

# 36 Conversation Analysis and Linguistics

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## 1 Brief History of CA and Linguistics

The interaction between CA and Linguistics began in the 1970s. Although Sacks originally had no special concern for language in his early explorations of social order (Heritage, 1984b), his growing interest in the organization of everyday talk eventually drew him to the details of language. What is arguably the most influential CA journal publication (“A simplest systematics” (Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson, 1974)) appeared in the flagship journal of the Linguistic Society of America (*Language*), and thereby established a relationship between CA and Linguistics. The second major journal publication (“The preference for self-correction” (Schegloff, Jefferson & Sacks, 1977)) likewise appeared in *Language*. Although the field of Linguistics at that time was fairly thoroughly dominated by the generative paradigm, both articles came to have a substantial impact on Linguistics; in fact, the 1974 paper is the most cited paper ever to appear in *Language* (Joseph, 2003). The seed for a deeper, though not always harmonious, relationship between CA and Linguistics was thus planted in these early articles

The appearance of those articles in *Language* was not accidental. A close reading of Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974: 703, fn. 12) in fact reveals an explicit invitation to linguists to participate in an interdisciplinary effort to understand the grammatical make-up and projectability of turn units. Later work in CA, for example Schegloff (1979b) on the syntax of repair, further pursues the connection with linguists. Schegloff (1996d: 2) in particular was, and remains, a clarion call to linguists to consider the multitude of ways in which they might rewardingly approach the study of linguistic structure in terms of routine conversational practices:

One reason [to explore grammar together with the organization of the turn-at-talk] is that, in conversation and many other forms of talk-in-interaction, turns-at-talk are the key proximate organizational niche into which bursts of language are introduced, and to which they may be expected to be adapted. And grammar is one of the key types of organization shaping these bursts.

And at least some linguists did take up the invitation. Yet apart from pioneering work by a few Linguistic Anthropologists (e.g. Duranti & Ochs, 1979, on left-dislocation; C. Goodwin, 1979, 1981, on conversational organization and the 'sentence'),<sup>1</sup> it was not until the mid-1980s and early 1990s that discourse-functional linguists started to pursue the interactional role of grammar (Auer, 1984; Houtkoop & Mazeland, 1985; Fox, 1987; Ford, 1993). Opened to the possibility of conversational and interactional functions of language by the groundbreaking work of scholars in discourse-functional syntax (Givón, 1979; Chafe, 1980; Du Bois, 1980; Hopper & Thompson, 1980, 1984), at least some of this early work on grammar and interaction saw itself as growing out of the larger discourse-functional syntax paradigm and expanding that paradigm. For example, Ford (1993: 1) describes her use of CA to study adverbial clauses in this way: "At a general level, this research is part of a larger program of interest in observing grammar in its 'natural habitat': connected, contextualized discourse."

In the 1990s, the term *grammar and interaction* began to be used (e.g. Couper-Kuhlen, 1992, on the prosody of repair, 1993, on speech rhythm; Ford, 1993 on adverbial clauses and reciprocity), to capture the growing body of research manifesting a blurring of the boundaries between the study of conversational patterns and of linguistic regularities, and in 1996 three influential collections appeared of articles studying morphosyntax and prosody in conversation (Couper-Kuhlen & Selting, 1996b; Fox, 1996; and Ochs, Schegloff & Thompson, 1996).

In the early 2000s, a new term, *Interactional Linguistics (IL)*, was introduced to capture the growing community of linguists studying sound as well as grammar from a distinctly interactional approach. In the edited volume that introduced the term, Couper-Kuhlen and Selting (2001: 3) characterized this new community as follows:

Interactional Linguistics thus takes an interdisciplinary and a cross-linguistic perspective on language. Its goal is a better understanding of how languages are shaped by interaction and how interactional practices are molded through specific languages.

It treats speech as an ongoing or emergent product in a social semiotic event and language as providing one set of resources for the accomplishment of goals or tasks within this event.

Both this term and this community are now accepted in the larger world of scholars focused on human interaction, with a number of conferences, and monographs, collections and articles appearing in a range of venues.

Couper-Kuhlen and Selting trace the origins of IL to three primary sources: discourse-functional syntax, CA, and anthropological linguistic work on contextualized language use (Gumperz, 1982; Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986; Hanks, 1990). Because CA is just one source of influence on the IL community, IL practitioners may on occasion have goals and methods that diverge from the more sociologically oriented CA literature. In particular, an interest in how language shapes interactional practices continues to inform much IL work in a way that reveals a primary interest in language and linguistic form.

