4 Janice has pragmatically, syntactically and prosodically completed a potential turn. She has made her point, she has produced a complete syntactic gestalt and she has signalled prosodic completion via a low final fall followed by a pause. Alice's extension is one that is syntactically elliptical, as it lacks a subject NP. It is prosodically integrated although

the preceding contour has already come to a potential completion. This is possible because 'any material may be included into a potentially closed intonational contour as a prosodic continuation' (Auer 1996: 70).

By coming in without an intonational reset Alice signals that her utterance is continuing the prior turn rather than starting a new one. The incoming is therefore perceptible as integrated into previous speech. However, on the content level, Alice's extension turns out to be an unacceptable continuation of Janice's utterance. Janice does not want to make the point that people are *tired of bending over backwards* (line 5), but quite the opposite, that *they still do* (line 6). Retrospectively, Alice's incoming is treated by Janice as an independent, rather than an integrated turn. Once more we have to take into consideration different linguistic domains. Prosodically, the incoming is integrated into the preceding turn. Interactionally, it is treated by its recipient as an individual turn, contradicting the very utterance it was designed to continue. Note that on the lexico-semantic level, too, the diverging opinions become apparent. Whereas *but* at the beginning of the incoming is doing continuation, *but* at the beginning of the next turn signals disagreement with the incoming, thus treating it not as a continuation, but a response to the prior turn.

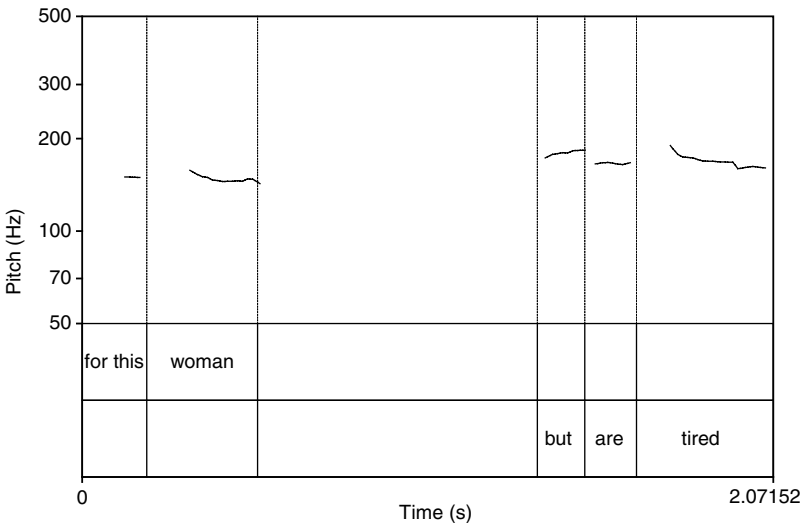


Figure 4.4 Prosodic extension

Figure 4.4 shows Alice's continuation of Janice's turn without a pitch reset, and within a very similar pitch range.

### *Summary*

In the above discussion of prosodic and syntactic completions and extensions we have examined three possible combinations: completions of both syntax and prosody, extensions of both syntax and prosody, and prosodic completions which are at the same time syntactic extensions.

Theoretically, there is one more combinatory possibility: syntactic completions which are prosodic extensions. This variant, however, does not occur in the data, which means that collaborative continuations from second speakers do not follow utterances which are syntactically incomplete but prosodically complete. Indeed, it seems that such first turns are rare, not only in combination with collaborative incomings but also in talk-in-interaction in general. The question why speakers rarely signal completion on the prosodic level when the syntax is still incomplete may be accounted for in two ways, with regard to syntax and to prosody. One explanation might involve the 'priority of syntax' attested by Auer:

If, then, the independence of prosody from syntax is considerable, the priority of syntax nonetheless cannot be denied either. The discussion ... suggests a model in which syntax and prosody cooperate in very delicate ways, each of them on the basis of its particular semiotic possibilities. Into this model of a division of labour, syntax brings its capacity to build relatively far-reaching gestalts, the completion of which becomes more and more projectable in time; prosody, particularly intonation, brings in its local flexibility to revise and adjust these gestalts while they are 'put into speech'. Thus, syntax retains its priority, but prosody/intonation is nevertheless independent from it. (Auer 1996: 75)

The priority of syntax and the flexibility of prosody are aspects of turn-projectability: a syntactic construction projects much more concretely into the future than a prosodic contour. With respect to collaborative productions this could mean that if a syntactic gestalt is incomplete, the constraint to complete it is far too strong to allow for prosodic contextualization of turn-finality at this point, even though prosody would be flexible enough to be so used. In this interpretation, syntactic incompleteness does not co-occur with prosodic completion – which is one of the factors contextualizing turn-finality – because a stretch of talk which

is syntactically incomplete would not be considered complete by its speaker, and thus would not be produced with complete prosody.

A second route of argumentation to account for the non-occurrence of the phenomenon takes prosody as its starting point. Unlike prosodic finality, a syntactically complete construction does not signal potential turn-completion. It only does so with accompanying turn-final prosody:

Intonational and pragmatic completions are nearly always syntactic completions as well. But the reverse (is) not the case. Syntactic completion points in English ... are *not* nearly always intonational and pragmatic completion points; there are in fact many more syntactic completion points than any other kind. In other words, the data show that intonation and pragmatic completion points select from among the syntactic completion points to form ... 'Complex Transition Relevance Places' (CTRPs). (Ford and Thompson 1996: 154, emphasis in the original)

Non-final prosody in combination with complete syntax overrides the syntactic completion signal with respect to turn-ending. Therefore a syntactically incomplete construction does not receive turn-final prosody because possibly the turn-ending contextualization cue of prosody would be too strong. Thus the fact that it takes prosody to signal turn-finality may point to the potential priority of prosody over syntax when it comes to local signalling of turn completion.

### **Collaborative productions as non-competitive early incomings**

A large number of collaborative productions are early incomings into the turn space of another speaker, and as such they are produced before the first speaker has reached a possible turn completion point. In fact, as we saw earlier (p. 171*ff*), collaborative incomings which follow a TRP are a marginal group. Therefore the sequential location of collaborative incomings is a potentially illegitimate place for turn transition.

Although natural conversation in English seems to be strongly constrained by the fact that 'overwhelmingly, one party talks at a time' (Sacks *et al.* 1974: 700), several kinds of conversational settings can be distinguished in which next speakers come in at other than possible completion points, thereby sometimes creating overlap (cf. Tannen 1984). However, those instances are usually of a relatively short duration,

which in itself suggests a strong tendency for interlocutors to abide by the one-speaker-at-a-time constraint.

French and Local (1986) have divided early incomings by next speakers into 'turn-competitive' and 'non-competitive' interruptions. Their work is based on the finding that:

the positioning of interrupter's speech at a non-completion point in current turn does not alone make for a hearing of that speech as directly competitive for the turn. (1986: 162)

According to French and Local, the distinction between competitive and non-competitive interruptions cannot be made on syntactic or lexical grounds, but current speakers classify early incomings as one or the other with reference to the other participant's prosody. Turn-competitive incomings are those in which the incoming speaker takes the floor, and thus the turn-holding role from the current turn-holder at a non-completion point. For interactants certain prosodic cues seem to signal such an intention in the course of the early incoming itself. French and Local find that the prosodic characteristics of turn-competitive interruptions are a combination of increased loudness and pitch, in relation to that speaker's ordinary loudness and pitch register. The authors present four empirical observations which serve to prove participants' orientation to those features.

Firstly, if an interrupter manages to take possession of the floor competitively, s/he returns to his/her normal loudness and pitch as soon as the first speaker has stopped. Secondly, a current floor-holder either takes up the competition and speaks with raised loudness and slower tempo for the whole duration of the overlap, or yields the floor and lets his/her turn 'fade out'. Thirdly, non-competitive incomings are usually very short utterances in which speakers do not attempt to take the floor, but on the contrary signal support of the current speaker in his/her right to hold the floor. Typical instances are recipient responses, interjections or asides. They are produced with reduced loudness, and current speakers tend to stop talking and give their interrupters time to finish their non-competitive utterances before they resume their own turn. The fourth piece of evidence involves current speakers' prosodic behaviour in cases in which the interrupting participant persists. The very fact that first speakers in those instances raise only their loudness but not their pitch seems to signal that they do not wish to be understood as claiming the floor illegitimately, but that they consider themselves rightful turn-holders.

Selting (1995) takes up French and Local's distinction between turn-competitive and non-competitive interruptions and introduces another category of incomings: 'legitimate' claims to the floor. These are not only pursued by those speakers whose turn is being intruded on but also by those who believe themselves to have a right to speak even though somebody else's turn is currently in progress. Typical examples are interposed questions, immediate replies to questions and certain kinds of repair. These legitimate incomings are also produced *forte*, and not *forte* + high pitch, which would imply an illegitimate incoming.

If we look at the prosody of the collaborative incomings in the examples above we find that only four instances contain increased loudness. In (10), Bills, and in (18), Fight a bill, below, a word search is completed by an incoming speaker in *forte*. (6), Baking cookies, is an exceptional example in that both speakers raise their voice at the same time and the loudness seems to belong to the climax-like finale of their collaborative turn. Their *forte* therefore does not belong in the same category as illegitimate incomings for which *forte* means increased loudness in comparison to that of the current speaker.

In the complete data collection there is only one instance in which a second participant comes in with a louder voice than the first speaker in order to claim back the floor. In the following extract from a private face-to-face conversation the couple Ken and Jo are telling a friend about a doctor's diagnosis concerning Ken's health:

(13)

**Drink**

- 1 KE: =and says yEAh well your b- your bLOOD's all SHOT;=  
 2 =and you have the lIver of a NINety year old, .hh  
 3 uhm -  
 4 [and i w- <<f> and i and i THINK- >  
 5 -> JO: [<<f> dO you DRINK?>  
 6 -> and he DOESn't [drInk.  
 7 KE: [ <<f> and i THINK - >  
 8 and i THINK uh:: -  
 9 you you pIcked up some (.)  
 10 -> JO: <<pp> Vlrus.>  
 11 -> KE: uhm Vlrus;

Jo's turn (line 5) is louder than Ken's, the original speaker, who begins to speak simultaneously with her and reacts to her loud incoming by also

raising his loudness (line 4). After Jo has stopped talking, he returns to his previous loudness (lines 8–9).

This is the only instance in this data collection in which a collaborative incoming may be interpreted as an interruption, at least from the perspective of current speaker. However, it does not have all the prosodic characteristics that have been ascribed to interruptions. Jo's incoming is produced forte but not at a higher pitch than Ken's, and thus could be interpreted with Selting (1995) as considered legitimate by Jo herself. As Ken's partner she may consider herself to have an equal right to quote Ken's doctor and to collaborate in the telling of his diagnosing practices. Ken, on the other hand, treats her incoming as potentially interruptive, as he possibly considers his illness to be his own property in terms of conversational topic allocation. His increased loudness shows him to be reacting to Jo's incoming as competitive and to consider himself the legitimate turn-holder.

The collection holds no examples in which the second speaker comes in at both higher loudness and pitch. The typical prosodic make-up of collaborative incomings is the same loudness for both contributions, as in (3), Renting, (4), Rubbish, (5), France, (7), Hippo, (8), Accurate, (9), Bread, (11), Decided to live and (12), Bending over backwards. There are also several cases of incomings which are produced with reduced loudness, for example the second collaborative production in (13), Drink, *virus* in line 10, above. All this is strong evidence in favour of categorizing collaborative productions as non-competitive incomings.

