

## University of Groningen

### Scopes of reciprocity

Koole, Tom; Gosen, Myrte

*Published in:*  
Journal of Pragmatics

*DOI:*  
[10.1016/j.pragma.2024.01.004](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2024.01.004)

**IMPORTANT NOTE: You are advised to consult the publisher's version (publisher's PDF) if you wish to cite from it. Please check the document version below.**

*Document Version*  
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

*Publication date:*  
2024

[Link to publication in University of Groningen/UMCG research database](#)

*Citation for published version (APA):*

Koole, T., & Gosen, M. (2024). Scopes of reciprocity: An organization of responses to informings. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 222, 25-39. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2024.01.004>

#### Copyright

Other than for strictly personal use, it is not permitted to download or to forward/distribute the text or part of it without the consent of the author(s) and/or copyright holder(s), unless the work is under an open content license (like Creative Commons).

The publication may also be distributed here under the terms of Article 25fa of the Dutch Copyright Act, indicated by the "Taverne" license. More information can be found on the University of Groningen website: <https://www.rug.nl/library/open-access/self-archiving-pure/taverne-amendment>.

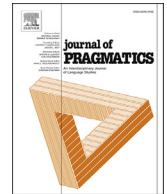
#### Take-down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

*Downloaded from the University of Groningen/UMCG research database (Pure): <http://www.rug.nl/research/portal>. For technical reasons the number of authors shown on this cover page is limited to 10 maximum.*

Contents lists available at [ScienceDirect](https://www.sciencedirect.com)

## Journal of Pragmatics

journal homepage: [www.elsevier.com/locate/pragma](http://www.elsevier.com/locate/pragma)

## Scopes of reciprocity: An organization of responses to informings

Tom Koole <sup>a, b, \*</sup>, Myrte N. Gosen <sup>a</sup><sup>a</sup> University of Groningen, The Netherlands<sup>b</sup> University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa

## ARTICLE INFO

## Article history:

Received 30 June 2023

Received in revised form 12 January 2024

Accepted 20 January 2024

Available online 9 February 2024

## Keywords:

Conversation analysis

Informing

Receipt practices

Multi-modality

Intersubjectivity

Informedness

## ABSTRACT

This paper is concerned with the organization of responses to informings. Using Conversation Analysis, it will show that different receipting practices, including both embodied and vocal ones, display differences in scope in response to informings. With these differences in scope, recipients of informings can signal to the informing party that they receipted either the just preceding part of the informing or the entire informing. The positions of these practices follow a typology of four dimensions: embodied vs. vocal, token vs. phrasal, semantically empty vs. semantically filled and rising vs. falling intonation. When an informing is receipted by different practices of these pairs, the first type will be used for small-scope reciprocity while the second type will be used for large scope. This organization of receipting practices illustrates how participants in informing sequences can negotiate the completeness of the informing and the state of informedness of the recipient.

© 2024 Published by Elsevier B.V.

## 1. Introduction

This paper is concerned with the organization of responses to informings such as news reports, stories, and multi-unit turn explanations. With regard to such informings, [Heritage \(1984a\)](#) observed that “the informed or uninformed status of recipients is commonly the object of active negotiation and determination throughout the course of the informing itself” (p. 304). In this paper we analyze multi-unit turn explanations in Dutch and propose aspects of an organization of response tokens that is designed to deal with recipients' statuses of relative informedness or uninformedness in these explanations. This organization is concerned in particular with relative differences in scope and provides a solution to – as [Stivers \(2004\)](#) has phrased it – “the interactional problem facing speakers whose turns are responsive not only to the immediately preceding unit of talk but to a larger course of action of which it is part” (p. 269). When a listener uses a particle such as ‘hm’ to do reciprocity while at same time inviting the speaker to carry on, this implies that the scope of his reciprocity is limited to the talk immediately preceding the particle. When, alternatively, a token is used to indicate reciprocity as well as the perceived end of an activity or stretch of talk, this token indicates reciprocity of the entire activity or stretch of talk. In other words, response tokens that are used to contribute to the closing of an informing have a larger scope of reciprocity than tokens that are used as continuers. In proposing this organization, we will move beyond the often used notion of response tokens as minimal responses ([Gardner, 2001](#); [Mazeland, 1990](#)) to include phrasal and “unrelated” ([Thompson et al., 2015](#): 128; see also

\* Corresponding author.

E-mail address: [tom.koole@rug.nl](mailto:tom.koole@rug.nl) (T. Koole).

Seuren et al., 2018) full clause responses such as formulations (Heritage and Watson, 1979) and bodily activities such as head nods (Stivers, 2008; Whitehead, 2011). We have found that the minimal responses and the phrasal and the embodied ones are all elements in an organization of reciprocity in informing activities with the purpose of establishing intersubjectivity among the participants on the state of (in)completeness of the information delivery and the state of informedness of the recipient.

### 1.1. Reciprocity and understanding

The machinery of interaction offers two systematic ways to do reciprocity. One is the production of a 'next turn': in each turn of talk we show our interlocutor aspects of how we understand his or her former turn (Heritage, 1984b; Jefferson, 1978; Schegloff, 1992; Sidnell, 2014). A second procedure, and the one that this paper is concerned with, is the set of practices that specialize in doing reciprocity, sometimes called 'backchannel' elements (Duncan and Fiske, 1977; Yngve, 1970). These include single-word response particles such as 'yes', 'hm' and 'oh' (Gardner, 2001; Sorjonen, 2001b), full clause responses such as formulations (Heritage and Watson, 1979), turn completions (Lerner, 1991), and bodily activities such as head nods (Stivers, 2008; Whitehead, 2011; Muntigl et al., 2012; Svinhufvud, 2016; Helmer et al., 2021; De Stefani, 2021).

With respect to the particles, conversation analysts (Jefferson, 1984; Schegloff, 1982) and other interaction researchers (Yngve, 1970) have noted that a variety of particles exists such as 'uh huh', 'mm mh' and 'yeah' and have wondered about a possible orderliness in the use that is made of this variety. Schegloff (1982) has suggested that "the availability of a range of tokens may matter less for the difference of meaning or usage between them [ ] than for the possibility thereby allowed of varying the composition of a series of them" (p. 85). He suggested that a repeated use of the same token may "hint incipient disinterest", while variation may mark "a baseline of interest" (p. 85). Jefferson (1984) has argued that "'mm mh' exhibits 'passive reciprocity'" while "'yeah' is used as recipient-so-far is moving into speakership" (p. 206). Indeed, Mazeland (1990) found similar turn-taking behaviour of the Dutch receipt particles 'mhm' and 'ja/nee' (yes, yeah/no). This paper argues that this variety of response tokens, including phrasal and embodied tokens, is used in an organization of receiving informings.

Research so far on response practices indicates that the retrospective work of reciprocity tokens (Beach, 1993) in informings can be characterized in terms of three different dimensions.

- (1) they target different *objects* and different domains of intersubjectivity (Sidnell, 2014). Mazeland (1990) for example found in medical consultations that "the selection of a different response-type seems to correlate with the kind of activity speaker accomplishes in prior turn" (p. 275). Stivers (2008) reports that in response to narratives, vocal receipt tokens target chronological elements of the narrative while head nods respond to markers of affective stance, and Thompson et al. note that freestanding 'oh's' not only receipt new information but also "display a cognitive-affective stance towards the informing" (2015: 65).
- (2) they differ in terms of *stance*, i.e. they make weaker and stronger claims to informedness or understanding. Although little research exists on this issue (but see Müller, 1996) there can be no doubt that for example 'yes of course' makes a stronger claim to understanding than 'hmm' (cf. Heritage and Raymond, 2012 on epistemic stance in the formulation of questions). Moreover, Seuren et al. (2016) show that interactants can distinguish between being newly informed (Dutch 'oh'+declarative) and now-remembering (Dutch 'oh ja'+declarative).
- (3) and the focus of the present paper, they differ in *scope*, i.e. reciprocity of smaller, still incomplete, or larger, possibly complete, units of informing talk. In a study of academic advising sessions, Guthrie found that "okay comes following an utterance which is in some way 'more complete' than the utterances which an mmhmm follows" (1997: 398), Koole (2010) found a difference in student responses to teacher explanations between 'hm' (I understand the immediately prior turn-constructive unit) and 'oh' (I understand the entire explanation), Betz and Deppermann (2021) and Mondada and Sorjonen (2021) discussed the scopes of the response particle 'okay' in different languages and found that the particle "can receipt information as understood and sufficient" but "can also mark prior information as [ ] not yet complete" (Betz and Deppermann, 2021: 56).