Although there can be differences between CA and IL, there are also many areas of overlap, and in some instances it is not possible to tell—except perhaps by looking at the disciplinary affiliation of the author—whether a particular study is being treated as CA or IL. However, as Ford (2010: 213) suggests:

IL can be distinguished from CA . . . in that research associated with IL is heavily informed by (some would say biased by) linguistic research and terminologies. IL researchers are committed to critiquing and expanding our understanding of language ‘structure’ within Linguistics by treating interactional functions and patterns as foundational. IL scholars attend to relationships between social interaction and recurrent linguistic forms. Over the past decade, IL has . . . also contributed substantially to a developing line of findings regarding the interrelationships between language typology and the structuring of social interaction across languages and communities.

With this passage we thus reaffirm that linguists working on talk-in-interaction, with their particular training, experience and inclinations, have much to contribute to both CA and to Linguistics. Linguists working on conversation bring both expertise in languages spoken around the world and a commitment to taking both a cognitive and social perspective on linguistic forms as shaped by language use.

It is important to remember that neither IL nor CA is monolithic. Recently both disciplines have broadened their foci. CA research can now be said to be interdisciplinary, having multiple interactional domains and using multiple methods (e.g. Browning & Duranti, 2005, on the role of theory and models in the study of interaction and language; Clayman & Heritage, 2002a, on the news interview; Drew & Heritage, 1992b, on talk at work; Enfield & Stivers, 2007, on reference; and Stivers, Enfield & Levinson, 2010, on responses to questions). At the same time, CA is being used as an analytical tool in a range of language-related areas (e.g. CA in medicine (Heritage & Maynard, 2006a; Robinson, 2006c), conversation analysis-for-second-language-acquisition (CA-for-SLA (e.g. Markee, 2000)), and ‘discursive psychology’); and researchers may self-identify with varying degrees of closeness

to one discipline or the other. Lerner (1995) and ten Have (2007) have used the term *applied CA* to capture some of this work.

The diversity within IL is no less great. Some work, such as Fox, et al. (frth.) on the syntax of self-repair, makes use of CA concepts but uses more traditional linguistic methods; such work could be thought of as CA-inspired Linguistics. On the other extreme, some work by practitioners of IL is essentially indistinguishable from work by CA sociologists and anthropologists. Some of the research addresses themes typically favored by those in "Applied Linguistics" (such as second language acquisition), while other studies focus on topics typically not thought of as part of Linguistics at all (such as Ford & Fox, 2010, on laughter).

With all of this research on language from a CA perspective, how have our understandings of language and linguistic practices been informed?

## 2 CA Informing Linguistics

As is true in its contact with other fields, CA has brought to Linguistics fresh perspectives on data, methods, concepts and theoretical understandings. In addition, CA has informed issues particular to Linguistics, especially issues related to form and function.

CA has given Linguistics an enriched view of data and transcription, bringing attention not just to everyday conversation but to the minute details of its moment-by-moment unfolding. Bringing awareness to everyday talk as the "primordial site of sociality" (Schegloff, 1995a) and of language use, CA has deepened the appreciation for the home of many linguistic practices in everyday talk, and of talk-in-interaction as a dynamic and temporally unfolding event, in contrast to the static approaches typical in earlier approaches to language. As we will see below, this shift to a temporally dynamic view has prompted a shift in thinking about linguistic form as static to a view of linguistic patterns as *practices* fitted to particular sequential environments.

The methods of CA that have found a way into Linguistics include single-case analysis and analysis based on collections. While discourse-oriented linguists may have been familiar with the practice of collecting instances of a particular linguistic phenomenon and generalizing over that collection, the CA approach to collections tends to focus on instances which share not only form but also action-type (although we will see below that this focus does not always hold). In addition, bringing a range of prior findings to bear on an analysis of a single instance is perhaps a new method for linguists, especially those grounded in a quantitative approach to form-function mappings. Nonetheless, CA methods and CA styles of argumentation are gaining in use in various linguistic endeavors. CA concepts such as projectability, turn-taking, sequence organization, self-repair, other-initiated repair, and so on, have become topics of inquiry in their own right.