In addition to prosody, there is a more structural factor which supports the non-competitive character of collaborative productions. The way incoming speakers manage floor-allocation shows that they are not interrupting but supporting the current turn-holder. In 11 out of 14 instances examined above, the floor reverts back to the first participant immediately after the second speaker's incoming. This relation is indeed representative for the whole data corpus, where in most cases the incoming participant only takes over for the short time of the completion or extension of the previous speaker's turn. There seems to be a tacit understanding that the original speaker holds primary rights to the floor, while collaborative incomings support his/her right to speak.

Another factor is first speakers' reactions in third position, after the collaborative incoming has occurred. Not only does their prosodic reaction suggest that they are treating the incoming as non-competitive (there is no return of competition at increased loudness), their verbal behaviour can also be interpreted in this way. In 7 out of the above 14 cases first speakers agree with or repeat other participants' incoming

material before continuing their own turn ((5), France, (7), Hippo, (8), Accurate, (10), Bills, (11), Decided to live, (13), Drink, lines 10–11). This, too, is evidence that the original speaker's right to speak is un-threatened by the collaborative incoming.

## **Interactional environments for collaborative productions**

This section discusses the interactional work achieved by completing or extending a previous participant's turn prosodically, syntactically and pragmatically. The following subsections do not claim to offer an exhaustive list of interactional functions accomplished by collaborative productions, but they show what participants are accomplishing in the current data collection. In the first subsection, data extracts are analysed which show that collaborative productions frequently occur in conversational duets. In the following subsection, the analyses reveal a kind of collaborative incoming which displays understanding, in different senses of the term. In the third subsection a type of collaborative production is introduced which involves a second speaker borrowing a construction from a first speaker for his/her own interactional purposes. The final subsection presents cases in which a first participant elicits information from another speaker, who is invited to complete an unfinished construction.

### **Collaborative productions in duets**

The data examined in this section suggest that conversational duets are a typical environment for collaborative productions. A duet has been defined by Falk (1980: 18) as a multi-party conversation in which 'two or more persons may participate as though they were one, by talking to an audience in tandem for both (or sometimes one) of them about the same thing, with the same communicative goal'.<sup>3</sup> According to Falk, duetters share a turn, and thus the role of speaker for the time of a conversational topic on which they have mutual knowledge and equal authority.

Falk treats duetters' contributions as 'subturns' rather than turns in their own right because, she claims, duet partners do not handle duet contributions as interruptions into their own turn space. Contributions are usually received by non-duetting participants as if they had been uttered by a single speaker. Duets necessarily include an audience of recipients, since the duetters do not treat each other as recipients of each other's talk. This view is potentially problematic, as an extract from our data reveals below.

Further motivation for Falk's treatment of duetters' utterances as subturns rather than turns in their own right is their internal structure. She points out that 'there is typically an *absence* of any transition in duet subturns. Duet partners are speaking as if they were one person. The second's utterance is often even syntactically, lexically and prosodically a *continuation* of the first's' (22, emphasis in the original). A representative example of a duet is the following data excerpt; the speakers are recapitulating a trip they took several months before:

(14)

**River**

- 1 PA: we ↑pOInted out this pub at mawnan smith when we  
 2 passed THROUGH there.  
 3 but we wAnted to get ↑rAther NEARer to the, (.)  
 4 RO: THAT'S RIGHT,  
 5 -> PA: RIver.  
 6 -> RO: and we THOUGHT [there must be something in MALpas.  
 7 PA: [( )]  
 8 yeah.  
 9 -> RO: and there WASn't.  
 10 PA: m.  
 11 RO: yeah,  
 12 -> PA: and we deCIded to go through that (.) ROAD,  
 13 from which there were lOVely VIEWS,

Patrick and Robert produce a collaborative narrative in which they link their incoming utterances to prior turns (lines 6, 9 and 12) so as to produce a chain of events which might have been reported by one participant alone. Between those utterances, however, the participants are still providing each other with recipient responses (lines 4, 7–8, 10, 11), moving back and forth between the role of speaker, or co-speaker, and recipient. It becomes evident throughout the whole duet, from which our example is only a small extract, that participants' roles of speaker and recipient are not always mutually exclusive. All persons present, including non-speaking participants are 'knowing recipients' (Goodwin 1977: 283) with mutual knowledge about the trip discussed, such that there is no 'audience' to a new story. However, a recipient in a duet can share the co-speakers' knowledge but decide not to join in, and thereby act as audience. Moreover, even the duetters themselves act as recipients of each others' subturns and produce both recipient responses and duetting

contributions respectively, without treating each other's incomings as illegitimate interruptions by co-speakers.

Tannen (1989: 12) comments on the distribution of the roles of speaker and listener: 'Conversation is not a matter of two (or more) people alternatively taking the role of speaker and listener, but ... both speaking and listening include elements and traces of the other.' Conversational duets make the problematic nature of a strict division between speaking and listening roles particularly apparent.

The next extract comes from a conversation in which two ex-missionaries, Sandy and Richard, are telling Richard's mother about their time in Africa (see also (7), Hippo). This story is about a woman who was killed by an elephant:

(15)

**Skull**

- 1 SA: and ONE foot (.) of his feet; (.)  
 2 CRUSHED one of her lEgs.  
 3 -> and Unfortunately the Other one; (.)  
 4 -> RI: [gOt her SKULL. ]  
 5 -> SA: [(stamped) ] RIGHT on the back of her skULL.

Neither Sandy nor Richard have witnessed the accident but both seem to know the story well. Sandy has acted as primary speaker throughout the whole narrative before the beginning of this extract, and from time to time Richard has completed her turns with brief contributions. In the above extract the story is about to reach its climax, that is the manner in which the woman died. Sandy is building up dramatic tension by neatly organizing details of the story into single intonation units. She also sets up a rhythmic pattern with accents on *crushed*, *legs*, *un-* and *o-* (lines 2–3). When she reaches the point where the climax is to be expected Richard comes in with that climax in exact coordination with Sandy's established speech rhythm (line 4).<sup>4</sup> Sandy, who also begins to continue her rhythm, draws out her item *stamped* (line 5) until Richard has finished his incoming, and thus also completes the story.

This instance is another one in which the narrative is mutual property of both participants, but their form of access to it is different to the previous example. While Robert and Patrick share first-hand experience, Sandy and Richard have only second-hand knowledge. Therefore they share the same perspective but this time one of knowing by hearsay rather than by participation.

Sandy acts as primary speaker in that she has started to tell the narrative, knowing that Richard is also familiar with it. Her prosody in line 5 shows no rise to a higher loudness and/or pitch, and thus does not signal a fight for the floor. She does not intervene in Richard's version of the story climax in any other way and gives him time to finish his completion. Richard on his part does not attempt to take over the floor after his candidate story climax. He offers his turn completion at an unmarked loudness and pitch, and lets Sandy continue immediately afterwards.

In contrast to extract (14) the above instance is structured differently with respect to floor distribution. There is one primary speaker rather than a group of equal co-speakers, and the collaborative production occurs in overlap, with the primary speaker paraphrasing the co-participant's incoming afterwards.

The next extract returns to Robert, Patrick and Patrick's wife Beverly re-enacting the trip they took together. In this excerpt, the group collaboratively recollects the bad service they received at a pub:

(16)

**Sausages<sup>5</sup>**

- 1 -> PA: and we waited FOUR hours for IUnch,  
 2 RO: ((cough))  
 3 BE: ((cough))  
 4 (1.0)  
 5 -> RO: TWO hours for the bEEr, (2.0)  
 6 -> PA: and it was FREEZing cOld to bOOt.  
 7 -> re↑MEMber thAt.  
 8 -> RO: and there was a hell of a NOISe going on, =  
 9 = because they were doing alterATIons,  
 10 -> BE: and they were BANG bang banging AWAY,  
 11 (5.0)  
 12 RO: now ↑WHAT did we HAVE.  
 13 (1.0)  
 14 PA: [<<f> YOU had SAUSages.>  
 15 BE: [something with CHIPS.  
 16 [SAUSages wasn't it;  
 17 RO: [THAT'S rIght,  
 18 PA: [you had SAUSages.  
 19 BE: [and CHIPS.  
 20 RO: [THAT'S rIght,  
 21 PA: you had SPEcial LOcal [CORnIsh SAUSages.  
 22 BE: [YES.

- 23 because she said;  
 24 DO you want ehm;  
 25 Ordinary sausages or lOcal o:r HOME MADE; .h  
 26 and we said ↑OH we'll have the HOME MADE;  
 27 and mY ↑GOD [they were TERRible.  
 28 -> RO: [and they were the WORST sAUsages;  
 29 -> [i have Ever HAD-  
 30 -> BE: [<<f> there was LOTS of GRISTle that[pig had.>  
 31 -> RO: [<<f> i have  
 32 Ever HAD;  
 33 -> [in my WHOLE] LIFE.>  
 34 -> BE: [in MY life; ]  
 35 -> ME TOO.  
 36 RO: and i- i've got a THING about sau[sage-  
 37 BE: [mhm,  
 38 RO: BRITish sausages,

In the beginning of this extract we find a long collaborative sequence (lines 1–10) which recapitulates how the party had to wait for their food. Each speaker adds another conversational item in a rhythmically similar fashion. In lines 1, 5, 6 and 7 Patrick and Robert design their intonation units such that they contain two prominent syllables with primary and then secondary stress (*four, lunch, two, beer, freez-, boot, -mem-, that*). Robert's two tone groups in lines 8 and 9 have only one primary stress each, but Beverly takes up the rhythm again in line 10 and inserts two redundant syllables into her intonation unit in order to keep it up (*bang bang banging away*).

Up to this point the floor is handled as common property, as all speakers share a collective perspective and no participant treats another's contribution as an illegitimate interruption. With Robert's turn *now what did we have* (line 12) the topic changes to the type of food that was ordered, and the sudden collaborative recollection of the food, especially of the sausages, results in an outburst of talk at noticeably increased loudness. Lines 14–15 and 16–17 are produced in overlap, and subsequently all three participants speak simultaneously (lines 18ff).

Following this sequence, Beverly recalls the actual ordering of the food (lines 23–26) and then goes on to assess its quality (line 27). Robert also comes in with an assessment, which is relatively loud, *and they were the worst sausages I have ever had* (lines 28–29), which interrupts Beverly's first assessment *and my god they were terrible*. However, Beverly still regards the floor as hers and continues with increased loudness, now

intervening into Robert's turn (line 30). Robert also seems to consider himself a legitimate speaker, and restarts and continues his assessment (line 31*ff*), speaking likewise in a louder voice than before. Subsequently, Beverly shows agreement with Robert by completing his construction, but she does so with her own personal pronoun *my* (line 34). She also joins in the rhythmic pattern previously established by Robert in line 32 on the syllables *e-* and *had*. Robert continues this pattern in line 33 on *whole* and *life* while Beverly produces *my life* also on the beat, overlapping with his syllable *whole*. Her two syllables take up one rhythmic beat, while he places his two syllables *whole* and *life* on two beats, which results in his completion being heard as persisting, since his last syllable is produced in the clear.