An important message of the research so far is that tokens of reciprocity such as 'yes', 'hmm' and head nods can be called multi-purpose since they work in different domains of interaction management at the same time. For example, Schegloff (1982) famously argued that a token such as 'uh huh', by coming in an interactional slot where repair could have been initiated, implicitly conveys that the listener has had no problem understanding the talk preceding it. Schegloff however also argued that 'uh huh' works as a continuer. Another well-known example in CA research is Heritage (1984a) who analyzed 'oh' from an intersubjectivity perspective as a 'change-of state token', and from an interaction management perspective as closure implicative. Thus, from a participant perspective, it does not make sense to say that Schegloff's 'uh huh' is either a continuer or that it is a token of understanding, or to say that 'oh' is either a change-of-state token or a closing device, since they are both.

In our analysis we have taken the intersubjectivity perspective by analyzing how recipients of informings signal their state of informedness to the informing party. In taking this perspective, we stand on the shoulders of more colleagues than can be acknowledged here. In particular Heritage (1984a) presented some preliminary observations which our analysis can be seen as elaborating. Heritage (1984a) noted that oh-receipts of informings "(1) occur in response to *complete* chunks of information and (2) are produced at points at which the informings are *possibly complete*" (p. 301; our highlighting) and that a yeah-receipt "seems designed to propose that [the] informing is *not yet possibly complete*" (p. 302; our highlighting). Indeed, we

will argue in this paper that some receipt practices are used in positions where an informing is hearably incomplete while others are used to receipt the complete informing. By receipting the complete informing, including the part that was already receipted by an earlier receipt practice, the latter set of practices have a larger scope-of-recipienty than the former. The use of a small-scope practice in a large-scope position (i.e. where an informing is possibly complete) led Jefferson (1984) to the observation that “‘Mm hm’ is strikingly misfitted to an announcement of topical completion” (p. 210), an issue we will address in the ‘negotiation of completeness’ section of the analysis. Small-scope receipt practices are used to indicate that the recipient of the informing is not yet fully informed, while large-scope practices are used to signal that the recipient is sufficiently informed ‘for all practical purposes’.

With the present systematic analysis of different practices of recipienty, we aim to contribute to the procedural view of understanding and intersubjectivity that was proposed by Schutz (1962) and Garfinkel (1967). In this view, understanding is not an individual and mental phenomenon but a social phenomenon that is established between participants in a social activity: participants treat each other and themselves as understanding well enough or being well enough informed (Heritage, 1984a) to proceed with their common activity. By extension, shared understanding “is [ ] an operation rather than a common intersection of overlapping sets” (Garfinkel, 1967, p. 30). The adequacy of participants’ understanding is what Garfinkel (1967) called an “adequacy for [ ] practical purposes” (p. 8) of their common enterprise which, Schegloff (1992) added, “is assessed not against some general criterion of meaning or efficacy [ ], and not by ‘external’ analysts, but by the parties themselves” (p. 1338). To achieve this work of intersubjectivity, participants have resources such as the distinction between claims and demonstrations of understanding (Sacks, 1992II, p. 253), recognizable positions in which understanding can be done (Sacks, 1992II, p. 426), the systematic methods of ‘next turn’ and ‘practices that specialize in doing recipienty’, we discussed above, the vocal and embodied practices on which these methods rely and indeed the organization of receipting informings that we propose in this paper. We will thus use the terms understanding, informedness and recipienty to refer to observable orientations of participants.

## 2. Data and method

For the analysis presented here, all data are in Dutch and were analyzed using the method of Conversation Analysis (Sidnell and Stivers, 2013). We worked with four different data-sets that have as a common feature that they involve two parties, consisting of one or two participants, one of which (K+) (Heritage, 2012) is knowledgeable on a topic that the other party (K-) seeks knowledge about, while information is transferred from the K+ party to the K- party (cf. Thompson et al., 2015: 51), what Couper-Kuhlen called “epistemically driven sequences” (2021: 158). Like the informings in Betz and Deppermann’s (2021) study of ‘okay’, the sharing of information can be a piece of news, a reporting, or a telling, but our data consist mainly of explanations.

The data sets are (i) face-to-face card game explanations in which, prior to playing a new card game, one or two of a group of friends or family members explain the rules of the game to the others, (ii) face-to-face mathematics lessons in which a teacher in a dyadic encounter helps an individual student who has a problem with an assignment (data also used for Koole, 2010, 2012a, b), (iii) telephone data of a call-centre on retirement pension issues (data also used for Nell et al., 2015), and (iv) face-to-face consultations on house-loans between bank employees and prospective house buyers (data also used for Herijgers, 2018; Herijgers and van Charldorp, 2021). In terms of the distinction that Thompson et al. (2015) make between ‘volunteered’ and ‘question-elicited’ informings, our focus-sequences are best characterized as question-elicited. The mathematics (ii) and pension (iii) data indeed start with a question from the information-seeking party, and although the game (i) and house loan (iv) informings do not always respond to a there-and-then question, the participants have come together because the K- party seeks information from the K+ party, either because they want to play a new game or because they want to buy a house.

The multi-unit turn is not the sole practice used in our data for sharing of information. Peräkylä (1995) distinguished between the ‘interview format’ in which the informing party informs the recipient by asking known-answer-questions that strongly project their answers (cf. Koole, 2010) and the ‘information delivery format’ (Peräkylä, 1995) in which the informing is done in a multi-unit turn. Also in our data sets we see both practices, yet, we have limited our present analysis to informings in the multi-unit turn format. This format was found in all four data-sets which allowed comparison across datasets.

Thus, the analysis below of the scopes of recipienty tokens is based on those parts in the four data-sets in which the sharing of information is organized according to the turn-organization that Houtkoop and Mazeland (1985) have characterized as a ‘discourse unit’ in which a primary speaker (in our data K+) produces a multi-unit turn that may be interrupted by the addressee as a secondary speaker (the recipient actions of K-) under the condition that subsequently the turn is yielded again to the primary speaker (see also Ford, 2004). The party producing the multi-unit informing (MUI) is expected to continue until a turn-constructural unit has been produced which marks the possible completion of the informing. This may be a prosodic marking such as falling unit-final intonation, a semantic marking such as the second part of an if-then structure, or a pragmatic marking such as a possibly complete answer to a prior question, or combinations thereof. In the analyses below we will address this turn-organization more thoroughly.

**Table 1**  
Overview of the data.

Data set	Video/Audio	Number of interactions	Number of multi-unit informings (MUIs)	Length of interactions
Card game explanations	Video	3	21	15–34 min.
Mathematics lessons	Video	10	10	14 s - 5 min.
Call-centre on pension issues	Audio	12	12	1–12 min.
House-loan consultations	Video	5	16	22–82 min.

Our focus on MUIs characterizes our study as a collection study (Clift and Raymond, 2018; Ten Have, 2007). As shown in Table 1, we collected between 10 and 21 informings in MUI-format from each of our four data-sets and submitted these to a comparative analysis in which we looked primarily at the positioning of different receipt practice types relative to the MUIs. To differentiate between different practices, we relied on the difference between lexical items such as 'ja' (yes), 'hm' and 'okay' (also used in Dutch) and design features such as prosody and the syntactic design of phrasal and clausal tokens. For head nods, we differentiated for trajectory (shallow vs. deep), number (single vs. multiple) (cf. Muntigl et al., 2012) and direction (down-up vs. up-down) (cf. Aoki, 2011 on speaker head nods; Helmer et al., 2021). For the positions of practices relative to a MUI we distinguished between positions where the MUI is recognizably incomplete and positions where the MUI is possibly complete (Heritage, 1984a; Houtkoop and Mazeland, 1985; Sacks et al., 1974).