The ethnomethodological understandings underlying CA also now inform work in Linguistics. Grounding analyses in participants' displayed orientations, seeing patterning as arising from normative orientations rather than rules,

understanding each mundane practice as an achievement produced by all parties, viewing all utterances as actions, and, as noted above, describing linguistic practices as situated in the dynamic moment-by-moment unfolding talk are now crucial parts of a growing body of research in Linguistics (e.g. Auer, 2005; Betz, 2008; Blythe, 2009; Bolden, 2006, 2008b, 2009b; Clift, 2001; Couper-Kuhlen, 2001, 2004b; Curl, 2005, 2006; Curl, Local & Walker, 2006; Fox, 2007; Golato, 2000, 2005; Hakulinen & Selting, 2005; Hayashi, 1999, 2001, 2003a, b, 2005a, b; Heinemann, 2008; Helasvuo, 2001a, b, 2003; Hopper & Thompson, 2008; Keevallik, 2003, 2010b; Kim, 1999a, b, 2001; Koshik, 2002a, 2003, 2005b; Laury, 1997; Lindström, 2006; Luke, 1990; Mazeland, 2007; Mazeland & Huiskes, 2001; Mori, 1999a, b, 2006; Morita, 2005, 2008; Ochs & Schieffelin, 1983a, b]; Oh, 2005, 2006; Selting, 1988, 1992, 1996a, 2000, 2001; Sidnell, 2006, 2007b, c; Sorjonen, 2001a, 2002; Steensig, 2001; Stivers, 2005a, 2008; Stivers & Sidnell, 2005; Streeck & Hartge, 1992; Streeck & Knapp, 1992; Takagi, 1999; Uhmman, 1996, 2001; Walker, 2004, 2007; Wu, 2004, 2005).

CA can readily be seen to have influenced long-established commitments that linguists have held dear in the traditional areas of linguistic 'structure'. Linguists have learned from CA research and drawn upon CA methods, insights and findings in their search to more deeply understand the nature of linguistic patterning. Particularly important have been CA research in turn-taking and turn design (Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson, 1974), sequence organization (Schegloff, 2007b), action formation (Schegloff, 1995a), and epistemic authority and rights (Heritage & Raymond, 2005). Research in CA has resulted in linguists actively seeking to re-conceptualize traditionally understood linguistic categories and units in terms of interactional practices and action (e.g. Thompson & Couper-Kuhlen, 2005, on the 'clause'; Thompson, 2002, on 'complementation'; and Hayashi, 2001, on postpositions).

CA has also had a major impact on Linguistics in calling attention to the importance of the organization of embodied and visible behavior in understanding linguistic practices (e.g. C. Goodwin, 1981, 1995a, 2000a; M. H. Goodwin & C. Goodwin, 1986, 1987; Murphy, 2005; Sacks & Schegloff, 2002[1971]; Schegloff, 1984a; Streeck & Hartge, 1992). The finding that interaction involves the juxtaposition of multiple semiotic systems (C. Goodwin, M. H. Goodwin & Olsher, 2002; Mondada, 2006a, 2007b) has been recently brought to bear on linguistic studies of clause combining (Fox, 2001b), joint utterance production (Hayashi, 2003a), laughter (Ford & Fox, 2010) responses to *wh*-questions (Fox & Thompson, 2010), and reference (Eriksson, 2009).

A major theoretical contribution of CA to Linguistics is the perspective that linguistic practices are sequentially-specific actions. That is, a single linguistic form or practice may not have a single function in interaction; rather, its action-import may depend on the precise sequence type in which it is produced. This is a refinement of the understandings of the relationships between form and function from earlier discourse-functional work. This perspective has led linguists in IL to formulate sequence-specific uses for particular linguistic practices (e.g. Curl & Drew, 2008; Ford, Fox & Hellerman, 2004; Couper-Kuhlen, 2001).

CA has also brought very concrete findings to the Linguistics community. A variety of traditional morpho-syntactic issues have been fruitfully investigated from a CA standpoint, including anaphora (e.g. Fox, 1987, 1996), zero anaphora (Oh, 2005, 2006), clause combining (e.g. Ford, 1993; Hopper & Thompson, 2008), constructions such as 'extraposition' (e.g. Couper-Kuhlen & Thompson, 2008), transitivity (e.g. Thompson & Hopper, 2001), reference (e.g. Enfield & Stivers, 2007), word order (Hakulinen & Sorjonen, 2009), complementizers (Tanaka, 2001), constituency (Helasvuo, 2001a,b; Kim, 2001), adpositions (Hayashi, 2001), quotatives (Golato, 2000), demonstratives (Hayashi & Yoon, 2006), increments (Ford, Fox & Thompson, 2002; Horlacher & Stefani, 2007) and negation (e.g. Ford, 2001). Deppermann (2005) has explored how CA can shed light on lexical semantic issues. As we will see below, a range of phonetic-phonological issues has also benefited from an interactional, CA investigation. These include categories of turn-ending prosody (e.g. Local & Kelly, 1986; Local, Kelly & Wells, 1986; Local & Walker, 2004, 2005a, 2008; Local, Wells & Sebba, 1985; Szczepek Reed, 2004, 2006; Wells & Peppé, 1996; Wells & Macfarlane, 1998), cut-off (Jasperson, 1998, 2002), continuing versus restarting (Local, 1992), and high onsets and turn formulation (Couper-Kuhlen, 2001).