By joining Robert in his utterance, Beverly signals agreement. However, through her own use of the personal pronoun *my* she makes Robert's perspective her own for her part of the construction. Subsequently, she offers explicit agreement with the collaboratively produced turn (*me too*, line 35). At this point, the participants are no longer engaged in a duet in a strict sense, rather this instance is one in which we witness a change in the way speakers negotiate their rights to a story-element. A past event which at first is treated as shared property by all conversationalists is subsequently claimed by one single speaker, Robert, as his personal experience. Another speaker, Beverly, is not willing to give up the floor and her right to the story, but does agree with Robert on the content level. By agreeing with him, she is no longer a co-speaker in a duet. Although the participants are duetting before and after this episode, this is a moment in the interaction where the floor shifts from being common property to being claimed by individual speakers. Thus it seems that although conversationalists can be engaged in a duet for an extended period of time, floor distribution and rights to tell the story have to be negotiated turn by turn.

A last example, (13), Drink, is reproduced below. It contains an attempted duet from a speaker who does not have first-hand access to the primary speaker's experience.

(13)

**Drink**

- |   |        |   |
|---|--------|---|
| 1 | KE:    | =and says yEAh well your b- your bLOOd's all SHOT;= |
| 2 |        | =and you have the lIver of a NINety year old, .hh   |
| 3 |        | uhm -   |
| 4 |        | [and i w- <<f> and i and i THINK- >                 |
| 5 | -> JO: | [<<f> dO you DRINK?>                                |
| 6 | ->     | and he DOESn't [drInk.                              |
| 7 | KE:    | [<<f> and i THINK - >                               |

- 8                   and i THINK uh:: -  
 9                   you you pIcked up some (.)  
 10 -> JO: <<pp> VIrus.>  
 11 -> KE: uhm VIrus;

Both participants have mutual knowledge about the incident discussed, but the experience itself is Ken's. He begins listing the results from his blood test using list intonation (lines 1–2) running into word retrieval problems for the third list item (lines 3–4, also 7–9). His hesitation in line 3 seems to prompt Jo's continuation in lines 5–6.<sup>6</sup> She comes in to overlap with Ken's still hesitant production of a third list item and does so with increased loudness and average pitch level, which signals that she sees nothing wrong with producing a collaborative list here. Ken, however, seems to regard the floor as his and does not seem to appreciate Jo's attempted duetting contribution. He neither acknowledges nor takes up her material although he still has problems formulating his own. He remains forte and repeats his words (*and I think*, lines 7–8) until Jo stops speaking, which indicates a fight for the floor on his part.<sup>7</sup> Interestingly, Ken accepts Jo's offer of help with the word-search for *virus* when she comes in at pianissimo in line 10, her prosody contextualizing her incoming as non-competitive.<sup>8</sup> By now, she is no longer attempting to collaborate in his turn as an equal duet partner but is contributing from a position of reciprocity.

It seems that the disagreement in lines 5*ff* is about authority on the conversational topic. Ken presents himself as primary narrator, treating Jo's attempt to co-tell his story as an interruption rather than a collaboration. Jo's change in strategy, her help in Ken's word search, is received without any more interactional rejection.

### Summary

It is not surprising that collaborative productions occur frequently in duets. When two people share an experience they are likely to know where their co-speaker is going with the narrative long before a possible completion point. As the story content is accessible to all duetting participants they are all co-speakers, sharing both knowledge and the floor. However, the above examples contain varying degrees of distribution of both these aspects.

Concerning floor distribution there are cases in which one speaker holds the role of main narrator, with the duet-partner contributing only small bits of shared information here and there ((15), Skull, and (13), Drink), and with the majority of speaking time being taken up by one main turn-holder. In other cases the floor is more or less equally divided

between duetters, none of them claiming a primary right to speak ((14), River, beginning of (16), Sausages). Concerning collaborative story-telling Lerner (1992: 268) writes:

Who comes to be the 'storyteller of record' can be problematic when story consociate participation is a possibility. Determining who will emerge from the story's preface as teller is a concerted achievement. In addition, tellership can be transferred during the story or it can even alternate throughout the course of the story. Since there are ways for a story consociate to begin participating throughout the course of the story, co-telling is a systematic possibility. Therefore the narrative produced on each occasion can be seen as an outcome of its collaboratively achieved telling.

Interactants can have different degrees of knowledge about a conversational item, but also different forms of access to that knowledge (Drew 1991). Both are criteria for the rights which participants allow themselves and others to a particular story. Quasthoff (1980) calls this the 'principle of competency' (*Prinzip der Zuständigkeit*). It seems that it is not always the amount of knowledge a speaker has which decides whose property a story may be, but the form of access, such as first- or second-hand experience. In the excerpts examined here three different possibilities were realized. Speakers may talk about an experience shared by all, as in example (14), River, where all participants are likely to have an equal amount of knowledge and are therefore equally authorized to tell the story. In these duets the narrative clearly belongs to all of the involved participants, and the floor is distributed equally among the duetters.

Quasthoff (1980: 113) distinguishes two roles for this type of collective story-telling: 'a narrator, who has lived through the experience and initiates the narrative discourse unit' (*'ein Erzähler, der das Geschehen miterlebt hat und der die narrative Diskurseinheit initiiert bzw ... einleitet'*) and 'a co-teller who, like the narrator, has also lived through the experience and participates in the verbal representation of the experience' (*'ein Koerzähler, der wie der Erzähler das erzählte Geschehen miterlebt hat und der sich in der Erzählsituation an der verbalen Repräsentation des Geschehens beteiligt'*).

A second possibility is knowledge to which some or all conversationists have equal access without being first-hand witnesses. This is not knowledge of a shared experience but involves a neutral or third perspective ((15), Skull). Instances from the current data collection of collaborative informings, or collaborative answers to questions, where more than one person have an answer, also belong in this group. With

this type of duet it is possible for one participant to consider the material his/hers, acting as primary speaker, or for participants to share a similar amount of speaking time.

A third kind of duet in our data are those where only one of the co-speakers' perspectives is represented, either because only they themselves have actually witnessed what is being discussed, or because the conversational topic is in some other way primarily related to them ((13), Drink). Here we would expect to find one of the conversationalists being the person to whom the story unmistakably belongs and others who act in the role of secondary speakers, coming in with smaller amounts of talk and taking up less speaking time. This role of secondary speaker can be compared to another type of co-teller in Quasthoff (1980: 125ff) whose behaviour is primarily supportive and consists of brief conversational contributions: 'Reacting to a narrator's asking for help, helping out with difficulties in phrasing and word retrieval, adding information concerning the role of the co-teller in the reported incident and correcting the narrator with a conflicting version of the story' (*'Das Reagieren auf ein Hilfesuchen des Erzählers, das Aushelfen bei Formulierungs- und Benennungsschwierigkeiten des Erzählers, das Ergänzen von Informationen, die die Handlungsrolle des Ko-Erzählers im Geschehen betreffen, und das Korrigieren des Erzählers durch eine konfligierende Geschichtsdarstellung'*).

Duetters typically do not treat each others' contributions as interruptions of their own turn, yet if they do, that can be an indication of a current speaker's denying him/her the right to duet ((13), Drink). In some cases first speakers insist on their own completion of a construction, but give the incomer time to finish their completion ((15), Skull). Typically, participants design their continuation of a previous turn in such a way that it could have been uttered by a single speaker, without insisting on their own version of a continuation ((14), River). On the incoming speakers' part a duetting contribution does not seem to be an attempt to take over the floor, as the prosodic delivery of such incomings is non-competitive. After a duetting contribution participants typically do not claim the floor for themselves but continue to consider it common property.

One possible function of collaborative productions in a duet has been pointed out by Sacks (1995). Discussing his famous example 'We were in an automobile discussion':

Joe: We were in an automobile discussion,  
 Henry: discussing the psychological motives for  
 Mel: drag racing on the streets (Sacks 1995: 144)

Sacks remarks:

We would take it that that's an obvious device to show, through this playing with the syntactic features of an utterance, that these people are close to each other. They're a unit. Because a sentence is obviously a prototypical instance of that thing which is done by some unit. Normally, some single person. That then permits it ... to be a way that some non-apparent unit may be demonstrated to exist. We get, then, a kind of extraordinary tie between syntactic possibilities and phenomena like social organization. (1995:145)

There probably isn't any better way of presenting the fact that 'we are a group' than by building a new sentence together. (1995: 322)

However, there are different kinds of potentially collaborative units, as the following sections show. One possibility is the duet, where two or more participants share knowledge and show each other that they do. In their collaboratively constructed semantic, syntactic and prosodic unit their 'togetherness' becomes maximally apparent. They might be forming their unit in front of an unknowing audience or because they want to establish rapport with each other, or both. Consequently one way of signalling 'togetherness' is to show another participant that you know what they are saying. Another way of creating such unity is to show that you understand what they are saying; the following sub-section explores this type of collaborative production.

### **Showing understanding**

In order to complete another participant's turn a speaker is not necessarily required to know exactly what that participant knows about their turn-in-progress. In fact, in the majority of collaborative productions incoming participants do not share the previous speaker's knowledge, but they take a guess, and according to this data collection, they get it right in 99.5 per cent of the cases.<sup>9</sup> This is at least partially due to the syntactic, semantic and prosodic projectability of utterances (cf. Sacks *et al.* 1974; Auer 1996). Participants' predictions about other speakers' turn-continuation are often based on an understanding of what the prior turn is about. Schegloff (1984) discusses the difference between the two practices of agreeing and showing agreement:

There is a range of forms through the use of which conversationalists can do the work of bringing off collaboratively that they are in agreement. Some are neatly prepackaged, for example, 'I agree,'

'I know,' 'Right,' and the like, which are *assertions of agreement*; others, unlistable because they are in particulars fitted to the matter being agreed on, *show agreement* by a variety of techniques, for example, showing one knows what the other has in mind by saying it for him, as in completing his sentence or his argument. (1984: 42, emphasis mine)

Schegloff's (1984) claims concerning agreement are also applicable to the larger notion of understanding another participant's turn. Rather than asserting understanding explicitly, as in 'I understand' or 'I know what you mean', participants more frequently show understanding. One way of doing so is to complete a previous speaker's utterance.

The following example is a typical case of a collaborative incoming showing a second speaker's understanding of a first speaker's material. The extract is (1), Wide Australian, reproduced below:

(1)

**Wide Australian**

- 1 WA: one of DAvid's FRIENDS comes from cAme from HEMel  
 2 ↑HEMPstead.  
 3 when he [was (.) THIR↑TEEN.  
 4 BE: [<<h> (↑HASn't he)>  
 5 WA: [or eLEven.  
 6 BE: [<<h> OH:;>  
 7 -> WA: you would you would NEVER GUESS it from his ACcent  
 8 -> <<I> i mean he's -> (.)  
 9 -> BE: WIDE auSTRALian [now.  
 10 -> WA: [speaking au [STRALian,  
 11 -> BE: [yeah.  
 12 WA: with ( )  
 13 -> BE: m;  
 14 MA: oh yEs like KEIR does of course but,  
 15 (0,5)  
 16 <<h> FUNNily eNOUGH EWAN DOESn't.>

Walter's utterance preceding Beverly's collaborative incoming contains a description of David's friend that can roughly be summarized as 'born in England but speaking without a British accent'. From this Beverly infers that the person speaks with an Australian accent, which, given the conversational topic 'Australia', is predictable. Beverly speaks with the same

loudness and roughly the same pitch level as Walter but without the high onset of a new turn. She quite clearly designs her completion as part of Walter's utterance without claiming the floor for herself. Her lack of desire to take the floor is also displayed by her recipient responses (lines 11 and 13) following Walter's own completion of the utterance. As he insists on his own completion and produces it in overlap with Beverly's incoming he could be interpreted as not appreciating her attempt to finish his turn. However, Beverly gives him supportive recipient responses although she has already shown that she has understood what he wanted to say. She thereby assures him of his right to speak, simultaneously declining it herself.