### 3. Analysis

This analysis section deals with the use of receipt practices to indicate scopes of receipt: small scope practices signaling receipt of the immediately prior part – often the immediately prior turn-constructive unit (Sacks et al., 1974) – of the informing, and large scope practices signaling receipt of the entire informing. The section consists of two sections. In part 1, we will show that different reciprocity practices in our collection of MUIs can have different scopes of reciprocity and show participants' orientations to this positioning. In part 2, we will formulate the gist of this positioning by proposing a systematic organization of reciprocity practices.

#### 3.1. Part 1: receipt practices and scopes

##### 3.1.1. Small and large scope receipt practices

The first data excerpt is taken from the card game corpus. In this excerpt, a daughter (D) explains the rules of a card game to her parents (F and M). Preceding this extract, she explained the features of a couple of cards before she moves into explaining the features of 'this card' (line 265). She produces a multi-unit turn (265–272) to explain the meaning of one particular card. It will be shown that the father (F) uses different practices to indicate a small-scope receipt (shallow nods) and a large-scope receipt (okay + formulation).

Excerpt 1. CARD GAMES Bever 4 (for transcription conventions, see below)

```

265 D: als je +$$*deze kaart trekt,+
      when you pull this card
      d: +points at card on the table+
      d: $gazes at cards ----->
      f: %gazes at cards ((until line 276))
      m: *gazes at cards ((until line 276))
266 (0.5)
267 D: dan mag daarna nog een kaart van de$
      then you may next uh pull another card from the
      d: -----> $
268 D: $aflegstapel eh trekken,
      throw-away-pile
      d: $gazes at M ----->
269 D: #als die leuk is dan eh leg je 'm neer,
      when it is good then uh you put it down
      f: → #↑↓ ↑↓ -----> ((until
      line 273))
270 D: $en als die niet $leuk is >dan leg je 'm weg,
      and when it's not good then you put it away
      d: →$gazes at cards $gazes at M ----->
271 D: mag je nog eentje< pakken,
      ((then)) you may take another one
272 D: en kijken of je die wel neer wil leggen $of niet.
      and see if you do want to put that one down or not.
      d: →$gazes at cards

```

273 M: +\$okay. + #  
 m: +sits straight+  
 d: \$gazes at F ---->  
 f: ----->#  
 274 F: → >okay mag je twee kaarten extra pakken  
*okay ((then)) you may pull two extra cards*  
 275 F en kijken\$.<  
*and look.*  
 d: ----->\$  
 276 D: \$ja.  
*yes*  
 d: \$gazes at cards

This turn consists of six syntactic and prosodic units, the first five ending with rising intonation (265, 268, 269, 270, 271) and the sixth ending with falling intonation (272). In response to the second unit, the father starts to produce a series of shallow nods (indicated as single arrows for upward ↑ and downward ↓ head movement) indicating his receipt of the first two units and his continued receipt of the further four. After the multi-unit explanation is complete, he produces an okay + formulation (274–5), realized as a single intonation unit, whose content shows that it receipts the entire explanation of the card including the parts that were already receipted by the shallow nods. Thus, the shallow nods indicate small-scope receipt of the just prior parts of the informing while the okay + formulation is used for large-scope receipt of all six units.

Note that throughout this excerpt, the parents keep their gaze on the table with cards and do not have eye contact with the daughter although the daughter's head movements from the cards (265–7) to the mother (268) and back (272) and then to the father (273) are within the peripheral view of both parents. Thus, the father's nodding, which starts after the second TCU (268) while the daughter gazes at mother, is not triggered by what Bavelas et al. (2002) called a 'gaze window' on the part of the daughter. Note also that the mother too produces an 'okay' - in combination with straightening her back - in a large scope position (273), i.e. after the sixth TCU with falling intonation.

In excerpt 2 from the math lessons corpus we see a similar division of labour between 'hmm' for small-scope and oh + formulation for large scope reciprocity. Immediately prior to this excerpt, student Henna (H) has called the teacher (T) and now asks him a question in lines 1 to 2. The question is concerned with an assignment on line graphs. The assignment speaks of measuring in 'quarters of an hour' while the coordinate system in which the graph is drawn displays on its horizontal axis the numbers 1 to 5. It seems that Henna would have expected a numbering running from 15 to 75. The teacher answers her question by producing a multi-unit informing from lines 6 to 15.

#### Excerpt 2. MATH Henna ZO-111199

1 H: +ik snap het niet, staat %een kwartier,  
*I don't get it, says quarter of an hour,*  
 h: +gazes at book ----->  
 t: %gazes at book - ->  
 2 H: kwartier geef je toch +aan met ↑vijftien?  
*isn't a quarter indicated as fifteen?*  
 h: ----->+gazes at teacher - ->  
 3 % (0.7)  
 t: - ->%gazes at Henna ----->  
 4 T: ja, maar  
*yes, but*  
 5 (1.0)%  
 t: - - ->%  
 6 T: %e:h je moet +dus  
*u:h you should*  
 t: %gazes at book ----->  
 h: +gazes at book - ->  
 7 T: als hier een een &vijf ↑staat,  
*if here it says five*  
 t: &points in book  
 8 H: → hmm,  
*hmm*  
 9 T: moet je dus even kijken.  
*then you should have a look.*  
 10 >°dan is het niet°< vijf minuten  
*then it's not five minutes*  
 11 maar moet je zeggen vijf kwartier. +  
*but you should say five quarters*  
 h: -----> +  
 12 +(0.6)  
 h: +gazes at T- - ->  
 13 H: → oh vijf keer vijftien doe je dan.  
*oh five times fifteen is what you do*  
 14 T: %ja.  
*yes.*  
 t: %gazes at Henna - - ->

15 H: be↑dankt. +%  
 thanks.  
 h: ----->+  
 t: ----->%

In response to this multi-unit informing, we see the student do reciprocity on two different occasions. The first time is in line 8 where she says “hmhm” at a position relative to the multi-unit turn where the teacher has produced the first part of an *als-dan* (if-then) construction: “if here it says five” (7). At this position, the multi-unit turn is recognizably incomplete since the if-part projects a then-part. The second time is in line 13 where she says “oh five times fifteen is what you do”. At this position, the multi-unit turn is possibly complete since the teacher has produced the then-part of the if-then construction in lines 10–11. As in excerpt 1, Hennia’s receipt tokens are not triggered by the teacher’s gaze which is directed to the book on the table from the start of his explanation in line 6 until his confirmation in line 14 of Hennia’s formulation. The use of ‘oh’ in combination with a formulation is similar to what we have observed in the previous excerpt concerning ‘okay’ plus a formulation. Both ‘oh’ and ‘okay’ precede a demonstration of understanding of the entire explanation. The ‘oh’ is delivered after an explanation elicited by a question of the student and underlines a change of state more explicitly than the ‘okay’ that is delivered after a general consolidation of card game rules, that was not elicited by a K- question. This seems to be in line with previous studies on ‘okay’ showing that this marks a response as sufficient.

We have found that the two response tokens in this excerpt could not have been reversed: ‘hmhm’ is a token in Dutch that typically occurs in positions where the MUI is recognizably incomplete, while the majority of ‘oh’s’ - which in Dutch behaves largely equivalently to Heritage’ (1984a) analysis of English oh (Seuren, 2019) – and formulations (Heritage and Watson, 1979) occur at positions of possible completeness. In terms of scopes of reciprocity, ‘hmhm’ has a small scope and does reciprocity of the immediately prior part of the MUI, while formulations have a large scope and do reciprocity of the entire MUI (cf. Mondada and Sorjonen, 2021 on the scopes of ‘okay’).