Looking toward another subdiscipline within Linguistics, CA has influenced the thinking of a number of linguistic anthropologists and sociocultural linguists. In his field-defining work, Duranti (1997a), for example, includes the study of sequence organization as a central aspect of linguistic anthropology. Browning and Duranti (2005) is an entire interdisciplinary issue of *Discourse Studies* devoted to the role of theory and models in the study of language, interaction and culture. Among the contributors, Levinson (2005) addresses the question of the relationship between the study of culture and the study of interaction as practiced in CA, by Schegloff in particular.

Bucholtz and Hall (2008) position CA within a coalition of approaches that can contribute to a new sociocultural (or "anthropolitical") Linguistics, one that takes seriously the participants' displayed understandings of the interaction and that investigates the detailed organization of talk while maintaining a commitment to ethnographic grounding, the content of discourse, social theory and critical engagement.

### 3 Contributions of Linguistics to CA

Among humans, language plays a central role in the organization of interaction. This is true even for small children (Kidwell, 2005, 2009a) and those adults who have lost much of their linguistic abilities to brain damage (C. Goodwin, 1995a, 2003a; C. Goodwin, M. H. Goodwin & Olsher, 2002). In this sense, then, interaction is thoroughly linguistic. Given this fact, it is appropriate to consider ways in which the field of Linguistics has made significant contributions to our understandings of talk-in-interaction.

As alluded to earlier, interactional linguists have brought an ethnomethodological critique to traditional *a priori* grammatical categories. Most notable, with respect to the sophistication of CA more generally, is the research that has been done on turn-constructional units. Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974) proposed grammar as a primary resource through which speakers and recipients project the up-coming possible completion of turns, such projection being essential to the precision timing in turn transfer. While the authors listed words, phrases, and sentences as constituting units of grammar (702), and while they also noted that intonation was certainly at play as well, they neither called for, nor engaged in, a critical investigation of traditional grammatical categories. This has been the work of linguists such as, for example, Ochs and Schieffelin (1983b) for left-dislocation, Fox (1987) for pronominals and anaphora, Ford (1993) for adverbial clauses (and see section 4 below). Furthermore, until Ford and Thompson (1996) tested the notion of grammatical projection on a small interactional corpus and proposed the inclusion of *pragmatic* or *action* projection, CA researchers commonly employed a rather loose notion of grammar to ground analyses of points of turn completion (e.g. Davidson, 1984). It is now commonplace for CA scholars to include not only reference to grammatical, but also to prosodic and action completion when addressing how ends of units are recognizable to participants in advance of actual turn completion. Schegloff (2007b: 4), for example, discusses TCUs (turn-constructional units) for English as “building blocks out of which turns are fashioned.” He explicitly lists component systems contributing to the recognizability of such units as grammar, phonetics, and “a recognizable action in context.”

Perhaps the most profound contribution of Interactional Linguistics to Conversation Analysis, and to the study of talk-in-interaction more generally, is the cross-linguistic orientation of the field of Linguistics, which embraces the differences in the linguistic resources and practices through which participants in different speech communities construct interaction. Many of the practitioners of IL come from a typological or cross-linguistic background, and this awareness of linguistic differences has been brought into work on interaction in a growing number of languages. While all of the original CA work was conducted on English,<sup>2</sup> there is now published work on a growing range of languages and language families, including indigenous languages of several continents. This research on a variety of languages has refined our understanding of key CA concepts, and deepened our appreciation for the ways in which linguistic resources shape turns and sequences. For example, see Bolden, 2004; Egbert & Vöge, 2008; Enfield & Levinson, 2006; Hachohen & Schegloff, 2006; Hakulinen & Selting, 2005, and contributions therein; Hayashi, 2001; Keevallik, 2008; Kim, 2001; Lindström, 1999; Mazeland & Huiskes, 2001; Sidnell, 2005b, 2009b, and the contributions therein; Sorjonen, 2001a; Enfield & Stivers, 2007; Steensig, 2001; Svennevig, 2001; Tanaka, 1999; Uhlmann, 2001; Wu, 2004.