Beverly shows that she understands what Walter wants to tell her. The fact that Walter does not treat her incoming as competitive proves that he receives it as a 'listening activity' (Yngve 1970).<sup>10</sup> Beverly does not claim the right to a whole turn but lets the floor pass directly back to Walter, who is thereby confirmed in his role as turn-holder.

Display of understanding is frequently used by participants in the service of other conversational actions. The following sections introduce some activities which speakers accomplish in the current data corpus when they employ collaborative productions for showing understanding.

### *Helping out*

Incoming participants may use the practice of showing understanding in order to help out their co-participants with a word search. An example is (10), Bills, reproduced below:

(10)

**Bills**

- 1 HE: we ↑jUst HEARD the other day;=  
 2 about ↑WELLstone by the way bArbra,  
 3 <<all> hE never mentioned this to YOU;=  
 4 but i don't s'pose he WOULD;> .hh  
 5 that hE is one of the ↑THREE ↑LARGest;  
 6 uhm uh (.) intro↑DUcer of ↑BILLS;  
 7 -> uh that uh that um;  
 8 -> BA: [<<f> that SPEND MOney.>  
 9 HE: [well Anyway.  
 10 MOney spending [bills.  
 11 BA: [<<l> Okay;>

Heather struggles first with the retrieval of the expression *introducer of bills* (line 6), and later with the phrase *money spending bills / that spend*

money. Lines 6–7 contain one pause, five *uhs* and *uhms*, three false starts and eventually Heather's resignation *well anyway* (line 9), which is spoken fast and with reduced loudness, falling down to a final fall. Her difficulties are even more apparent as her speech rate previous to the word search is rather fast, and the flow of her utterance is forcefully held up by the retrieval problems, which occur during the climax of her argument.

Barbara helps out with the missing item (*that spend money*, line 8) in a loud voice. Heather's immediately following version *money spending bills* (line 10) has even higher loudness. Both turns carry the raised loudness which often accompanies the successful end of a word-search (Szczepek 1998). Interestingly Heather does not repeat Barbara's exact phrase. While Barbara completes the previous syntactic structure Heather replaces the earlier item *bills* with an unattached noun phrase.

In other instances of helping out, incoming speakers are uncertain whether the expression they are offering is indeed the required one. They offer what they believe the co-participant is searching for with high rising intonation, thereby contextualizing their candidate completion along the lines of 'is this what you are looking for?' An example of such try-marking is taken from the same birthday party as (6), Baking cookies. In the following extract Marcy and her daughter-in-law Wendy discuss a certain kind of soft drink:

(17)

**Regular grape**

- 1 MA: what i'm gonna complain about is that they don't  
 2 make white grape;=  
 3 thIs stuff is GOOD.  
 4 it's like sparkling GRAPE JUICE (.) COCKtail or some-  
 5 thing,  
 6 you know remember that ( ) -  
 7 WE: <<h+f> they only make that> with NUtra sweet  
 8 though;  
 9 d- DON'T they;  
 10 -> they DON'T make; (-)  
 11 -> REGular - (-)  
 12 -> MA: a REGular GRAPE?  
 13 -> I don't KNOW.  
 14 WE: every time i look at that bot that bottle of water;  
 15 that sparkling WATER it's all ( );  
 16 MA: but they don't make thIs kind at ↑ALL anymore.

Wendy wants to know whether the company that produces the drink also makes a regularly sugared one as opposed to a nutra sweet version (line 7ff), and has trouble finding a verbal item to follow *regular*. In line 12 Marcy offers a candidate with high rising intonation. However, she does not give Wendy an opportunity to confirm that this was indeed the term she was looking for, but continues to answer the question immediately.<sup>11</sup>

Interestingly both participants in this sequence are engaged in asking questions. Wendy asks about the regular drink, while Marcy asks whether *a regular grape* is the required item to complete Wendy's question turn. Marcy's continuation of Wendy's turn has 'question intonation'. However, the intonation pattern has probably less to do with the fact that Marcy is completing a question, which may indeed have rising intonation, but more with Marcy's uncertainty about that completion. In other words the verbal material *a regular grape* belongs to Wendy's turn; the prosody in which it is delivered is Marcy's.

The above case suggests that in instances of try-marking, the incoming speaker, although s/he continues an incoming participant's prosody, does not necessarily do so in the way it has been previously projected. We do not know whether Wendy was going to design her question with rising intonation. In other cases where the try-marking is not involved in a question from a first speaker, it is even more obvious that the rising pitch was not projected by the current utterance before the incoming. So although the second speaker's incoming is heard as a completion of the ongoing turn, it has a prosody which the second speaker can claim authorship for.

In the excerpts above, a recipient's display of understanding seems to be sequentially necessary. They are cases where a first conversationalist gets into trouble with his/her current verbal material and seems to be searching for a particular word or phrase, displaying this word search through hesitation signals such as pauses, false starts and hesitation markers. A second speaker joins in and produces the item in an attempt to help out. If the candidate suggestion is what the first speaker was looking for, that speaker takes up the turn where s/he left it and is again in possession of the floor. The incoming participant is not treated as an interrupter. Ferrara (1992: 220) describes such sequences as 'helpful utterance completions'.

Extract (17), *Regular grape*, is an instance of an incoming speaker who wishes to show understanding and to help out, but who is unsure whether s/he has understood the first speaker correctly. In such cases,

second speakers typically design their completion prosodically as a candidate completion.

*Terminating another participant's turn*

Another conversational action which participants may accomplish when they use a collaborative production to show understanding of a previous speaker's turn is a forced termination of that turn. The following extract is taken from a radio discussion in Minneapolis with Barbara Carlson and Congressman Graham. The topic is representative government in general, and the people's influence on a specific law in particular:

(18)

**Fight a bill**

- 1 GR: if you're going to FIGHT a BILL;  
 2 if you WAIT until it gEts to the floor of the HOUSE; (.)  
 3 the VOTES have already been CAST.  
 4 BA: <<p> yeah.>  
 5 GR: you HA:VE to be prO ACtive;  
 6 and you hAVE to be out in FRONT of the bills; .h  
 7 <<all> and THAT'S what we're trying to do with a lOT  
 8 of the Issues.>  
 9 we want to BRING em home at our TOWN meetings; .hh  
 10 we want to commUNicate to our (.) vOTers what's  
 11 going On;  
 12 and A:sk for your response (.) ↑EARly; .h  
 13 to make ↑SURE that (.) uh (.) a- i-  
 14 -> agAI n i commEND;  
 15 -> ALL the CALLs that were MADE;  
 16 -> and ALL the LETTers that were WRITTen; .h  
 17 i just think that [TOO Many  
 18 -> BA: [ <<all+f> but it ↑SHOULD have  
 19 been EARlier.>  
 20 -> GR: it SHOULD have been EARlier.  
 21 BA: i DO wanna answer that gentleman's call- that  
 22 gentleman's question.

Before this extract Graham has already been talking for 30 seconds, telling listeners how people's calls to the White House came too late to stop the bill in question. In lines 1–13 Graham is in the middle of explaining the

general conditions under which the public can influence political decisions. From line 7 onwards he digresses into a brief election speech, which he has problems bringing to completion (line 13); instead, he begins to repeat himself (lines 14–16). Upon reaching his concessive *I just think that* (line 17) Barbara Carlson completes it with faster speech rate and increased loudness (lines 18–19). He agrees with her completion of his statement by repeating her exact material in the same prosodic fashion (line 20). Subsequently Barbara turns to a member of the audience.

By the time Barbara comes in Graham's turn has taken up 55 seconds, with only one recipient response from Barbara (line 4). Considering the restricted speaking time of a radio programme this is a long turn. Barbara is responsible for precise time management on her show, and it seems she is acting upon that responsibility by bringing his turn to an early completion. Her prosody signals both that she speeds up Graham's turn and that she considers it her right to do so (allegro and forte without a rise in pitch register).

In collaborative productions such as this one, in which an incoming participant forcibly terminates another's utterance by showing s/he has understood what they are saying, it may be characteristic for the completing speaker to come in with raised loudness, showing herself to be a legitimate interrupter at this stage in the conversational sequence.

### *Showing support*

In dealing with conversationalists showing understanding of each other there are two senses of the term 'understand' that are relevant. One sense is implied in all collaborative productions that show understanding, namely that of comprehending what the other speaker has in mind and is in the process of expressing. The *Concise Oxford Dictionary* calls this to 'perceive the meaning of (words, a person, a language, etc)'. This sense concerns the semantic-pragmatic content of an ongoing utterance which the incoming speaker demonstrates to have correctly predicted.

A second meaning of the word is its empathetic use in the sense of 'I understand you, your motives for doing such-and-such a thing, for arguing this way', and so on. The same dictionary paraphrases this as to 'be sympathetically aware of the character or nature of, know how to deal with'. This second sense is especially implied in cases where the supportive function of showing understanding is the main motivation for the incoming.<sup>12</sup>

See for example another piece of radio data in which Barbara Carlson is hosting a radio programme on the pros and cons of prolonging life

on medical machines even if the patient concerned will not regain consciousness:

(19)

**Let her go**

- 1 HE: I had to make a decision with my MOTHER,  
 2 who was eighty seven years OLD, .hh  
 3 i'm an only CHILD,  
 4 a:nd I: had to make the decI:SION whether or NOT; .hh  
 5 to conTInue - .hh  
 6 hAve her continued O:n maCHI:NES, (.) .hh  
 7 BA: <<p> mhm,>  
 8 -> HE: O:R to let her GO;;  
 9 -> and i mAde the decI:SION to [lEt her ↑GO.  
 10 -> BA: [ <<p> lEt her ↑GO.>  
 11 HE: and it was (.) .hh VERY very ↑DIFFicult.  
 12 BA: <<p> mhm,>  
 13 HE: there were mAny unresolved THINGS;  
 14 that we had nO:t (.) TALKED about during our  
 15 LIVES, .hh  
 16 uhm (.) ↑SO many unfinished thIngs;  
 17 and .hh still i had to make that deCISion and i, .hh  
 18 take responsiBILity for that,  
 19 -> BA: <<p+l> i thInk you made the RIGHT decision;  
 20 -> i'm GLAD you DID make that decision.>  
 21 HE: a:nd i i uh REALLY canNOT -  
 22 i f:eel that SHE is in a way still wlth me.

Heather has made it clear in her talk before the above extract that she is in favour of 'letting go'. She shows no hesitation signals, she has no problems finding the right expression, and she does not leave a pause before Barbara's incoming (lines 9–10). This is a characteristic environment for collaborative productions that show support in which the incoming participant's completion is designed to overlap precisely with the first speaker's, and is usually spoken very quietly. The collaborative incoming does not lay claim to the floor in any way, but on the contrary seems to support the original speaker in his/her right to the speaking role. Barbara signals support prosodically by producing Heather's projected intonation pattern, including the steep fall on *go*, and verbally by taking up the gist of Heather's argument.<sup>13</sup> She adopts Heather's perspective and thereby backs her up in the decision she made to 'let her (mother) go'.

There is no immediate next-speaker evidence for the fact that Barbara's completion is received as support, but Barbara offers additional recipient response (line 12), and shortly afterwards explicitly states her support for Heather's decision, again with extremely subdued prosody (lines 19–20).