In line with what we argued above, we also see that in excerpt 2, “hmhm” does more than only receipt the if-part of the MUI. The “hmhm” is preceded by the teacher’s pointing to the book, probably, but not visible in the video, to the ‘5’ in the coordinate system of the graph. This means that “hmhm” not only does a good-enough-understanding of the teacher’s explanation-so-far but also acknowledges the indexed referent: the 5 in the coordinate system.

A third illustration of the use of reciprocity practices with different scopes, involving yet other receipt practices than in excerpts (1) and (2), is excerpt (3) from the pension call-centre corpus. The caller (C) has a question for the call-taker (CT) about a letter he received from his pension organization which states something about the right of his ex-partner to a partner-pension. They have been discussing this for quite a bit, when the caller asks a declarative clarification question in line 32. When the multi-unit turn proceeds, the caller uses the lexical element ‘ja’ in both his small-scope as well as in his large-scope practices. In small-scope the element stands on its own, while in large-scope the ‘ja’ is used multiple times and in combination with ‘ah’, similar to the ‘oh’ in excerpt 2.

### Excerpt 3. PENSION TG031

32 C: ja ↑ik re- recht geven?  
 yes i ((am going to)) give ((her)) the ri- right?  
 33 CT: nee [dat gaat automatisch.  
 no that is automatic.  
 34 C: [of eh  
 or uh  
 35 CT: dat is dan omdat u gescheiden bent,  
 that is because you are divorced,  
 36 en dan gaat u-  
 and then you go-  
 37 naar uw ex-partner gaat het bijzonder partnerpensioen.  
 the special partner pension goes to your ex-partner.  
 38 en dat is het pensioen wat er is opgebouwd  
 and that is the pension that has been built up  
 39 eh ja vanaf indiensttreding  
 uh yes from the start of the employment  
 40 tot de scheidingsdatum,  
 to the date of divorce,  
 41 C: → °ja,°  
 yes,  
 42 CT: en dat gaat in mocht u komen te overlijden  
 and that starts in case you should die  
 43 en dat is dan eh voor a. saffir.  
 and then that is uh for a. saffir.  
 44 C: → a:h ja ja ja.  
 a:h yes yes yes.

In this excerpt, we see an answer from the call-taker that, like in the other excerpts, is organized as a multi-unit turn (33–43). In response to this answer, we see the caller produce a single “ja” in line 41 and “ah ja ja ja” in line 44. In line 39 the multi-unit turn is hearably incomplete as a result of the call-taker’s rising final intonation in line 40 that indicates that the same speaker is going to continue. In contrast, in line 44 the MUI has come to a possible completion point: the answer is

hearable as a complete answer to the question in line 32, it reaches a syntactic completion point in line 43, and the final intonation is falling (Ford and Thompson, 1996; Selting, 1995).

Again we claim that the reciprocity tokens in lines 41 and 44 could not be reversed. As we shall also see below (excerpt 5), large-scope “ja” is produced with falling intonation while the small-scope “ja” in line 41 is produced with rising intonation. A use in line 44 of a small-scope practice – either the re-use of an already used practice or the use of a practice that can only be used for small-scope receipt – would treat the MUI as still incomplete. Therefore, the caller has to use a receipt practice that is not only different from the prior one, but that is systematically different from it. The use of the change-of-state token “ah” followed by multiple ‘ja’s’ serves this purpose. And as with excerpts (1) and (2), the different practices have different scopes of reciprocity: while the caller’s “ja” in line 41 does good-enough-understanding of the answer-so-far, the “ah ja ja ja” by virtue of recognizing the answer’s completeness, receipts not just the second part of the answer but the entire answer. Thus, the caller uses “ja” with a smaller scope than “ah ja ja ja”, which seems to confirm Stivers’ (2004) observation that “multiple sayings are a resource that speakers have for displaying themselves to be dealing with an entire course of action and not only the just prior unit of talk” (p. 296).

In our data, we see a particular positioning of receipt practices. Some practices are used only for small-scope reciprocity while others are used only for large-scope reciprocity. A third set of practices at first sight seems to be useable for both, yet, as we shall see, the combination of practices into multimodal gestalts (Mondada, 2014, 2018) still differentiates a lexical element with rising intonation for small-scope purposes from the same element with falling intonation for large scope.

Practices in our Dutch corpora that are only used for small-scope reciprocity are ‘hmhm’ (see excerpt 2) and series of multiple shallow nods (excerpt 1). Dutch ‘hm’/‘hmhm’ seems to behave similarly to US English ‘uh huh’ as it was analysed by Schegloff (1982). In Dutch social interaction this token is most frequently produced with closed lips as opposed to the open lips of ‘uh huh’, but open-lip instances are also found in Dutch – as closed-lips ones (Jefferson, 1984: ‘Mm hm’) in US English. It occurs in our data as single ‘hm’ or double ‘hmhm’, both with slightly rising and slightly falling intonation but all in small scope positions. Excerpt 4 from the house loan corpus illustrates both of these small-scope practices produced by the clients (C1 and C2) in response to the advisor (A). Prior to this excerpt, A has asked the clients if they know what a ‘linear mortgage’ is and one of them has answered that he would like A to tell them: “just tell us.”

#### Excerpt 4. HOUSE LOAN, ET34

```

1  A:      +*ik eh ik teken hem meestal dat eh werkt vaak wat eh
           I uh I usually draw it that works mostly uh
           a:      +gazes down on paper ----->
           a:      #draws ----->
2  A:      het handigste (.) eh bij een lineaire hypotheek,
           the best          uh with a linear mortgage,
           c1:      %↓↓          ↑          %
           c2:      ×↓↓          ↑          ×
3  A:      × (.) eh uitgaande van
           uh based on
           c2:      ×↓↑----->
4  A:      dertig jaar zeggen we >eigenlijk< van die hypotheek, (.)
           thirty years we actually say we will divide that mortgage
5  A:      gaan we eigenlijk verdelen in driehonderdzesstig stukjes
           actually in three hundred and sixty pieces
6  A:      [#dus driehonderdzesstig maanden, #
           so three hundred and sixty months
           a:      ----->#
           c1:      %↓          ↑
7  C1: →  [°hm°.
8  C1: →  °hmhm°,
9  A:      %en iedere maand +betaal je
           and every month you pay
           a:      ----->+gazes to clients
           c1:      %↓↑----->
10 A:      één >driehonderdzesstigste stukje<
           one piece of the three hundred and sixty
11 van de hypotheek [terug%, dus na *dertig jaar, (.)
           of the mortgage back, so after thirty years,
           c1:      ----->%↓↑          %
           c1:      *gazes up at A
12 C2: →  [hm,
13 A:      %heb je hem (.) volledig afgelost.%
           you have repaid it in full.
           c1:      %↓↑↑↑          %
14 A:      #en iedere maand
           and so every month
           a:      #draws----->
15 °betaal je dus +precies hetzelfde bedrag.
           you pay exactly the same amount.
           a:      +gazes down on paper
           c2:      ----->×

```

16 (0.7)  
 17 A: en daar bovenop ↑betaal je de  
*and on top of that you pay the*  
 18 rente over het bedrag × ( . ) dat nog openstaat. #x  
*interest on the amount (.) that is still open.*  
 a: -----> #  
 c2: ×↓↑-----> x  
 19 C2: → (.) ja. x+  
*yes*  
 c2: ×↓↓ ↑  
 a: + gazes up at clients

In this excerpt, the advisor (A) announces in lines 1–2 that she will support her explanation of the linear mortgage with a drawing. Then she produces her multi-modal explanation – talk and drawing – from lines 3 to 18. We see the clients C1 and C2 respond with ‘hm/hmhm’ three times (lines 7, 8 and 12) in the course of the multi-unit informing before the explanation of a ‘linear’ house loan payment comes to an end in line 18 and one of the clients responds with “ja” (‘yes’) with falling intonation and single head nod (19).