Although even a cursory review of this literature is outside the scope of the current chapter (but see also Heritage & Stivers, this volume, and other chapters on specific practices), a quick survey will serve to demonstrate the point. The original work on turn-taking suggested an orientation to turn projection from

the very beginning of the turn. More recent work on Japanese (Hayashi, 1994; Tanaka, 2000b) proposes that speakers of Japanese, in part because of quite variable turn-initial syntax, are able to deploy “delayed projectability” (Tanaka, 1999) or a “wait and see” strategy (Fox, Hayashi & Jasperson, 1996).

With regard to sequences, cross-linguistic research has found that linguistic resources shape responsive actions. As noted in Heritage (this volume) preference organization exerts a pressure on the design of responsive actions. Orthogonal to this pattern of preference is an interrelated pattern of preference referred to as type-conformity, which can be found in responses to polar interrogatives. Responses to polar interrogatives in English display either one of the response particles *yes/no*, or no such response particle at all. The former are referred to as *type-conforming*, and the latter as *nonconforming*. Nonconforming responses tend to resist the formulation of the question, while type-conforming responses accept the formulation of the question (Raymond, 2003). However, in some languages the pattern is different; for example, in Finnish type-conforming responses to polar interrogatives often take the form of a repetition of the finite verb from the initiating action, a response-form not found in English (Sorjonen, 2001a). The morpho-syntactic characteristics of a language are also reflected in other types of responsive actions. For example, in Finnish the possibility of forming a sentence without a subject and the relative range of word-order patterns is made use of by the speakers for modifying their stance when responding to assessments by the prior speaker (Hakulinen & Sorjonen, 2009; Sorjonen & Hakulinen, 2009).

While research on languages other than English has refined our understanding of key concepts like turn projection and response design, it has also provided evidence for the belief which is core to much of CA work that the basic ‘mechanisms’ of interaction are shared by all people regardless of ‘culture’ or language. For example, all work to date has found evidence for adjacency pairs as a source of normative orientation, and all languages/cultures so far explored exhibit turn-taking and repair. Thus the basic organizations revealed by early work in CA are seen to be universal organizations, although the details of their workings appear to be shaped by the linguistic resources of the language (cf. Schegloff, 2006a; Sidnell, 2007c, 2009b).

A second important contribution of Interactional Linguistics to CA and the study of interaction is a detailed exploration of the role of phonetics in interaction. While early work in CA sometimes pointed to prosody as important (cf. Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson, 1974), and sound production was the topic of studies such as Jefferson (1974), the skills required for careful phonetic analysis have more recently been brought to bear by linguists (phoneticians and prosodists) focused on interaction.

Work by Local, Kelly, Couper-Kuhlen, Selting, Walker, Auer, Ogden, Reber and others has tremendously deepened our awareness of the level of detail that participants orient to in the sound production in spoken languages. For example, Local and Kelly (1986) have shown that English speakers orient to glottal holds as projecting more to come, while silences lacking glottal holds are heard as not projecting turn continuation. Ogden (2004) has found that speakers of Finnish

orient to the presence/absence of creaky voice at places of possible turn completion. In related work, Local and Walker (2004, 2005b) explore the possibility that phonetic practices may serve to distinguish closely related interactional devices for constructing multi-unit turns (such as rush-throughs vs. abrupt joins). And Local and Walker (2005a) find that the phonetic practices through which the word *so* can be produced in English shape the interpretation of the interactional work of *so*—whether projecting more talk to come or doing turn trail-off.

Just as CA has questioned traditional social categories, Interactional linguists, and discourse-functional syntacticians working with discourse data before them, have questioned the traditional grammatical categories inherited from our structuralist ‘forefathers’. Practitioners of Interactional Linguistics have brought to the study of interaction an enriched understanding of the nature of grammatical categories. Recent work in Linguistics has questioned the traditional view that grammatical categories are static and pre-existent mental structures, suggesting instead that the grammatical categories are emergent; in line with Hopper (1987) and Schegloff (1996d), interactional linguists explicitly began to explore grammatical patterning as a dynamic, temporal instance of “structuration” (Giddens, 1976), (cf. Hopper, 1987; Bybee & Hopper, 2001; Bybee, 2010), reminiscent in organization to the self-organizing, temporal emergence of structure in sand dunes and flight patterns in geese, as discussed in Camazine, et al. (2001: 8):

... a process in which pattern at the global level of a system emerges solely from numerous interactions among the lower level components of the system. Moreover, the rules specifying interactions among the systems components are executed using only local information.

Thus the static existence of such categories as ‘clause’, ‘phrase’, ‘sentence’, ‘noun phrase’ has been replaced with an understanding of categories as emerging from repeated occasions of use. Current uses of linguistic items are shaped by past uses and ‘renew’ immediate alignments among forms and functions. A certain caution with traditional grammatical categories has thus been introduced through Interactional Linguistics.