### *Summary*

Showing understanding of a first speaker's turn by collaboratively completing his/her utterance represents the largest group of collaborative productions in this data collection. Among them are instances where the showing of understanding has a secondary interactional function, some of which have been demonstrated above. No doubt there are others. However, in many cases the showing of understanding seems to be motivated by the desire to establish rapport as an end in itself.

Showing understanding of previous talk is of course a component of all sequential utterances in a conversation:

Utterances, or larger units, are constructed to display to coparticipants that their speaker has attended a last utterance, or sequence of utterances, or other unit, and that this current utterance, in its construction, is placed with due regard for where it is occurring. (Schegloff 1984: 37)

Collaborative productions are just one way of doing so, perhaps a particularly effective one, as the understanding is displayed before the current speaker has reached turn-completion.

In contrast to the duetting practice described above, the two participants involved in showing understanding are allocated the roles of speaker and recipient, rather than of co-speakers in front of an audience. The incoming participant is not by experience or state of knowledge on a par with previous speaker, but clearly acts as recipient of the ongoing utterance. Thus, the collaborative productions in this category are unmistakably recipient activities.

Concerning the question of whose perspective the collaborative production represents, the incomings that show understanding are usually oriented towards the first speaker. Incoming participants tend to complete previous speaker's material as his/hers, not as their own, with the exception of the instance of try-marking intonation in (17), Regular grape. Thus it seems that the whole collaborative utterance is typically treated as the property of the initial participant.

The aspect of perspective is often closely linked to the distribution of floor. The prototypical case is one in which one conversationalist begins

a construction, another speaker completes it, and the floor reverts directly back to the original turn-holder after the collaborative incoming. However, there are other possibilities. Second speakers do not necessarily have to share the same perspective as the original one; they need not even take up the projection of a previous utterance. The next section presents cases in which an incoming speaker's completion is not at all what a first speaker had in mind.

### Borrowing

There are instances of collaborative productions where the incoming participant's completion does not comply with what has been projected by the utterance so far. In a small number of cases, this is because interactants have made a wrong guess.<sup>14</sup> More frequently, however, when a next speaker's material is different from the expected completion of an ongoing utterance the incoming seems to have been produced intentionally. In many instances the result is accompanied by laughter, both from the incoming speaker and from the other participants. Other such completions are motivated by a difference of opinion, which is realized within the frame of one turn. The latter instances often involve the incoming participant taking over the floor. A first example comes from two couples who talk about their Australian relatives. One of the cousins is a musician, and the conversation is about a song she has published:

(20)

#### Bit of a dirge

- 1 PA: the MUsic sounds like that one of grAcie FIELDS;  
 2 WHAT was it;  
 3 (2.0)  
 4 the er (.) the new ZEAland one.  
 5 (2.5)  
 6 MA: i n- i THINK i knOw what you mean;=  
 7 but i cAn't remember the ↑NAME;  
 8 (1.3)  
 9 erm -  
 10 (0.8)  
 11 PA: NOW is the HOUR.  
 12 [NOW is the HOUR.  
 13 BE: [((humming))  
 14 [NOW is the HOUR yes.  
 15 MA: [NOW is the HOUR.  
 16 -> well it's a ↑BIT like that;=

- 17 -> it's a sort of - (.)  
 18 -> PA: <<all+p> bIt of a DI:RGE.>  
 19 -> MA: <<len> austrAlian WESTern [thIng.>  
 20 -> BE: [hehehahahahaha:  
 21 -> <<laughing> PATrick you're (GORgeous.)>  
 22 -> MA: ↑DON'T be ↓HORRible,

In this sequence, Martha and Patrick are looking for an adequate way to describe their cousin's song. Patrick compares it to another song (*Now is the hour*), which eventually triggers general recognition (lines 1–15). Subsequently, Martha begins a description (lines 16ff), but in line 18 Martha's turn-in-progress is 'borrowed' by Patrick to insert his non-serious remark (*bit of a dirge*). Patrick's characterization of the song is clearly not what Martha had intended, and at first she continues with her own description without paying attention to Patrick's incoming (line 19).

However, the little piece of ridicule has not gone unnoticed by Beverly, who starts to laugh and comments on Patrick's sense of humour (lines 20–21). Following this, Martha also comments on the remark in a playfully reproachful fashion (line 22). The two reactions by Beverly and Martha show that Patrick did something out of the ordinary, something which is both funny and *horrible* (line 22). His prosody on the completion is faster and quieter than the surrounding material, contextualizing it as subordinate. It seems he would not have made such a remark in an utterance all his own, but since Martha has unwittingly supplied the beginning of the construction he quickly inserts his incoming into her turn before she continues. Thus he creates a situation in which he does not have to take full responsibility for the turn as a whole; the turn is still Martha's, rather than his. Nevertheless, the other participants, including Martha as the original turn holder respond to his comment as coming independently from him.

The same strategy of borrowing somebody else's construction to insert one's own material can be used for disagreeing. In the following example the radio presenters Tommy and Don are discussing a boxing match to which Don has challenged another moderator. This person has told Tommy that he will not fight:

(21)

**Boxing thing**

- 1 DO: tOmmy actually TALKED to him today,  
 2 he WOULDdn't-

- 3 he WON'T do the BOXing thing.  
 4 TO: no i c-  
 5 i TALKED to him a cOUple of times today,  
 6 his ↑RATionale for NOT doing the BOXing was; .hh  
 7 -> that the ↑Idea THERE seems to bE that; (.)  
 8 -> there's [aniMOSity-  
 9 -> DO: [he JUST WON'T DO it.  
 10 TO: there's animosity [both ways.  
 11 -> DO: [<<f+h> the ↑Idea> thERE is he's a  
 12 COWard.  
 13 [THAT'S the idea.  
 14 TO: [NO.  
 15 DO: THAT'S the idea.  
 16 TO: [↑NO.  
 17 DO: [SO-  
 18 TO: <<f+h> BRYan said,  
 19 [that he ( )>  
 20 DO: [<<f+h> I don't care what BRYan said;=  
 21 =he's a COWard.  
 22 ↑SO;> (-)  
 23 in LIEU of that, (.)  
 24 ^^NOW, (.)  
 25 TO: <<h+all> in FACT he said he loved you.>

Don's incoming *he just won't do it* (line 9) is a collaborative completion of Tommy's *the idea there seems to be that*, which Don recycles as a whole construction (lines 11–12), repeating Tommy's pitch step up on *idea*. In the meantime, Tommy has attempted twice to complete his report of what was said (lines 8 and 10). After Don's judgement of the third person as *a coward* (line 12), there comes a sequential opportunity for Tommy to agree – he abandons his reported speech and can now offer his own assessment of the situation. He does so, but in unmitigated disagreement with Don (*no*, lines 14–16). Lines 18–20 show the speakers fighting for the floor, their prosody both high pitched and loud. Subsequently the floor goes to Don.

In this extract, the second speaker borrows the other's construction to complete it according to his own interpretation, *he just won't do it*. Don uses Tommy's phrase *the idea there is* to formulate his own personal perspective, which has little to do with that of the quoted speaker. However, the tone group which carries the collaborative incoming (line 9) is not prosodically designed as an interruption, or even as an incoming at a

non-TRP. At this point, Don still speaks with unmarked loudness and his pitch is rather low. It is only afterwards that the two speakers get into an open fight for the floor.

### *Summary*

The above instances have been termed 'borrowing' because one speaker seems to borrow another participant's syntactic construction and semantic content in order to insert something independently his/her own. Borrowing differs in this respect from other forms of collaborative productions where the inserted material is designed according to the original speaker's perspective. Two types of borrowing can be identified. In some cases the inserted sequence turns the collaborative production into an utterance which the incoming speakers would not necessarily have dared to say all by themselves, but are happy to add to someone else's utterance. This first type of borrowing is demonstrated in (20), *Bit of a dirge*. It is a non-competitive kind of borrowing which is not inserted to take the floor from the current speaker, but is done for the purpose of amusement.<sup>15</sup> Speaker reactions such as commenting on the incoming and laughter are typical for this kind of collaborative. Hartung (1998: 144) mentions this kind of completion when he describes strategies for the use of irony:

When a hearer uses this format ironically, he must follow the speaker's utterance in so far as to be able to produce a correct syntactic continuation, but he need not predict the speaker's intention, as he deliberately offers phrases of which he not only knows that they are not a possibility for the speaker but which even contradict the speaker's intention. This way, the hearer uses this format, which in its typical use is supportive, in order to critically or playfully comment on the speaker's utterance.

*(Bei der ironischen Verwendung dieses Formats muß der Hörer zwar der Sprecheräußerung so weit folgen, daß er einen korrekten syntaktischen Anschluß realisieren kann, seine Äußerungsabsicht voraussehen braucht er aber nicht, denn er bietet absichtlich Formulierungen an, von denen er nicht nur weiß, daß sie für den Sprecher nicht in Frage kommen, sondern die sogar dessen Aussageabsicht widersprechen. Auf diese Weise nutzt der Hörer dieses in üblicher Verwendung unterstützende Format, um die Sprecheräußerung kritisch und oftmals auch witzig zu kommentieren.)*

A second type of borrowing is fundamentally different, and is exemplified in (21), *Boxing thing*. This conversational activity involves an

element of disagreement in that a second speaker takes over an utterance already begun by a first participant in order to change its course.<sup>16</sup> With respect to perspective, the incoming is not offered as something which still belongs to the original speaker, but as representing the incoming participant's point of view.

The interactional evidence that a collaborative production is indeed a borrowing can be found in the turns that follow. Firstly, the original speaker's and other recipients' responses usually show that for them the completion comes as a surprise, for example via laughing or disagreeing. Secondly, the first speaker later typically self-completes and thereby shows what the projected end of the utterance would have been had it been continued without the collaborative incoming.

### Eliciting information

One interactional environment for collaborative productions was found which seems best described from the first speaker's perspective. It is possible for participants to begin a turn without knowing, or without showing that they know, how it will end. In such cases, the addressee is expected to provide the completion and is prosodically invited to do so. The prosody that contextualizes the incomplete utterance is often lengthening on one or more of the vowels in the incomplete intonation unit, and typically rising or level intonation on the last accented syllable.

An example is taken from a radio programme in which Barbara Carlson has invited a dog trainer, who has brought two of her dogs, one of them is called Striker:

(22)

#### Striker

- 1 BA: STRIker, (.)  
 2 -> a:nd STRIker i::s a:: -  
 3 (-)  
 4 -> CI: GOLDen reTRIEver,  
 5 he's thrEE years OLD,  
 6 BA: [<<p> oKAY,>  
 7 CI: [and i'm (training) him in oBEDience right no:w,  
 8 BA: oKAY;

Barbara designs her request for information by providing a slot for Cindy to fill in the missing verbal item (lines 2–3). She increasingly draws out her vowels in *and*, *is* and *a*, thereby slowing down her speech rate and giving Cindy a chance to prepare for her incoming.

Syntactically she elicits Cindy's completion by producing a copulative structure up to the indefinite article. Cindy responds accordingly, filling in the open slot with her dog's breed.

For Ferrara (1992), inviting utterance completion is a discourse strategy with which speakers cover up their lack of knowledge, eliciting missing information through 'questions masquerading as statements' (1992: 221), and through hesitant and incomplete prosody.

