ON THE PLACE OF TURN AND SEQUENCE IN GRAMMAR. VERB-FIRST CLAUSAL CONSTRUCTIONS IN SWEDISH TALK-IN-INTERACTION[1]

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Abstract

This study elaborates the concept of a positionally sensitive grammar with respect to the sequentiality of turns and the turn constructional units in conversation. The linguistic object of the analysis is clausal constructions in Swedish that are initiated by the finite predicate verb: Polar questions, receipt questions (news receipts), conditional protases and pro-drop declaratives. These constructions share potentially the same syntactic surface pattern but are constrained by different sequential conditions of use. The study proposes an integrated interactional linguistic analysis which takes into account both syntactic and sequential aspects of turn construction. A grammatical attribute-value matrix, based on the framework of construction grammar (CxG), is introduced. The analysis shows that regularities of sequential organization may provide robust distinctive constructional features while a pure syntactic analysis remains less distinctive. The decisive constructional features are systematically captured by a notation designed for sequential and syntactic organization.

Keywords: Positionally sensitive grammar; Construction grammar; Interactional linguistics; Sequence organization; Turn-construction; Verb-first constructions.

1. Introduction

As an increasing number of linguists have seen the benefits of Conversation Analysis as a method of approaching the regularities of naturally occurring talk-in-interaction, there has been a growing interest in studying "interactional" and "grammatical" phenomena in connection to each other. The former category includes factors such as turn-taking, sequence organization and repair, the latter includes structural phenomena such as, say, discourse markers, clausal combining and prosody. An integrated study of these interactional and grammatical phenomena has subsequently become to be known as interactional linguistics (Couper-Kuhlen & Selting 2001).

To suggest a marriage between grammar (or linguistics) and interaction is not, however, a straightforward matter. From the point of grammar (at least in a more or less traditional guise), it may be a challenge to relate a description of internal constructional regularities (say, a clausal structure) to regularities that concern the typical context of

use for a specific construction (say, as a second-pair part in a sequence). The registration of contextual information is, in fact, often ruled out in grammars as irrelevant or inapplicable for an account of constructions. When turning to interactional and sequential organization, the challenge is to present regularities as regular enough so that they can be incorporated in a necessarily abstract and generalized constructional account.

One of the ground-breaking efforts in joining an interactional and structural approach is Schegloff's (1996) explorative study of the regularities of turn-organization. The very key in his contribution is the concept *positionally sensitive grammar(s)*:

> One has a range of grammatical resources, grammars if you will, whose relevance is positionally sensitive to organizational features and contingencies of the sequential and interactional moment in which the [speaker's] conduct is situated. (Schegloff 1996: 110)

As Schegloff argues, positional sensitivity operates at three levels. First, the unfolding structure and micro-events in a turn-constructional unit (TCU) can be studied as its horizontal, temporal directionality. Positional sensitivity can thus concern the choice of elements that constitute a TCU beginning or elements that can be recognized as projecting, or at least occurring before the possible completion of the unit. This level of analysis shows the interrelated orderliness between interactionally crucial slots in a turn/TCU (such as the beginning) and types of verbal units that typically occupy those slots (such as discourse markers). Second, positional sensitivity may concern the sequentiality of turn constructional units within multi-unit turns. That is, the form of a TCU can be relative to whether the TCU is a first unit in a turn or a subsequent one. A first unit may be designed so that it projects subsequent units to come, while a subsequent unit can be marked as a follow-up with back-linking devices, such as the adverbial expression *in fact*. Third, positional sensitivity may depend on the sequentiality of turns themselves. This means that the form of the turn/TCU may be relative to whether it is an initiative or a response in an exchange. For example, a reply may have a different (more condensed) design than a question that seeks a reply.

The directionality of TCUs with respect to turn construction has perhaps gained most attention so far. Work on on-line syntax and temporality in turn construction relates directly to this field of interest (Auer 2005, 2009; Hopper 2011; Ono & Thompson 1995). It seems that the Scandinavian research tradition with its roots in positional syntax has taken the formalism in these studies farthest, providing elaborate TCU parsing models which have joined together interactional, grammatical and prosodic features in a descriptive matrix (Karlsson 2006; Lindström 2006, 2008; Steensig 2001a, 2001b). Analyses of increments, that is, post hoc additions and expansions of turns/TCUs, also connect to the directionality of TCUs. Increments are seen as structurally dependent continuations of a possibly completed TCU (Couper-Kuhlen & Ono 2007), although their occurrence may simultaneously be relative to sequential contingencies, like the absence of a relevant up-take.

Examples of studies which have focused on the sequentiality of TCUs within complex turns include Linell et al. 2003, who have analyzed multi-unit question turns, and Laury 2008, which presents crosslinguistic studies of clause combining in talk-in-interaction. Explorations of the sequentiality of turns with a direct bearing on grammar have been less common, but the work of Thompson et al. (forthc.) on responsive actions is a significant contribution in this direction as well as Raymond's (2003) and Fox and

Thompson's (2010) studies of responses to questions; for a corresponding perspective on initiating actions, see Couper-Kuhlen's contribution in this volume.