In an enlivened interplay between Interactional Linguistics and CA, CA provides a way to reframe our understanding of these categories as not just categories of form but also as categories of action. Although it is clear from recent work by scholars in IL that form matters, form matters because of the actions that different forms are used to accomplish. For example, declarative questions in both Finnish and English are used to seek confirmation of understandings already present in the interaction (Sorjonen, 2001a; Raymond, 2010), while polar interrogatives are more likely to be used when a stronger epistemic gradient exists between speaker and recipient. Different grammatical forms are used in English to accomplish offers arising in different interactional environments (Curl, 2006). Thus grammatical categories are seen not just as emergent and shifting but also as grounded fundamentally in action and interaction.

In a somewhat similar vein, recent work with phonetic detail suggests the complexity of grounding phonetic/phonological categories in action (see Walker, this volume, and citations therein). IL phoneticians have raised important meth-

odological questions regarding the nature of categories. Does the presence of an inbreath in what otherwise might be considered an abrupt join suggest a separate practice or just a slightly modified manifestation of the same practice? Interactional linguists bring to bear a heightened awareness of the complexity and gradience of the *etic/emic* distinction and have thus introduced important methodological questions on the notion of 'practice' into the study of talk-in-interaction.

Another contribution from IL is the introduction of quantitative methods in an interactionally-grounded manner. For example, in a recent paper, Stivers, Enfield & Levinson (2010) compare the length of gaps after polar interrogatives in ten languages. Each author 'coded' a set of sequences initiated by polar interrogatives after first doing at least a superficial interactional analysis of the sequence (enough to determine if the response was preferred or dispreferred, or if gaze was present at the TRP, for example). The length of gap was calculated for each sequence in each language, and the distributions of lengths were compared across the ten languages (means for each language were also calculated and compared). This blending of interactional analysis with quantification provides access to research questions, especially those comparing a large set of languages, that would not otherwise have been possible.

## 4 Cross-Fertilization between CA and IL

Although certain research projects clearly reveal the disciplinary concerns of the authors involved, some recent studies are so thoroughly situated in questions of both language and social action that the disciplinary home of the authors is much less transparent to the reader. Here we review just a few of these studies by IL scholars, and explore the ways in which disciplinary boundaries are erased, or at least muted, in them.

Couper-Kuhlen (2001) presents the finding that reason-for-the-call utterances are marked with high pitch onsets. Although there is a focus on pitch, a property that could be seen to be in the 'territory' of Linguistics, the study starts with a particular sequential environment and looks to see how those utterances are produced. The study thus starts with action-sequence and notices what could be thought of as a linguistic correlate. However, "high onset" is not a fixed category within Linguistics and has not been imported directly from prior non-interactional linguistic studies.

Ford (2001) presents evidence that denials are normatively followed by accounts, and thus that the [*denial + account*] format constitutes a "cohesive discourse structure" (62). She also finds evidence that participants orient to a denial without an account as problematic, and thus makes use of the "deviant case" method of CA (Heritage, 1984b). While denials are seen to typically contain negative utterances, Ford shows that not all denials are grammatically negative. The study begins with an action type (denial) and finds that such actions, which are produced in opposition to something said by a prior, are regularly produced in a particular format. Further, the "regularity" of the format is not achieved probabilistically or

statistically, but rather normatively, and participants orient to deviation from the format. While the study observes the use of grammatical negation in many denials, Ford finds that grammatical category does not motivate the study or constrain its methods.

Curl (2006) and Curl and Drew (2008) explore the grammatical forms through which offers and requests, respectively, are accomplished. Curl (2006) finds that offers in English are generally accomplished with three syntactic formats, each specific to a particular sequential environment. Curl and Drew (2008) report on two syntactic formats for requests, and the particular interactional work that each does. Once again the studies begin with action types, in particular sequential environments, and examine the syntactic formats used to perform those action types. Although there is a focus on syntax, the syntactic formats examined do not match *a priori* grammatical categories in Linguistics.

Thompson and Couper-Kuhlen (2005) offer another approach in grounding the linguistic category 'clause' in its primordial interactional home. They argue that the clause is a locus of interaction, in the sense that it is one of the most frequent grammatical formats to which interactants orient in projecting what actions are being done by others' utterances and in acting on these projections. Yet the way in which the clause affords grammatical projectability depends on the nature of the clausal grammatical formats which are available as resources in a given language. They conclude that the evidence suggests that clauses are interactionally warranted, if variably built, formats for social action.

The issue of *reported speech* has attracted a great deal of attention from linguists. Two studies which arrive at complementary conclusions from linguistic and CA perspectives are, respectively, Günthner (1999) and Sidnell (2006).