The excerpt illustrates the small-scope use of ‘hm/hmhm’. In addition, it shows that ‘ja’ as a lexical element is used in large-scope position in addition to the small-scope use of it as illustrated in excerpt 3. This reveals that large-scope tokens are not only reserved for more explicit displays of understanding as we have seen in excerpts 1–3. In comparison with the ‘hm/hmhm’, the ‘ja’ marks an increase in reciprocity as one might say.

Finally, the excerpt also illustrates the use of series of shallow (single arrows) nods as small-scope receipt tokens. Both clients acknowledge the topic of ‘linear’ house loan payment with a deep downward nod (double arrow, line 2) after which client 2 continues to nod slightly until the advisor has said “and so every month you pay exactly the same amount” (14–15). Interestingly, C2 stops nodding at the moment when the first part of the MUI, about the repayment of the loan, is complete (lines 3–15) and the second part, about the payment of interest on this loan (lines 17–18), is yet to come. By stopping the series of nods and by not producing a large scope receipt token here, C2 shows an orientation to the first part as complete but also an orientation to more-to-come. The large-scope “yes” in line 18 is accompanied by a deeper downward single nod which illustrates the use of single, deep nods as large-scope reciprocity tokens. This seems to support [Whitehead's \(2011\)](#) analysis of similar nods as ‘change of state nods’.

The lexical element “ja” can also be used for small-scope reciprocity when it is produced with rising intonation. In extract 5, we see “ja” used both in small-scope and in large-scope position within a single informing. When seemingly the same token is used both for small-scope and for large-scope purposes within one informing, we see that the multimodal character of these tokens – lexical item + intonation – turns them into different ‘gestalts’ ([Gudmundsen and Svennevig, 2020](#); [Mondada, 2014, 2018](#)): ‘ja’ with rising intonation for small-scope and falling intonation for large-scope purposes. In excerpt 5, from lines 13 to 23, the call-taker (CT) answers a question from the caller (C) (lines 10–12) about a letter the caller received but does not quite understand.

#### Excerpt 5. PENSION TG018

10 B als ik laag en hoog pensioen  
*if I check low and high pension*  
 11 T mh  
 12 B aankruis, wat houdt dat in.  
*what does that mean.*  
 13 CT: .hh dat houdt dan in dat u bijvoorbeeld de eerste vijf  
*.hh this means that for example the first five*  
 14 jaar eh (.) een hogere uitkering van ons krijgt,  
*years uh you receive a higher payment from us*  
 15 .hh en dan na die vijf jaar (.) een lagere.  
*.hh and then after those five years a lower one.*  
 16 dus stel u heeft bijvoorbeeld eh (.) ik noem even een  
*so imagine you have for example uh (.) I'll just*  
 17 bedrag hoor, honderd euro eh zou u maandelijks van ons  
*take a number, you would receive uh one hundred euros from*  
 18 krijgen,  
*us every month*  
 19 C: → [ja,  
*yes,*  
 20 CT: [als u dan kiest voor vijf jaar hoog, dan krijgt u  
*if you choose five years high, then you'll receive for*  
 21 bijvoorbeeld honderdtwintig,  
*example one hundred twenty*  
 22 .hh (0.5) en na die vijf jaar krijgt u dan  
*.hh (0.5) and after these five years you'll receive*  
 23 bijvoorbeeld tachtig euro.  
*for example eighty eurors.*  
 24 C: → ja.  
*yes.*

25 (1.0)  
 26 want er staat hier dus dat mijn ouderdomspensioen is (.)  
*because it's here that my retirement pension is (.)*  
 27 <drieëndertig vierenzestig> bruto per jaar  
*thirty three sixty four gross per year*  
 28 CT: (.) hm hm,  
*hm hm,*  
 29 (0.5)  
 30 C: maar er staat dus dat partnerpensioen, wat houdt dat in?  
*but it says partner pension, what does that mean?*

In lines 13–18 the call-taker produces the first part of his answer which is observably incomplete at the end of line 18, both in terms of CT's action – he starts an example in line 16 which he finishes in line 23 – and in terms of the final rising intonation on “*krijgen*” (line 18). The “*ja*” response in line 19, following the first part of the answer – and for that matter, of the example – is produced with rising intonation while the “*ja*” in line 24, following the second part of both the example and the answer, gets falling intonation.

That the latter “*ja*” is treated as receipting the answer and thereby closing this question-answer sequence can also be seen in the immediate continuation of the call, in which there is a 1 s gap (line 25) in which the call-taker leaves the floor to the caller and the caller in turn produces a next question that is related to the prior question with ‘because’ (line 26). This “*ja*” then seems to do the double work of both receipting the call-taker's answer as complete and of opening the floor for a follow-up question, similarly to Mazeland's (1990) observations based on Jefferson's (1984) analysis of ‘yeah’ as a practice for moving into speakership.

Overall, small-scope ‘*ja*’ is produced with rising intonation while large-scope ‘*ja*’ gets falling intonation. We can see this for small-scope “*ja*” in excerpt 3 (line 41) and in excerpt 5 (line 19) which are both produced with rising intonation, and for large-scope “*ja*” in excerpt 4 (line 19) and excerpt 5 (line 24) which are produced with falling intonation.

### 3.1.2. Negotiation of completeness

In the previous excerpts, we have seen that with their small-scope and large-scope practices participants show an orientation to the incompleteness or possible completeness of multi-unit turn informings. This becomes even more visible in cases where there is negotiation about completeness of a multi-unit turn. This can for instance be seen in excerpt 6 where the two participants seem to negotiate the completeness of the informing. Prior to this excerpt, the bank employee (referred to as ‘advisor’ A) has explained to the client (C) that the law requires banks to charge clients for giving advice and that this charge can be waived when the client does not need advice and can directly inform the bank on the arrangement he has chosen. The last TCU of this is shown in line 373 (“then it is a matter of execution”) after which the employee produces four TCUs starting with two ‘so’-marked self-formulations (374–378; 379–387) that present upshots on what the bank employee who will register these choices can and cannot do.

#### Excerpt 6. HOUSE LOAN 20130712HG1/ET1

((Throughout this excerpt, Adviser and Client have eye contact))

373 A: en dan is het een kwestie van uitvoeren.=  
*and then it is a matter of execution.*  
 374 =dus de adviseur daar die zal nog wel (.) wat  
*so the advisor there will (.)*  
 375 aanvullende vragen stellen natuurlijk,  
*ask some additional questions of course,*  
 376 want het is wel belangrijk dat het  
*because it is important that it*  
 377 gewoon allemaal &↑goed gaat& eh  
*all just goes well uh*  
 c: &↑ ↓ &  
 378 maar hij mag geen &advies& geven.  
*but he is not allowed to give advice.*  
 c: → &↑↓ &  
 379 A: dus als je zegt ik twijfel  
*so if you say I wonder*  
 380 of ik nou tien jaar vast moet zetten  
*if I should fix ((the interest rate)) for ten years*  
 381 &of vijf jaar vast,  
*or five years,*  
 c: &↑↓ ↑↓ ----->  
 382 (0.6)  
 383 A: dan zegt hij van ja&  
*then he will say well*  
 c: ----->&



Both excerpts, so Jefferson (1984) tells us, show the possible completion of a telling in lines 1–2 whereupon the recipient produces a “mmhm” with rising intonation, in excerpt 8 seemingly repairing the immediately prior falling “yeah”. G’s “that’s that” in both excerpts treats the ‘mmhm’ as not recognizing that what preceded it was the completion of the telling. Thus, Jefferson’s (1984) excerpts seem to show that the production of a small-scope token such as ‘mmhm’ in a position of possible completeness where a large-scope token was due is responded to by a continuation of the teller, in these two cases a rein-statement of the completion.

Jefferson’s (1984) excerpts also show that in response to the continuation, the recipient has yet to produce the large-scope receipt practice that was due prior to the continuation. This is also evident in excerpt 6 in which the informing party treats a large-scope practice to be required in response to the completion of the informing. When in line 391 the recipient fails to produce such a practice, she explicitly invites one (line 392).