### Response tokens as one form of recipient reaction

Amongst all potential forms of recipient reaction to collaborative productions the data show one to be particularly frequent: the use of response tokens for agreement or confirmation, produced either by the first, or by the incoming speaker. Example (8), reprinted below, is a first instance of a response token from the original speaker:

(8)

**Accurate**

- 1 PE: and he said the ↑Only thing WORSE than sEcond hand  
 2 SMUG uh <<breathy + p> GOD;>  
 3 sEcond hand SMOKE is; .h  
 4 MOral SMUGness.  
 5 ((laughter))  
 6 -> [<<p+1> which (.) which is> (.) a`GAIN `REALLY; (1.0)  
 7 -> LE: [<<l> Accurate.>  
 8 AL: [it's [FUnny;  
 9 -> PE: [yeah.

Peter is engaged in a word-search (line 6) to which Lesley provides the lexical item *accurate* (line 7). Peter agrees with the response token *yeah*, without producing a completion of his own (line 9). His agreement not only signals affirmation of the lexical item as an appropriate continuation of his aborted turn, it is also a way of treating Lesley's incoming as a collaborative action, rather than as an illegitimate intrusion. Interestingly, Peter's turn (lines 1–6) is received differently by the two co-participants. While Lesley treats it as incomplete, bringing it to completion with respect to its prosodic projection and syntactic structure, Alice seems to consider it potentially complete, possibly as trailing off. She treats it as a TRP and begins a new turn (line 8).

The following extract comes from a family dinner, the topic of conversation is electrical appliances. Once more the agreement by the first speaker to a collaborative production does more than simply agree:

(23)

**Rogue one**

- 1 BE: well ↑dOn't you FIND;  
 2 that with Anything <<1> elEctrical (.) or like that;>  
 3 PA: the MORE [you-  
 4 BE: [you get a ROGUE one,  
 5 and it it [gOEs WRONG.  
 6 PA: [OH yes;  
 7 BE: it's the same w-  
 8 -> with TELevisions and m- MOtor cars even;  
 9 -> [you gEt-  
 10 -> SA: [you can't guaran[TEE;  
 11 -> BE: [NO.  
 12 SA: CAN you.

In line 8 Beverly has clearly not yet reached a possible completion point as both her prosody and her semantics project a continuation of her turn. In contrast to Peter in (8), above, she has produced no hesitation signals that could be understood to invite a second speaker's incoming. She attempts to complete her turn (line 9), but Sandra comes in in overlap, also with a possible completion (lines 10; 12). Beverly gives up her own attempt at completion and agrees with Sandra's in her next turn (line 11). In this example, we are not dealing with a helpful utterance completion from the incoming speaker, as in (8), Accurate, but with a rather abrupt take-over, which could possibly be understood as an illegitimate interruption. Beverly's agreement with Sandra's completion, however, signals that she was going to continue along those same lines, and that Sandra's incoming is not being treated as competitive but on the contrary, as collaborative.

Another outcome of a first speaker's agreement with an incoming speaker's completion is to ensure a smooth conversational flow. Had Beverly insisted on her own completion a short sequence would have followed in which turn continuation and possibly floor distribution would have had to be re-negotiated.

A third example of first speaker agreement is the following. The two conversationalists are engaged in a duet in which they tell other participants about a young man who has a strong liking for various sub-cultures

but does not participate in them himself:

(24)

**Whole thing**

- 1 AL: he's a he's a voyEUR you see,  
 2 SU: [yeah;  
 3 AL: [he likes to see this on other PEOple;  
 4 and he likes to sort of preTEND that; (.  
 5 -> mAYbe he can [sOrt of gEt LIKE it;  
 6 SU: [yeah::;  
 7 -> [but he WON'T do the whole THING.]  
 8 -> AL: [but he doesn't want to be a real ]MEMber of it; nO;

The pragmatic content of Ashley's description of their friend's behaviour in line 1 seems to project a two-fold construction in explanation of the term 'voyeur'. The first part of this format is produced by Ashley with hardly any hesitation signals (lines 3–5). The projected second part of the formulation is produced by both participants in overlap, both starting with *but* and continuing along pragmatically similar lines (lines 7–8). At the end of his completion Ashley produces a response-token (*no*). To agree with one's own turn is unusual, agreement being a typical responding activity. From the sequential format of this collaborative production it seems probable that Ashley is not agreeing with his own utterance but with Sue's, which he has heard in spite of the overlap. Sue's incoming has not been prompted by any sign of hesitation from Ashley and could therefore theoretically be interpreted as illegitimate. Ashley's agreement confirms it as collaborative rather than competitive in nature.

It is arguably necessary for Ashley to give a sign of appreciation for Sue's incoming. Simultaneous speech of such length allows for the interpretation of one speaker ignoring the other, in this case Ashley ignoring Sue. Within his ongoing intonation unit (line 8) Ashley may be heard as not responding to Sue's continuation of his turn. In previous extracts we have seen first speakers breaking off and giving incomers time to finish their completion before they themselves continue ((15), *Skull*). Ashley does nothing of the sort; however, he does not fight for the floor, either. If he were to attempt to simply 'talk over' Sue, we would expect a different prosodic design for his completion, most importantly a louder one, whereas Ashley remains at his original loudness and pitch level. By latching his response token directly onto his own completion he signals retrospective appreciation for Sue's contribution.

To summarize the first three excerpts, response tokens by original speakers seem to do several things at once. First of all, they signal agreement. In (8), Accurate, the incoming speaker has reacted to an ongoing word-search and obviously provided a term that is acceptable to the original speaker, who agrees with it. Secondly, response tokens assure the incoming speaker that his action is appreciated, and received as collaborative, rather than as an illegitimate interruption. In addition to these two functions, a third one is demonstrated in (23). Here, the response token prevents a possible insertion sequence, in which the acceptability of the second speaker's candidate completion would perhaps have been negotiated.

In (24) both the original and the incoming speaker produce a completion simultaneously, and therefore the first speaker already provides evidence for their mutual agreement on the matter discussed. His agreement with the incomer is therefore potentially redundant. However, by producing an additional response token and latching it onto his own completion, he retrospectively appreciates the collaborative incoming of his co-participant. He thereby excludes a possible interpretation of his own simultaneous speech as ignoring and 'talking over' the second participant's contribution. The following instances show response tokens by incoming speakers. A first instance is taken from a face-to-face conversation between two women; the conversational topic is Alissa's husband's job:

(25)

**Stable**

- 1 AL: thAt's the only part i'll MISS but;  
 2 -> MA: HIS posItion is pretty uh - (-)  
 3 -> AL: t.hh STABLE.  
 4 -> YEAH.

Margret is searching for the right expression to characterize Alissa's husband's position. Alissa fills in a candidate term, and confirms it herself in a second TCU. Once more, it seems unlikely that a participant would confirm her own claim in a directly adjacent TCU. However, by confirming her own completion of Margret's turn, Alissa retrospectively treats that completion as if it had come from Margret herself. It is even possible to assume that the construction *his position is pretty uh stable* is treated by Alissa as a question, and her *yeah* is offered as an answer to that question. The same speaker response token fulfils the additional function of covering up Margret's word search. By confirming the

completing item, which is being treated as Margret's, Alissa also treats Margret's turn as complete. Furthermore the response token allows for smooth continuation of the talk, as floor distribution can continue as it would have without Margret's word-search. A different reaction from Alissa would have interrupted the conversational flow and required new negotiation of floor allocation.

A last example of a same speaker response token is (4), Rubbish, reprinted below:

(4)

**Rubbish**

- 1 PA: but you CA:N use quality meat [for SAUSages.  
 2 BE: [VEAL actually,  
 3 RO: ↑Oh you no you you CA:N,  
 4 and and they DO,  
 5 [in in GERmany ↑And swITzerland,  
 6 -> PA: [but the but the ma↑JOrity of sAUsages,  
 7 -> A:RE,  
 8 -> [( )  
 9 -> BE: [↑RUbbish.  
 10 (1.0)  
 11 -> PA: what they CAN'T sELL as ROASTing BOILing,  
 12 -> BE: that's ↑RIGHT;  
 13 -> PA: ↑FRYing joints.

In this collaborative production (lines 6–9) the first speaker, Patrick, does not produce any hesitation signals, but the prosodic design of his utterance makes its continuation rather predictable. Beverly produces a candidate continuation, which is a perfect prosodic match for Patrick's incomplete turn. He continues in overlap, breaks off, and after a pause continues again, without overtly reacting to Beverly's completion. In his second continuing attempt he is supportively agreed with by Beverly (line 12).

Beverly's response is redundant in its function as doing agreement, which has already been fulfilled by her earlier collaborative incoming. However, the response token retrospectively contextualizes her previous incoming as collaborative. This is sequentially necessary as Patrick's lack of reaction to her completion allows for the possibility that he sees it as in some way illegitimate. Such an interpretation is retrospectively denied by Beverly's agreement with Patrick's own completion. By agreeing with something she herself has already formulated in very similar terms,

Beverly treats her completion of Patrick's turn as his, and therefore as a collaborative production rather than as an interruption to take the floor.

To summarize the implications from the examples for second speakers' reactions, response tokens by incoming speakers underline the collaborative nature of collaborative productions. Incoming participants may agree with or confirm their own completion of another's turn and thereby treat the completion as belonging to the first speaker's utterance. Their response constitutes a new turn in itself, a reaction to the collaboratively completed turn, and it covers up a possible word-search from the original speaker by maintaining the original floor distribution. If the original speaker decides to continue his/her turn in addition to the already offered candidate completion from a second speaker, an agreement from the second speaker with that completion retrospectively contextualizes the earlier incoming as supportive rather than as competitive. It also treats the completion as the first speaker's property, and assures the original turn-holder of his/her right to it.

### **Summary**

Response tokens as reactions to collaborative productions are evidence for the constant necessity for sequential reception of other participants' talk. Just as a collaborative incoming is a form of uptake of a previous speaker's material, that incoming must also be explicitly received, or it will be interpreted as requiring further affirmation of its collaborative character. As the instances of response tokens from first speakers show, such an explicit appreciation of a second speaker's contribution treats the early incoming as note-worthy, but unmarked and unthreatening to current floor allocation. Most importantly, agreeing or confirming reactions from both first and incoming speakers seem to be supportive evidence for the non-competitive nature of collaborative productions. By responding to another speaker's completion, participants signal their appreciation of another's incoming. By responding to an utterance which they themselves helped complete they allocate that utterance to its first producer and support the other participant in his/her right to the floor. Thus, second speakers can signal retrospectively that their earlier collaborative incoming was non-competitive.

It was argued earlier in the chapter that collaborative productions are non-competitive early incomings, because they are not treated as turn-competitive by co-participants, and because they typically lack raised loudness and high pitch, and are therefore not prosodically designed as turn-competitive (French and Local 1986). The above occurrences of response tokens after collaborative productions are more proof from the

participants themselves that the incoming part of a collaborative production is not an attempt to take over the floor, but enables participants both to contribute to other speakers' turns and at the same time to support them in their right to speak.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has shown how speakers share turns by jointly producing prosodic and syntactic patterns. In the first half of the chapter, such collaborative productions were analysed from two structural perspectives, the projective trajectory of the first speaker's prosodic and syntactic contribution, and the prosodic and syntactic link created by the incoming part. In this context an analysis of the prosodic design of first and second speakers' contributions showed that interactants involved in collaborative productions do not treat each other as interrupters into one another's turn space, but as collaborators in the production of an interactional unit.