Svennevig (2008) explores various practices for responding to other-initiations of repair in Norwegian, finding evidence that there is a *preference hierarchy* of response-types. Recipients of such initiations preferentially treat the problem as resulting from hearing. It is only when a repair addressed to a hearing problem does not solve the problem that the recipient of a repair initiation treats the trouble as having resulted from a problem of understanding.

## 5 Challenges Facing IL

It should be clear from the discussion above that linguistic categories pose a range of challenges for all scholars of talk-in-interaction. In general, research on linguistic form and interactional function has struggled with how to approach linguistic form. Which linguistic categories are appropriate for analysis? What role does the linguistic category play in the analysis? Should the analyst find evidence for participant orientation to a linguistic form/category? If so, how? These and related questions have proven challenging for scholars of talk who want to ground their analyses in the orientations of the participants.

It is of course common practice in CA to start with a noticing about some bit of talk rather than with an abstract question about the function of a particular

grammatical category (see Sidnell, this volume). In contrast, the practice in discourse-oriented Linguistics has been generally to start with a grammatical form and ask what function it performs in discourse. Now, are both methods useful for different kinds of projects? Do they yield different kinds of linguistic categories? Are they equally attentive to action? Are other approaches fruitful?

A review of a range of studies in CA reveals that there is no single answer to these questions. Some studies start with action and locate the linguistic forms which serve as vehicles for that action, while other studies start with linguistic form to determine the action achieved with that form. Still other studies appear to work back and forth between the form and the action-function. All of these approaches can yield important insights into talk-in-interaction.

For example, Heritage's work on *oh* starts with a form—the word or particle *oh* in English—but each published installment of the research on this form describes its use in a particular sequential environment (Heritage, 1984a, 1998, 2002d): responses to assessments, responses to inquiry, responses to informing, after other-initiated self-repair, and so on. Although a single function or meaning of *oh* is proposed for all of the environments ('change of state'), the reasoning goes from particular sequential environments to general, abstracted function rather than the reverse (the research on *oh* is discussed by Sidnell, this volume).

However, some CA work has started with a grammatical format, and this approach, too, appears to yield important results. For example, Raymond's work on type-conforming and nonconforming responses explores responses to polar interrogatives in English in all manner of sequence types (Raymond 2003). *Polar interrogatives* (also known as *yes-no interrogatives*) are a grammatical construction in English, marked by striking syntactic patterns (obligatory use of auxiliary, 'subject-aux inversion', etc.). Their form is thus much more complex than the particle *oh*, and, furthermore, it is a traditional category of Linguistics. Although it is well known that polar interrogatives implement first-pair parts, and are used for many different kinds of actions, Raymond's work finds the relevancies mobilized by the construction itself to be crucial in shaping responses. A similar approach is taken with regard to *declarative questions* in Raymond (2010). Thus Raymond's work suggests that at least in some instances the analysis can start with a grammatical form—even something as complex as a grammatical construction, and one recognized by traditional Linguistics—not situated in a particular action environment.

Lerner's work on *increment elicitors* (Lerner, 2004d) suggests another possible approach, which starts with a noticing about a set of forms which are not themselves a single grammatical category but which can all be used to serve a similar interactional function. Increment elicitors are single words which do not generally stand alone (that is, TCUs constructed from one of these items tend to have the use described by Lerner here) and which are used by the recipient of an utterance to initiate repair and to elicit further talk from the original speaker. Many of these items could be identified as 'prepositions' (*about, to*), but others are 'conjunctions' (*and, but*). Increment elicitor is thus an emergent category, grounded in grammatical form but moving beyond a single category, whose existence as a category can

only be found in the interactional work that these forms can accomplish. The category and the function thus bring one another into being.

Of course another approach begins with interactional function and looks to see what kinds of grammatical forms are drawn on for those functions. Curl (2006) takes this approach to offers and their syntactic forms in different sequential environments, as do Curl and Drew (2008) with requests. This type of analysis is perhaps the least controversial in that the analysis begins with an agreed-upon action environment and seeks to find grammatical 'vehicles' for those actions. The grammatical categories that emerge from this kind of analysis again may not resemble any *a priori* linguistic categories (e.g. offers with *would you like*). Similarly, Drew and Holt (1998) and Heinemann and Traverso (2009) examine the forms used in lodging complaints in interaction.

It thus appears that multiple approaches to the relationship of grammatical category and interactional function have to date proven fruitful in work on interaction. There is no single answer to the questions raised above with regard to linguistic categories; what we see in fact is that all of the studies described above provide extensive evidence and argumentation concerning participants' orientation to the form/category as doing the work it is claimed to do.