### 3.2. Part 2: a typological organization for receipting informings

The organization of receipt practices emerging from our findings is a typology of types of receipt practices and their use for small-scope and large-scope reciprocity. Similar to Ford et al.’s (1996) analysis of interactional units in terms of syntactic, intonational and pragmatic resources that in practice co-occur, this typology is based on the single practices that are the constituents of often multimodal and multi-practice actions. In our data, we have seen orientations to 4 dimensions of receipt practices and their positioning (Table 2).

**Table 2**  
Typology of receipt practices and positioning.

	Small scope	→	Large scope
1	embodied	→	vocal
2	particle	→	phrase/clause
3	lacking semantic content	→	having semantic content
4	rising intonation	→	falling intonation

Of these dimensions, the third is perhaps the most contentious since linguists do not always agree on the boundaries of semantics. In line with Clift (2016), we take the semantic core to be the context-free meaning we attribute to linguistic elements or structures and from this perspective we treat ‘ja/yes’ and a ‘head nod’ as having affirmative cores, while ‘hmhm’ lacks such a core and is fully dependent for its meaning or function on the context in which it is used. This makes ‘hmhm’ comparable to ‘huh’ which Dingemanse et al. (2013) analyzed as “devoid of semantic content”.

The positioning of these different typological dimensions of receipt practices is – in any case in response to informings – so organized that when both elements of a dimension are used in response to a single informing activity, the first will be used to do small-scope reciprocity while the second one will do large-scope reciprocity. Table 2 should not be misread as meaning that left-column embodied practices and single verbal tokens (particles) cannot be used for large-scope reciprocity. Indeed, we have seen many examples in the excerpts above that they can. We have for example shown an embodied practice such as a single head nod and a token such as ‘ja’ used for large-scope reciprocity. An exception is probably the dimension of lacking vs. having semantic content since tokens lacking a semantic core such as ‘hmhm’ are never used in our data for large-scope reciprocity purposes.

The typological organization depicted in Table 2 is such that.

- when within a single informing activity both *embodied* tokens and *vocal* tokens are used, the embodied token will do small-scope reciprocity while the vocal token will do large-scope – possibly in combination with embodied ones –, not the other way around.
- when both *single* tokens and *phrasal or clausal* practices are used in response to a single informing activity, then the single token will be used for small-scope and the phrase or clause for large-scope reciprocity, not the reverse.
- when both practices *lacking a semantic core* and practices *having a semantic core* are used in response to a single informing, then the ones lacking a semantic core will do small-scope reciprocity while the one with semantic cores will do large-scope, not the other way around.
- when both *rising* intonation practices and *falling* intonation practices are used in receipt of a single informing activity, then the rising intonation will do the small-scope and the falling intonation will do the large scope receipt, not the other way around. This seems to confirm Thompson’s et al. finding for English that “final rising intonation on a response to an informing indexes an epistemic outcome whereby the recipient is not yet fully K+, and makes a further turn from the informer relevant next” (2015: 56).

#### 4. Conclusions

The analysis presented in this paper started with the observation that there exists a large variety of receipt practices such as the Dutch particles 'hmm', 'ja' ('yes'), 'oh', phrasal practices such as formulations and embodied practices such as head nods. Several authors have wondered about the need participants in social interaction may have for this variety. The present analysis proposes that this variety is systematically organized in small-scope versus large-scope receipt practices that allow recipients of informings to signal their states of informedness as either still incomplete or as sufficient for the purpose at hand. With its attention to scope, this paper finds itself in the company of a number of recent papers on 'okay' such as [Betz and Deppermann \(2021\)](#), [Mondada and Sorjonen \(2021\)](#) and [Koivisto and Sorjonen \(2021\)](#).

The point of the analysis is that this variety is used as a resource in an organization in which recipients of an informing can signal to the informing party that they receipted either the just preceding part of the informing or the entire informing. We have called the former use of receipt tokens 'small scope' reciprocity because it signals receipt of only one element of the informing, often the grammatical clause or TCU immediately preceding the receipt token. The latter use we have called 'large scope' reciprocity because it signals receipt of the entire informing including the elements that have already been receipted by small scope tokens. The use of a small-scope practice also indicates the recipient's expectation of more to come, while the use of a large-scope practice also signals the recipient's orientation to the informing as complete. We have been able to establish that recipients orient with the positioning of their receipt practices to the development of the ongoing informing; only occasionally were receipt tokens invited by verbal invitations such as understanding checks or by 'gaze windows' ([Bavelas et al., 2002](#)) on the part of the informing party. The latter may in part be a result of the data used: they were telephone data and in the case of the face-to-face data these were often concerned with texts, cards and drawings to be explained and to which the gaze of the participants was directed.

We have found the different practices to be systematically distributed over the positions of small and large scope reciprocity following a typology that consists of four dimensions: embodied vs. vocal, particle vs. phrasal/clausal, lacking vs. having semantic content and rising vs. falling intonation. When an informing is receipted by different practices of a dimension, the first type will be used for small-scope reciprocity while the second type will be used for large scope.

The sharing of information in the different data sets central to this paper shows an orientation to an interactional collaboration that is concerned with the distribution of turns as well as with the negotiation of informedness. We have shown that recipients of a multi-unit turn informing collaborate in treating the turn as either unfolding and underway or as possibly complete. Although notions such as 'informing' and 'multi-unit' may suggest post-hoc reification, i.e. treatment as an established unit of discourse activity, it is important to stress that the activity has to be produced incrementally and with the collaborative efforts of both the informing and the receiving party. When we see in participants' practices orientations to the more-than-one TCU character of the activity, these should not be taken to mean that it is an established unit after all. As Ford wisely warned us: "while working toward a precise account for units, interactionally oriented linguists run the risk of foregrounding the discreteness of units and backgrounding their constant and functionally crucial malleability" (2004: 29–30). Indeed, the practices analyzed in this paper are the tools by which the incremental multi-unit informing is achieved.

The organization of receipt behaviour presented in this paper is a tool for participants in informing activities to show themselves accountable for establishing intersubjective alignment on the state of completeness of the informing and the state of informedness of the recipient (cf. [Enfield and Sidnell, 2022](#)). It supports the view of understanding and intersubjectivity as procedural phenomena that was put forward by [Schutz \(1962\)](#) and [Garfinkel \(1967\)](#). Both the variety of receipt tokens and the organization of their systematic use as small-scope and large-scope tokens show that intersubjectivity is a constant concern for participants in interaction. Recipients of informings such as explanations or instructions make the scopes of their reciprocity observable for the informing party and thereby render intersubjectivity on informedness, completeness and understanding accountable, since observable, as interactional phenomena that are produced between participants.

As we argued above, the organization of receipt tokens in terms of scope does not exclude proposals such as those of [Schegloff \(1982\)](#) on possible displays of interest or disinterest in the informing or [Stivers' \(2008\)](#) analysis of alignment and affiliations when using either different or repeated receipt tokens. Indeed, receipt tokens and in particular the particles such as Dutch 'oh', 'hm' and 'ja' and head nods, may work at different levels of the management of interaction at the same time, doing small scope receipt and at the same time indicating continued interest or affiliating with the informing's stance.

In his book 'When Listeners Talk', [Gardner \(2001\)](#) concludes on response tokens that "much remains to be discovered concerning what they do", one of the questions being how response tokens "work in a series" (2001: 254). The analysis proposed here can be seen as an answer to this question, given the multi-purpose use just discussed, certainly not 'the' answer. With reference to the title of Gardner's book, one part of this answer is that listeners - and speakers too, for that matter - do not only "talk" but also use their bodies for example for several nodding practices.

Concerning the latter, this paper also presents a contribution to the literature on head-nodding. Stivers's treatment of all head-nods as "tokens of a single gesture type" (2008: 37) may be in order when it concerns doing affiliation which is the focus of her analysis, but when it comes to doing reciprocity, the present study shows that multiple shallow nodding cannot be used interchangeably with single deep nods, a finding that resonates with those of [Whitehead \(2011\)](#) and [Muntigl et al. \(2012\)](#).