In the second half of the chapter collaborative productions were shown to constitute sequential environments in which participants cooperate interactionally. Such cooperation may occur as a conversational duet in which participants tell a story together, as a display of understanding or support of another's position, as help with word searches or as providing information for co-participants. Yet, there are instances where collaborative productions are not collaborative on the interactional level, or only partially so. Incomers may decide that the story belongs more to them than to the other person; turn-holders may not appreciate an attempt to share a narrative; incomers may complete a current speaker's turn because they have decided that s/he has talked long enough; incomers may use another's turn to say things they would not normally say by themselves; and incomers may complete another person's turn in order to disagree with it.

Whatever the conversational action accomplished by a collaborative incoming, it has been integrated into a previous speaker's turn prosodically, syntactically and pragmatically. It is therefore offered up as talk which, although it is spoken by one conversationalist, potentially belongs to another. Collaborative productions therefore provide an opportunity for participants to sensitively handle questions of interactional authorship and responsibility. The possible implications this has for the notion of turn-taking and turn-allocation must be reserved for further research.

# 5

## Conclusion

### Summary

This study has explored a variety of ways in which participants in spontaneous, naturally occurring conversation make use of prosody as a resource for interactional collaboration. Prosodic orientation has been shown to occur as an exclusively prosodic phenomenon in cases of prosodic matching, prosodic non-matching and prosodic complementation, and in the highlighted variety of stylized prosodic orientation. In all of the above the practice of orientation can be analysed with respect to prosody alone. One sub-category of prosodic orientation, prosodic continuation, was found in combination with syntactic co-construction in the practice of collaborative productions, in which the prosodic and the syntactic domain are employed symbiotically by participants for the collaborative production of turns.

In the preceding chapters prosodic orientation has been analysed first with respect to its prosodic structure, and shown to take four basic forms: prosodic matching, prosodic non-matching and prosodic complementation were presented in Chapter 2, while prosodic continuation was described in Chapter 4. Prosodic matching was found to be accomplished with a variety of prosodic parameters, including intonation contour, pitch step-up, pitch register, loudness, speech rate, voice quality and phonetic sound production. Prosodic non-matching was shown to be employed with respect to pitch register and loudness, while prosodic complementation and continuation are only describable for the parameters intonation contour and occasionally speech rhythm.

Stylized prosodic orientation was shown to occur in the form of musical intervals, marked prosodic designs and repetitions. While a frequent musical interval for prosodic stylization is the minor third, the main

form of marked prosody are declining intonation contours with extreme duration and portamento, marked pitch register combined with marked loudness, and marked voice quality. Stylized prosodic orientation by repetition typically involves one item which is reiterated by a number of participants.

Collaborative productions as a phenomenon are a combination of the fourth basic form of prosodic orientation, prosodic continuation, and simultaneous syntactic continuation. They were categorized according to the types of projection which are made relevant by the original speaker prosodically, but also syntactically, semantically and pragmatically. They were furthermore described according to the types of continuations offered by the incoming participants, depending on whether they are prosodic and syntactic completions or extensions of the previous speakers' utterances. In addition, collaborative productions were compared to other kinds of early incomings by second speakers, such as turn-competitive interruptions, and in contrast to these were shown to be treated by participants as non-competitive solely on the basis of their prosodic delivery.

In addition to the formal descriptions, prosodic orientation was shown to occur in a variety of interactional environments, accomplishing specific conversational actions. Basic prosodic orientation can be found in a broad range of sequential environments, co-occurring with responding activities such as confirmations, responses, return greetings and farewells in telephone openings and closings, acknowledgements, assessments-as-seconds, news receipts and disagreements. In addition to these specific actions, prosodic orientation was also shown to be used frequently for closing a turn, action or sequence.

Stylized prosodic orientation is a common prosodic design for appreciation sequences, the voicing of imaginary figures, routine conversational structures such as openings, closings and other adjacency pairs, and playful interludes.

Collaborative productions are found to co-occur with instances of duets, the display of understanding, borrowing and eliciting information. Showing understanding can be further grouped into cases of helping out, terminating another participant's turn and showing support. Third turns to collaborative productions were also analysed with respect to response tokens from either the original, or the incoming participant.

In all instances of prosodic orientation, the prosodically orienting turn by a second speaker is employed to signal some form of collaboration. Through prosodic orientation speakers not only reveal their awareness of a previous prosodic design, but by referring back to it in this way

they appear to be tying two turns together to form a unit in the prosodic domain, which is initially irrespective of whether a similar bond exists between the two turns on other levels of turn organization. However, typically the two turns form some form of sequentially organized 'pair'.

Stylized prosodic orientation is employed by participants as a resource for drawing attention to their own and other speakers' prosodic design. The framing of a sequence as stylized is a further practice which speakers employ to hold a sequence together, and to signal that it is playful or routine. Collaborative productions are a practice with which participants share their turns, thus collaborating in the production of a single interactional unit which is typically produced by one speaker alone.

## Conclusion

It can be concluded that while basic prosodic orientation is a widely applicable practice which can be transferred to many interactional locations which make an immediate second turn relevant, the two distinct forms – stylized prosodic orientation and collaborative production – are employed by participants for specific conversational actions. However, all instances of prosodic orientation have in common that they reveal an underlying treatment of prosody by participants as an independent domain for conversational action.

Previous investigations of natural conversation have shown that prosody is treated by participants as a signalling domain within conversational and social action. To name only a few interactional functions of specific prosodic patterns, speakers can be observed to react to certain prosodic designs such as a high rising intonation contour on a single NP, by producing a specific next action, such as giving an answer, thereby treating the high rise as an interrogative form (cf. Chapter 2, p. 69). With respect to turn-taking, participants have been found to come in with their next turns after highly specific prosodic patterns by previous speakers, thus treating them as signals for turn completion (Local *et al.* 1985; Local *et al.* 1986; Wells and Peppé 1996).

This book has taken a step beyond the above characterizations of particular prosodic patterns in that it shows that prosody as such is handled by participants as a separate domain for interaction, in which appropriate next – prosodic – actions are constantly made relevant and collaboratively achieved. Prosody can thus be shown to establish independent conversational relevancies, in addition to the grammatical, semantic, pragmatic and interactional constraints which participants are committed to during the turn-by-turn development of talk.

For prosodic orientation these relevancies include options such as doing the same as, continuing, complementing or doing the opposite of what the previous participant has done.

In all the practices described above, the sequences in which participants prosodically orient to one another are analysable as separate from others which are not as clearly prosodically orienting. However, since this study shows participants to be so acutely aware of each others' precise prosodic delivery it may be hypothesized that spoken conversation is permeated by other, more subtle forms of prosodic orientation which cannot be detected on the immediate interactional surface. An investigation into such other forms of prosodic awareness amongst participants is a potential pursuit for future research.

All of the observations and findings in this study are directly dependent on the type of data underlying the analysis, and the analytical method employed. Only through the study of natural conversation was it possible to discover the above practices, as they are a feature of spontaneous talk and do not occur in other occurrences of language frequently used for linguistic description and analysis. Linguistic research which is based on introspection, constructed examples, laboratory data or interviews with language users is necessarily blind to linguistic practices which occur only in the spontaneous flow of natural talk.

Furthermore, the specifically backwards-orienting nature of our phenomenon is a striking example of a linguistic practice which can only be discovered and described by basing all analyses on participants' reactions, as they are evident in each subsequent turn. In prosodic orientation participants respond prosodically to an immediately previous contribution. As such the phenomenon is inseparable from the nature of spontaneous conversation as constantly emerging next turns.

# Notes

## 1 Prosody in Conversation

1. Cf. Couper-Kuhlen (1986), Cruttenden (1997), Laver (1995), Selting (1995), Couper-Kuhlen and Selting (1996).
2. The frequency and acoustic analyses for this study have been made with Praat 3.8.31, see [www.fon.hum.uva.nl/praat/](http://www.fon.hum.uva.nl/praat/)
3. However, it seems possible to establish a rhythm with only two syllabic beats when other sound events such as audible gestures and breaths, or even visual events such as silent gestures are taken into account.
4. This methodological stance is adopted from Firthian Prosodic Analysis, as discussed later in the chapter.
5. The following is considered to be only a rough overview of some of the ways in which previous phonologists have treated prosody. For more extensive surveys see for example Crystal (1969: chapter 2), Gibbon (1976: chapter 3), Couper-Kuhlen (1986: 63–72), Selting (1996:1.1.3; 1.1.4), Couper-Kuhlen and Selting (1996: 11–24).
6. The degree to which Halliday's grammatical criteria are indeed 'grammatical' is criticized and discussed in Gibbon (1976).
7. The notation of a 'fall' as H\*+L is an extremely simplified conversion, as Pierrehumbert's original analyses show that both configurations which begin on the high tone and also those which rise to a high tone from a mid-level pitch are analysed as H\*+L (Pierrehumbert 1980: 75, 288). Ladd (1996: 82) provides a table of possible correspondences between the British and the AM system with respect to nuclear tones. However, he concedes that 'there is no single agreed inventory of nuclear tone types that we can compare item by item against the Pierrehumbert analysis' (1996: 83).
8. Walker (2001).
9. Cf. pp. xiii–xiv.
10. Cf. Local *et al.* (1986), Kelly and Local (1989), Ogden (1993), Ogden and Local (1994), Coleman (1998), Local and Ogden (1998), Heid and Hawkins (2000), Hawkins and Smith (2001), Ogden (2001), Ogden and Walker (2001), Walker (2001), Local (2002a), Ogden (2002).
11. Cf. Ogden (1999) for an analysis of the interplay of phonological and syntactic systems.
12. Cf. Anderson (1985).
13. For more comprehensive surveys of CA cf. West and Zimmermann (1982), Levinson (1983: 294–332), Bergmann (1988), Zimmerman (1988), Wootton (1989), Boden (1990), Psathas (1990), Drew (1995), Hutchby and Drew (1995), Psathas (1995), Pomerantz and Fehr (1997), Hutchby and Wooffitt (1998), Ten Have (1999).
14. Cf. French and Local (1983; 1986), Local (1992).
15. Cf. p. 18ff.

16. Furthermore, there have been widespread attempts, in recent years, to apply ethnomethodological and conversation analytical methods of analysis to other, non-spoken environments of social interaction, such as internet news-groups (Reed and Ashmore 2000; Reed 2001), chat rooms (Schmidt 2000; Günthner and Schmidt 2002), human-computer interaction (Frohlich and Luff 1990; Luff *et al.* 1990; Greatbatch *et al.* 1995; Heath and Luff 2000), SMS (Androutopoulos and Schmidt 2001), letter-writing (Mulkay 1985; 1986; De Rycker 1985) and body movement and gesture in conversation (Heath 1986; 1992; Streeck 1988; 1993; Streeck and Hartge 1992; Bohle 2002).
17. Cf. Hopper (1987; 1988; 1998) for emergent grammar: 'The notion of Emergent Grammar is meant to suggest that structure, or regularity, comes out of discourse and is shaped by discourse as much as it shapes discourse in an on-going process. Grammar is hence not to be understood as a pre-requisite for discourse, a prior possession attributable in identical form to both speaker and hearer. Its forms are not fixed templates, but are negotiable in face-to-face interaction in ways that reflect the individual speakers' past experience of these forms, and their assessment of the present context, including especially their interlocutors, whose experiences and assessments may be quite different. Moreover, the term Emergent Grammar points to a grammar which is not abstractly formulated and abstractly represented, but always anchored in the specific concrete form of an utterance' (Hopper 1987: 142).
18. Cf. Hughes and Szczepek Reed (2006) for conversational genre as a turn projecting mechanism.
19. The term 'syntactic gestalt' is adopted for this study from Auer (1996), and is used here to refer to all constructions which are syntactically complete.