Future scholars working in the field of IL will inevitably face conceptual and methodological challenges of the sort outlined above. But they also stand to gain immense rewards by exploring large areas of virtually uncharted terrain in the field of language and interaction. Four of these areas can be singled out for special mention—ones which, based on current research, hold the promise of rich linguistic findings.

Conversation analysts have recently begun to look beyond the well-known organizational systems governing turn-taking, repair, and sequence structure to considering how participants stake out and negotiate domains of knowledge and experience in the conduct of conversation (Heritage & Raymond, 2005; Raymond & Heritage, 2006; Heritage, 2011c). What is emerging from this growing body of research is that linguistic form (e.g. presence or absence of a modal verb, affirmative vs. negative polarity, interrogative vs. declarative syntax, use of a tag, choice of response particle, presence of repetition, etc.) in specified sequential positions is crucial in participants' staking out a stronger vs. weaker *epistemic* stance and in negotiating rights to knowledge (Raymond, 2003; Stivers, 2005a; Heritage & Raymond, 2012). One of the future challenges for interactional linguists will be to work out how linguistic form also contributes to staking out *affective* stance and negotiating rights to experience.

Related to domains of knowledge and affectivity is the increasingly pressing question of action formation. How do participants design and produce TCUs to be recognizable as actions of a particular type? In the past, CA has tended to stress *position*: an action is recognizable by virtue of its sequential location (see, for example, Schegloff, 1984b). The way a TCU is treated in the next turn establishes what participants take that action to be. But increasingly, attention is shifting to *composition*: which lexical, morpho-syntactic, phonetic, prosodic and embodied features are present in a turn and how they 'lamine' onto epistemic status in a

given sequential location in order to constitute a recognizable action type (Heritage, 2012b). Clearly there is major work to be done here and linguists are admirably well suited to do it.

Moving from action to inter-action, a third big growth area for IL involves what Schegloff (1996d) has called *positionally sensitive grammars*. The idea is that for any one specifiable sequential position, there is a restricted set of forms that can be used to carry out the relevant action in that slot. Together these forms constitute a context-dependent ‘grammar’ for that position. There is no guarantee, however, that the same form will have the same meaning potential in different sequential locations. Positionally sensitive grammar entails the understanding that speakers choose particular forms by reference to where they are located sequentially in conversational structure. As Fox, et al. (frth.) show, the notion of positionally sensitive grammar can be profitably applied to the age-old linguistic problem of *ellipsis*: minimal forms are not ‘elliptical’ versions of fuller forms, but both are context-sensitive alternatives, each with its own interactional task in specifiable sequences and positions. Positionally sensitive grammar is thus a powerful notion and one that will repay application to other cases of apparent ‘free’ alternation.

Future scholars will find many things to discover in these and other areas of intersection between language and interaction. Yet if they work with videotaped data of face-to-face interaction, they will also inevitably find themselves confronted with the need to situate language vis-à-vis other semiotic systems in interaction. The more attention is paid to embodied and visible dimensions of interaction, the more evident it becomes that interaction is by no means dependent on language. In fact, as Levinson (2006b) stresses, interaction can occur wholly independently of language.

Thus, over and above methodological and substantive questions in future work, it will fall on all researchers in talk-in-interaction to situate language in the semiotically rich framework of interaction in such a way that it is not unduly prioritized, but is at the same time acknowledged to be, where present, a complex and immensely rich resource for the conduct of conversation that cannot, indeed must not, be overlooked.

## 6 Conclusions

Although CA and Linguistics have come to the study of language from quite distinct directions—CA having arisen from an ethnomethodological interest in how humans construct social order and Linguistics having begun life as a discipline that concerns itself with regularities in the patterning of linguistic form—the last three decades have seen a growing interest on the part of linguists in the details of talk as interaction, and a corresponding increase in the interest on the part of CA practitioners in the ways that linguistic resources shape interactional practices. This increasing cross-fertilization has led to a striking body of literature with shared assumptions, and common goals, as all of the practitioners

come to appreciate the significance of linguistic form in human social interaction, and grasp its deeply dynamic, situated and reflexive nature.

## NOTES

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We are grateful to the editors for their valuable feedback; any infelicities that remain are our responsibility.

- 1 Parenthetical citations in this chapter, when related to the historical evolution of the relationship between CA and Linguistics, are presented in chronological (as opposed to alphabetical) order to better illustrate that historical progression.
- 2 With the exception of Moerman's work on Thai; see Moerman (1977).