Finally, two words of caution, not in the least to ourselves as authors. First, the analyses presented here are made on Dutch data, and since much of the organization proposed in this paper is linguistic in nature, we should be cautious not to extrapolate these findings too easily to interaction in other languages, even though we already see similarities with the English-language data analyzed in for example [Heritage \(1984a\)](#) and [Thompson et al. \(2015\)](#), the Finnish data of [Sorjonen \(2001a\)](#) and the German

data of Helmer et al. (2021). Secondly, an organization such as the one proposed in this paper runs the risk of being stated and being understood as an abstract and static systematics. And indeed, the typology presented in Table 2 is fairly abstract. We must bear in mind that the organizations that participants in social interaction orient to are what Sacks et al. (1974: 726), with reference to the organization of turn-taking, have called “party-administered”. It is an organization that participants use and adapt to their purposes as could be seen in extract 6 where the recipient of the informing seems to exploit the systematics presented here. Thus the organization of scopes of reciprocity proposed in this paper is much more than abstract and is far from being static. It is a tool used by participants to gauge the here-and-now state of informedness of the recipients of multi-unit informings, and to establish and adapt their intersubjective understanding of the informing.

### CRediT authorship contribution statement

**Tom Koole:** Conceptualization, Formal analysis, Investigation, Methodology, Project administration, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing. **Myrte N. Gosen** Conceptualization, Formal analysis, Investigation, Project administration, Writing - original draft and Writing - review & editing.

### Declaration of competing interest

We hereby declare that there are no conflicting interests concerned with the writing and publication of this article.

### Data availability

The authors do not have permission to share data.

### Acknowledgements

We thank two anonymous reviewers for their generous, elaborate and valuable comments. We thank Marloes Herijgers, Louise Nell and Kimberley Hommes for allowing us the use of their data and Mieke Breukelman and Anke Bleeker for supporting the analysis. We are grateful to Arnulf Deppermann, Jörg Zinken and Jan Lindström for their helpful comments on an early version of this paper.

### Transcription conventions

Talk (Jefferson 2004)	
[yeah]	Overlapping talk
[okay]	
(.)	Brief interval
(1.4)	Time (in absolute seconds) between end of a word and beginning of next.
=	End of one TCU and beginning of next begin with no gap/pause in between. Can also be used when TCU continues on new line in transcript.
<u>word</u>	Underlining indicates emphasis on underlined syllable
wo::rd	Colon indicates prolonged vowel or consonant.
↑word	Marked shift in intonation, up (↑) or down (↓).
↓word	
word.	Falling final intonation
word,	Slight rising final intonation
word?	Sharp rising final intonation
WORD	Upper case indicates syllables or words louder than surrounding speech by the same speaker
°word°	Degree sign indicate syllables or words distinctly quieter than surrounding speech by the same speaker
word-	A dash indicates a cut-off. In phonetic terms this is typically a glottal stop
>word<	Right/left carats indicate increased speaking rate (speeding up)
<word>	Left/right carats indicate decreased speaking rate (slowing down)
(( ))	Double parentheses contain analyst comments, descriptions or English verbal elements that in the Dutch original are encoded syntactically.
Embodied (Mondada 2018)	
**	Gestures and descriptions of embodied actions are delimited
++	between two identical symbols (one symbol per participant)
%%	and are synchronized with corresponding stretches of talk.
*->	The action described continues across subsequent lines
->*	until the same symbol is reached.
This article	
↑↓	Single arrows indicate shallow head nod; here: first up then down
↑↑↓	Double arrows indicate deep head nod; here: first up then down