## 2 Prosodic Orientation

1. Cf. Couper-Kuhlen (1983), French and Local (1983), Local *et al.* (1985), Couper-Kuhlen (1986), Local and Kelly (1986), Couper-Kuhlen (1993), Local *et al.* (1986), Local (1992), Selting (1995), Couper-Kuhlen and Selting (1996), Ford and Thompson (1996), Selting (1996), Auer *et al.* (1999), Selting and Couper-Kuhlen (2001).
2. An orientation to prosody by laughing can be found in Flowe (2002: 107ff). In Flowe's extract, a second participant begins to laugh after a stylized intonation phrase. 'His laughter at exactly this point can be taken as an indication that he is orienting towards Carlson's prosodic highlighting' (2002: 109). Flowe's use of 'orienting' does not correspond to the notion of prosodic orientation adopted for this study.
3. An orientation by way of a meta-linguistic comment can be found in Local and Wootton (1995: 160), where a mother tells her son: *talk slowly Kevin*.
4. Couper-Kuhlen (1986: 205) shows that the principle of pitch concord does not hold for less hierarchical discourse, such as panel discussions.
5. Tim thus contextualizes Barbara's *Tim good morning* as a summons, rather than a first greeting. This phenomenon has been described by Couper-Kuhlen (1993: 231):

Callers to the phone-in programmes are kept waiting on line until some sign comes from the studio that they are on the air. One such sign is the moderator

mentioning the caller's name (presumably noted at the switchboard when the call arrives) and appending a token of greeting such as *hello, how are you*. Such a turn works much as a summons (Schegloff 1972), announcing that the line is open from studio to caller and requesting an answer from caller to studio to confirm the connection ... In such cases a round of greetings typically follows next. This can be seen as support for the claim that the first exchange actually functions as a summons-answer sequence despite the greeting tokens used.

6. Cf. Couper-Kuhlen (1993: 234f) for a transcript of the rhythmic structure of this opening sequence and an analysis of line 4 as an instance in which a caller does not pick up a previous speaker's early beat. David can be seen to come in early with his greeting (line 3), thereby offering a potentially faster rhythm to his caller. Gary, however, does not take up this faster rhythm but comes in at the next beat according to the rhythm which was established by David before the greeting token.
7. For a discussion of relative and absolute values in intonation analysis see Crystal (1975).
8. Although orientation in pitch step-up can often be represented well in frequency analyses, this particular example, chosen because it holds such an abundance of step-ups, produces an unreliable wave form, as almost all of them occur in overlap with other talk.
9. The term *register* is adopted from Couper-Kuhlen (1996), who introduces it to avoid confusion over the notion of *key*, a term often used in the literature for this prosodic parameter (Crystal 1969: 149; but also Brazil *et al.* 1980: 60ff cited in Couper-Kuhlen 1996: 369). This use of the term *register* only partially overlaps with the use of the term *voice register* in the vocal arts, which covers the notions of head, chest or mixed resonance.
10. The notion of 'key' will be adopted from Hymes (1974: 57) to describe 'the tone, manner, or spirit in which an act is done. It corresponds roughly to modality in grammatical categories'. In German the term '*Interaktionsmodalität*' was introduced by Kallmeyer (1978) and developed by Flowe (2001).
11. Although Couper-Kuhlen (1993: 267) has 'ample evidence ... to suggest that the equation of temporal "immediacy" with preference and of delay with dispreference is overly deterministic' (254), her investigation still yields the following result:

for the majority of sequences, the establishment or maintenance of a rhythmic structure can be regarded as the preferred option. It produces an effect which might be labeled 'harmony', 'interaction proceeding smoothly' or 'take no notice', as the case may be. The destruction or breaking down of a rhythmic structure is on the whole a dispreferred option, producing by contrast effects such as 'disharmony', 'we have a problem', 'notice this', depending on situational factors.

12. For a discussion of methods for measuring speech rate see Barden (1991).
13. He does so also by using Barbara's syntactic construction personal pronoun + verb *to be* + adjective, which in combination with the matching of voice quality allows it to be interpreted as a continuation of Barbara's syntactic gestalt begun in line 3: *when the editorial board of the southern tribune*

goes after me ... Thus, Peter's turn *you're outraged* is a collaborative extension (see p. 169) of Barbara's prior turn rather than a reply to it.

14. Cf. Bolinger (1985: 106) on the iconicity of intonation: 'intonation is part of a gestural complex, a relatively autonomous system with attitudinal effects that depend on the metaphorical associations of up and down'. However, while intonation requires the intermediate stage of a (however universal) metaphor, the prosody of a quiet and breathy voice is iconic in a more direct way, as it can be associated with the physical effects of exhaustion.
15. Cf. Chapter 1 on the definition of prosody and the discussion of Firthian prosodic analysis. See for example Local *et al.* (1986), Kelly and Local (1989), Local and Ogden (1998), Ogden and Walker (2001) who show that all aspects of sound production are relevant for the analysis of conversation.
16. Cf. Couper-Kuhlen (1993: 247f) for a rhythmic transcription of this excerpt and an analysis of line 18 as an instance of rhythmically integrated news receipt.
17. See Chapter 4, example (20).
18. Asking for confirmation does of course not necessarily involve prosodic complementation or indeed any form of prosodic orientation. The following extract involves prosodic matching:

Get away

- 1 JE: let's get away.
- 2 JI: <<p> i'd L:OVE to.>
- 3 you know i was talking to ↑KEri tonight,
- 4 i gave KEri a call,
- 5 and uhm;
- 6 JE: wow;
- 7 -> at MICHael's?
- 8 -> JI: uhu?
- 9 and she was so MISerable.

19. Cf. Couper-Kuhlen (1999a, b) and Selting (2002) for conversational list construction.
20. Couper-Kuhlen (personal conversation) suggests that this is especially true for interaction between caretakers and children.
21. Another way for participants to refer back to prosody is prosodic repair, in which speakers correct their own prosody, for example from a terminal contour to a non-terminal one or vice versa, by repeating the relevant verbal material with the new pattern.
22. Possibly there are certain restrictions concerning orientation with respect to different prosodic parameters – it may be more acceptable to match some parameters than others.

### 3 Stylized Prosodic Orientation

1. This definition is in close proximity to that of Flowe (2002: 92), who works within the broader frame of gestalt theory. In his work:

the term 'highlighting' is introduced to describe how gestalt elements may be manipulated in order to draw attention to an individual (i.e. 'local') part

of a gestalt. Within spoken interaction such manipulation often coincides with an increased orientation to the stylized structure by conversation participants. The term 'stylize' is introduced to describe how interactants manipulate gestalt elements and structures in order to bring out an underlying structure of an entire gestalt.

2. The same point is made by Abe (1962) in a passing comment.
3. <http://www.uni-konstanz.de/FuF/ueberfak/sfb511/teilprojekte/luckmann.htm#Unterprojekt3>
4. The Hertz values for all musical notes are average values, calculated over the length of the held note. This means that at different points during the tone one may find slightly varying values.
5. Both turns can be analysed as borrowing collaborative productions, see Chapter 4, p. 197ff.
6. Cf. Goodwin and Goodwin (1982) on assessments as a collaborative activity.
7. Cf. Crystal (1998) for the 'ludic' function of language.

#### 4 Collaborative Productions: Orientation in Prosody and Syntax

1. Steep falls have been analysed as signalling contrast, by Couper-Kuhlen (1986).
2. The same contour is mentioned in Auer (1996: 75) in the constructed example '*Susy, is, pregnant!*'
3. Lerner (1992) on assisted story-telling deals with a similar phenomenon. For duets in German see Quasthoff (1980) and Hartog (1992).
4. For rhythmic coordination between speakers at turn transitions see Couper-Kuhlen (1993).
5. Cf. Couper-Kuhlen (1993: 137ff) for a transcript of the rhythmic pattern of this sequence.
6. Cf. Jefferson (1990) and Lerner (1994) on collaborative list construction.
7. French and Local (1983) show how 'repeats of incomplete syntactic units' frequently occur in turns which are being interrupted by competitive incoming speech (1983: 33).
8. Cf. pp. 190ff for collaborative incomings as a way of 'helping out'.
9. A single exception in the data for this investigation is **Gun-Shy**:

- 1 JO: what happens when you call andy ↑DAWkins.  
 2 BA: <<nasal> well ANDy's a little NERvous <<l> about me right  
 3 now.>  
 4 you know we're we're <<laughing> TRIED to schedule the  
 5 debAte,>=  
 6 just before the eLEction,=  
 7 <<nasal> WE HAVE the mineApolis debate;> .hh  
 8 i think the DAY before the eLEction.  
 9 I: think <laughing DAWkins I:s;>(.)  
 10 -> JO: I:s in TROUBLE.  
 11 -> BA: .h well I Also think he's GUN-shy. (.)  
 12 <<l> maybe that's not the word to> ↑USE but; .hh

- 13 I thInk he's a LITTLE-  
 14 JO: he's ↑BARbra shy.

10. 'A person engages in different activities when he has the turn than when he doesn't have it. When he has the turn he engages primarily in speaking activities and when he doesn't have it he engages primarily in listening activities' (Yngve 1970: 568).  
 11. In other instances the first speaker provides a reply to such a question. See for example:

#### School

- 1 MI: are THEY – (1.2)  
 2 TEACHing – (.)  
 3 -> any more lamBAda (.) at uh; (1.5)  
 4 -> JA: <<p> SCHOOL?>  
 5 -> MI: <<p> yeah.>

12. Schwitalla (1992) describes this function of collective speech as 'showing the current speaker (and other participants) in a demonstrative and exceptional way that one thinks and feels like him/her' (*'dem aktuellen Sprecher (und anderen Beteiligten) in demonstrativer und auffallender Weise zeigen, daß man so denkt und fühlt wie er'* (1992: 73)).  
 13. Cf. note 1. The steep fall on *go* in lines 9–10 can be interpreted as signalling a contrast between letting *go* and continuing on machines, which might explain why Barbara is able to predict the falling contour.  
 14. Cf. note 9, 'Gun-Shy'.  
 15. One typical format is collaborative lists, into which second speakers can insert items that do not match the rest of the list and which produce a comic effect. See for example:

#### Riverbanks

- 1 DA: you can sAY hello to the WORLD while you're on.  
 2 G: well i'd just like to say hello to (-) PARENTS, (-)  
 3 GIRLFRIEND,  
 4 judith BANKS, (.) .h  
 5 mary BANKS,  
 6 PAUL BANKS,  
 7 KAREn BANKS, (.) .h  
 8 DAVE WARing,  
 9 -> SUE JAGGer,  
 10 -> DA: RIVERBANKS,  
 11 G: hehehe

16. Kotthoff (1993: 201f) has found a similar way in which participants use others' material in argumentation sequences: 'The speaker co-opts the opponent's expression or point, and uses it for his or her own side ... Opponent's formulations are incorporated but interpreted to the contrary.' In these cases, the strategy is to incorporate semantic and verbal material, whereas in the cases under analysis here, participants borrow a syntactic construction and a global prosodic contour in order to insert semantically and lexically *new* material.

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