## References

- Aoki, H., 2011. Some functions of speaker head nods. In: Streeck, J., Goodwin, C., LeBaron, C. (Eds.), *Embodied Interaction. Language and Body in the Material World*. Cambridge University Press, pp. 93–105.
- Bavelas, J.B., Coates, L., Johnson, T., 2002. Listener response as a collaborative process: the role of gaze. *J. Commun.* 52 (3), 566–580.
- Beach, W.A., 1993. Transitional regularities for 'casual' "Okay" usages. *J. Pragmat.* 19 (4), 325–352.
- Betz, E., Deppermann, A., Mondada, L., Sorjonen, M.-L. (Eds.), 2021. *OKAY across Languages. Towards a Comparative Approach to its Use in Talk-In-Interaction*. John Benjamins.
- Betz, E., Deppermann, A., 2021. OKAY in responding and claiming understanding. In: Betz, E., Deppermann, A., Mondada, L., Sorjonen, M.-L. (Eds.), *OKAY across Languages. Towards a Comparative Approach to its Use in Talk-In-Interaction*. John Benjamins, pp. 55–92.
- Clift, R., 2016. *Conversation Analysis*. Cambridge University Press.
- Clift, R., Raymond, C.W., 2018. Actions in practice: on details in collections. *Discourse Stud.* 20 (1), 90–119.
- Couper-Kuhlen, E., 2021. The prosody and phonetics of OKAY in American English. In: Betz, E., Deppermann, A., Mondada, L., Sorjonen, M.-L. (Eds.), *OKAY across Languages. Towards a Comparative Approach to its Use in Talk-In-Interaction*. John Benjamins, pp. 131–173.
- De Stefani, Elwys, 2021. Embodied responses to questions-in-progress: silent nods as affirmative answers. *Discourse Process.* 58 (4), 353–371.
- Dingemans, M., Torreira, F., Enfield, N.J., 2013. Is "Huh?" a universal word? Conversational infrastructure and the convergent evolution of linguistic items. *PLoS One.* 8 (11), e78273. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0078273>.
- Duncan, S., Fiske, D.W., 1977. *Face to Face Interaction Research. Methods and Theory*. Laurence Erlbaum Associates.
- Enfield, N.J., Sidnell, J., 2022. *Consequences of Language. From Primary to Enhanced Intersubjectivity*. MIT Press.
- Ford, C.E., Thompson, S.A., 1996. Interactional units in conversation: syntactic, intonational, and pragmatic resources for the management of turns. *Stud. Int. Sociolinguist.* 13, 134–184.
- Ford, C.E., 2004. Contingency and units in interaction. *Discourse Stud.* 6 (1), 27–52.
- Gardner, R., 2001. *When Listeners Talk*. John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Garfinkel, H., 1967. *Studies in Ethnomethodology*. Prentice Hall.
- Gudmundsen, J., Svennevig, J., 2020. Multimodal displays of understanding in vocabulary-oriented sequences. *Social Interaction-Video-Based Studies of Human Social.* 3 (2), 1–26.
- Guthrie, Anna M., 1997. On the systematic deployment of OKAY and MMHMM in academic advising sessions. *Pragmatics* 7 (3), 397–415.
- Have, P. ten, 2007. *Doing Conversation Analysis*. Sage, Thousand Oaks, California.
- Helmer, Henrike, Betz, Emma, Deppermann, Arnulf, 2021. Coordination of OKAY, nods and gaze in claiming understanding and closing topics. In: Betz, E., Deppermann, A., Mondada, L., Sorjonen, M.-L. (Eds.), *OKAY across Languages. Towards a Comparative Approach to its Use in Talk-In-Interaction*. John Benjamins, pp. 363–393.
- Herijgers, M.L.C., 2018. *Mortgage Communication Design: an Interdisciplinary Perspective on Experts Managing Contextual, Interactional and Technological Constraints in the Mortgage Information Process*. LOT [dissertation].
- Herijgers, M., Charldorp, T. van, 2021. Communicating information packages in institutional face-to-face consultations. *Discourse Stud.* 23 (1), 3–27. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461445620942907>.
- Heritage, J., 1984a. A change-of-state token and aspects of its sequential placement. In: Atkinson, J.M., Heritage, J. (Eds.), *Structures of Social Action. Studies in Conversation Analysis*. Cambridge University Press, pp. 299–345.
- Heritage, J., 1984b. *Garfinkel and Ethnomethodology*. Polity Press.
- Heritage, J., 2012. The epistemic engine: sequence organization and territories of knowledge. *Res. Lang. Soc. Interact.* 45 (1), 30–52. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08351813.2012.646685>.
- Heritage, J., Watson, D.R., 1979. Formulations as conversational objects. In: Psathas, G. (Ed.), *Everyday Language: Studies in Ethnomethodology*. Irvington Publishers, pp. 123–162.
- Heritage, J., Raymond, G., 2012. Navigating epistemic landscapes: acquiescence, agency and resistance in responses to polar questions. In: de Ruiter, J.P. (Ed.), *Questions: Formal, Functional and Interactional Perspectives*. Cambridge University Press, pp. 179–192.
- Hoey, E.M., 2015. Lapses: how people arrive at, and deal with, discontinuities in talk. *Res. Lang. Soc. Interact.* 48 (4), 430–453.
- Houtkoop, H., Mazeland, H., 1985. Turns and discourse units in everyday conversation. *J. Pragmat.* 9 (5), 595–620.
- Jefferson, G., 1978. Sequential aspects of storytelling in conversation. In: Schenkein, J. (Ed.), *Studies in the Organization of Conversational Interaction*. Academic Press, pp. 219–248.
- Jefferson, G., 1984. Notes on a systematic deployment of the acknowledgement tokens "yeah" and "mm hm". *Pap. Linguist.* 17, 197–216.
- Jefferson, G., 2004. Glossary of transcript symbols with an introduction. In: Lerner, G.H. (Ed.), *Conversation Analysis. Studies from the First Generation*. John Benjamins, pp. 13–31.
- Koivisto, A., Sorjonen, M.-L., 2021. OKAY as a response to informings in Finnish. In: Betz, E., Deppermann, A., Mondada, L., Sorjonen, M.-L. (Eds.), *OKAY across Languages. Towards a Comparative Approach to its Use in Talk-In-Interaction*. John Benjamins, pp. 205–233.
- Koole, T., 2010. Displays of epistemic access: student responses to teacher explanations. *Res. Lang. Soc. Interact.* 43 (2), 183–209.
- Koole, T., 2012a. The epistemics of student problems: explaining mathematics in a multilingual class. *J. Pragmat.* 44 (13), 1902–1916.
- Koole, T., 2012b. Teacher evaluations: assessing 'knowing', 'understanding', and 'doing'. In: Rasmussen, G., Brouwer, C.E., Day, D. (Eds.), *Evaluating Cognitive Competences in Interaction*. John Benjamins Publishing Company, Amsterdam, pp. 43–66.
- Lerner, G.H., 1991. On the syntax of sentences-in-progress. *Lang. Soc.* 20 (3), 441–458.
- Mazeland, H., 1990. "Yes" "No" and "mhm": variations in acknowledgment choices. *Réseaux. Communication-Technologie-Société* 8 (1), 251–282.
- Mondada, L., 2014. The local constitution of multimodal resources for social interaction. *J. Pragmat.* 65, 137–156.
- Mondada, L., 2018. Multiple temporalities of language and body interaction: challenges for transcribing multimodality. *Res. Lang. Soc. Interact.* 51 (1), 85–106.
- Mondada, L., Sorjonen, M.-L., 2021. OKAY in closings and transitions. In: Betz, E., Deppermann, A., Mondada, L., Sorjonen, M.-L. (Eds.), *OKAY across Languages. Towards a Comparative Approach to its Use in Talk-In-Interaction*. John Benjamins, pp. 93–127.
- Müller, F.E., 1996. Affiliating and disaffiliating with continuers: prosodic aspects of reciprocity. In: Couper-Kuhlen, E., Selting, M. (Eds.), *Prosody in Conversation: Interactional Studies*. Cambridge University Press, pp. 131–176.
- Muntigl, Peter, Knight, Naomi, Watkins, Ashley, 2012. Working to keep aligned in psychotherapy. Using nods as a dialogic resource to display affiliation. *Lang. Dialogues* 2 (1), 9–27.
- Nell, L., Lentz, L., Pander Maat, H., Koole, T., 2015. Pension helpdesk calls: a repair mechanism in the client communication of financial institutions. *Stud. Commun. Sci.* 15 (1), 103–110.
- Peräkylä, A., 1995. *Aids Counselling. Institutional Interaction and Clinical Practice*. Cambridge University Press.
- Sacks, H., Schegloff, E.A., Jefferson, G., 1974. A simplest systematics for the organization of turn-taking for conversation. *Language* 50, 696–735.
- Sacks, H., 1992. In: Jefferson, G. (Ed.), *Lectures on Conversation*. Basil Blackwell.
- Schegloff, E.A., 1982. Discourse as an interactional achievement: some uses of 'uh huh' and other things that come between sentences. In: Tannen, D. (Ed.), *Analyzing Discourse: Text and Talk*. Georgetown University Press, pp. 71–93.
- Schegloff, E.A., 1992. Repair after next turn: the last structurally provided defense of intersubjectivity in conversation. *Am. J. Sociol.* 97 (5), 1295–1345.
- Schutz, A., 1962. *The Problem of Social Reality*. Springer.
- Selting, M., 1995. *Prosodie im Gespräch. Aspekte einer interaktionalen Phonologie der Konversation [Prosody in conversation. Aspects of an interactional phonology of conversation]*. Walter de Gruyter.

- Seuren, L.M., Huiskes, M., Koole, T., 2016. Remembering and understanding with oh-prefaced yes/no declaratives in Dutch. *J. Pragmat.* 104, 180–192.
- Seuren, L.M., Huiskes, M., Koole, T., 2018. Resolving knowledge discrepancies in informing sequences. *Lang. Soc.* 47, 409–434.
- Seuren, L.M., 2019. Oh (/o/) als ontvanger van informatie in sociale interactie [Oh (/o/) as receiver of information in social interaction]. *Tijdschr. Taalbeheers.* 41 (2), 363–389.
- Sidnell, J., 2014. Who knows best? Evidentiality and epistemic asymmetry in conversation. *Pragmat. Soc.* 63, 127.
- Sidnell, J., Stivers, T. (Eds.), 2013. *The Handbook of Conversation Analysis*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Sorjonen, M.L., 2001a. Responding in Conversation. A Study of Response Particles in Finnish. John Benjamins. *Pragmatics and Beyond New Series* 70.
- Sorjonen, M.L., 2001b. Simple answers to polar questions. In: Couper-Kuhlen, E., Selting, M. (Eds.), *Studies in Interactional Linguistics*. Benjamins, pp. 405–431.
- Stivers, T., 2004. “No no no” and other types of multiple sayings in social interaction. *Hum. Commun. Res.* 30 (2), 260–293.
- Stivers, T., 2008. Stance, alignment, and affiliation during storytelling: when nodding is a token of affiliation. *Res. Lang. Soc. Interact.* 41 (1), 31–57.
- Svinhufvud, K., 2016. Nodding and note-taking Multimodal analysis of writing and nodding in student counseling interaction. *Lang. Dialogues* 6 (1), 81–109.
- Thompson, S.A., Fox, B.A., Couper-Kuhlen, E., 2015. *Grammar in Everyday Talk. Building Responsive Actions*. Cambridge University Press.
- Whitehead, K.A., 2011. Some uses of head nods in “third position” in talk-in-interaction. *Gesture* 11 (2), 103–122.
- Yngve, V.H., 1970. On getting a word in edgewise. In: *Proceedings from: Chicago Linguistics Society, 6th Meeting, University of Chicago*, pp. 567–578. 1970.

**Tom Koole** is emeritus professor of language and social interaction at the University of Groningen. His research deals with mutual understanding (intersubjectivity) in social interaction with a focus on classroom interaction and emergency calls.

**Myrte N. Gosen** is assistant professor at the Language and Social Interaction research group of the University of Groningen. She has a particular interest in classroom interactions in relation to knowledge and she uses conversation analysis to identify the fundamental structures and practices in interaction that are related to knowledge construction.