Following the latter trail, this paper addresses the question of positionally sensitive grammars from the sequential point of view with a special reference to the sequentiality of turns-at-talk, but also to the sequentiality of their constitutive parts, i.e. the order of TCUs in multi-unit turns. The grammatical phenomenon in focus is a family of clausal verb-first constructions in Swedish, which may appear in functions such as polar questions, conditional protases and declaratives. While the syntactic shape of these constructions is at least superficially similar, their functional differentiation is dependent on sequential factors. That is, there are necessary conditions for in what sequential location a verb-first clause may be recognized as, for example, an interrogative or a declarative. The aim of this study is therefore to show that it is not only possible to provide sequential information in a constructional account but that it may turn out to be essential to do so in order to pin down the distinctive features of constructions. In this perspective, the sequential characteristic of a construction is an intrinsic part of what we understand as "grammar".

This study proposes an integrated interactional-grammatical account which not only formalizes the internal grammatical (syntactic) relations of a construction but also the sequential regularities associated with the construction. The proposed grammatical model draws on the ideas and the analytic tools presented within the framework of construction grammar, more accurately the variant known as *Construction Grammar Plus*, CxG (see Fried & Östman 2004). Although construction grammar cannot be characterized as very "interactional" in its starting points, it is nonetheless clearly open to expanding the scope of constructional accounts beyond mere syntactic facts. The grammar can, for example, embrace different aspects of contextual information such as textual organization (see Östman 2005). Indeed, there have been some attempts to incorporate information on interaction and sequentiality in the formalism that the practitioners of CxG utilize (cf. Fried & Östman 2005). The argumentation in this study builds on instances that are collected from natural Swedish conversations in everyday as well as institutional settings (see Data).

2. An overview of verb-first clauses in Swedish

There are a number of instances in the Swedish language where a clausal structure is initiated by the finite, tense-inflected verb. Some of these are thoroughly established patterns, like the formation of polar questions. An example of the usage is seen in line 3 in extract (1): *Kan de vara mer än fem frön?* 'Can it be more than five seeds?'. The extract is taken from a call to the Poison Control Centre in Sweden. The caller (C) is anxious to know whether the seeds from a certain plant can be harmful for a child who may have eaten some of them. The pharmacist (P) then reflects on the number of the seeds involved in this case.

(1) Polar question; conditional protasis (GIC: 16634; Call to the Poison Control Centre, P=pharmacist, C=caller).

01 P: kan   de va   mera än   f<u>e:</u>m frö-n
         can.PRS it be.INF more than five seed-PL
         'can it be more than five seeds'

02	då ska man in ti sj<u>u</u>k-hu<u>:</u>s,
	then shall.PRS PRO.GNR in to sick-house
	'then one has to go to the hospital'

→ 03   kan de v<u>a</u>-ra mer än f<u>e</u>m frö-n?
can.PRS it be-INF more than five seed-PL
'can it be more than five seeds?'

04   (1.3)

05 C: ja de vet   >ja inte<
PRT that know.PRS I NEG
'well I don't know about that'

06   ja ska gå: å fr<u>å</u>ga (dom e)   i m<u>a</u>t-sal-en
I shall.PRS go.INF and ask.INF they be.PRS in food-hall-DEF
'I'll go and ask (they're) in the dining room'

The same extract also houses another established use of the V1 clausal pattern, i.e. the conditional protasis *Kan de va mera än fem frön* 'Should it be more than five seeds' in line 1.[2] As can be seen, the conditional protasis and the polar question are structurally similar, but the protasis is embedded in a clause combination with the following clause, which expresses the consequence of the condition (apodosis), here *då ska man in ti sjukhus* 'then one has to go to the hospital'. Verb-first conditional clauses are commonly used in both spoken and written Swedish, but to a lesser degree in spoken German, while in English such uses are generally limited to only some auxiliaries, e.g. *Had I known, I would have taken a cab* (see Auer & Lindström 2011).

There is a pragmatically specific use of polar questions that may deserve recognition as a construction of its own, namely, short receipt questions that merely consist of a pro-verb or a repeated auxiliary and of a pronominal subject, sometimes also of a pronominal verb phrase complement (Norén 2010 on Swedish). Extract (2) shows an example in line 2. Speaker A is offered a cup of coffee by B but declines the offer by saying that she has already had some coffee and a sandwich on another occasion; B then reacts to this as news with the receipt question *Har du?* 'Have you?'.

(2) Receipt question (Norén 2010: 39; Coffee with friends, A=guest, B=hostess).

01   A: ja ha ↑f<u>å</u>-tt kaffe å smörgås där ja va,
I have-PRS get-PRF coffee and sandwich there I be.PST
'I have had coffee and sandwich where I was,'

→ 02   B: h<u>a</u>:-r du[:,
have-PRS you
'have you'

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[2] There is a slight difference in the pronunciation of the infinitive form of the copula, *va* in the conditional protasis, *vara* in the polar question. The former variant is the normal colloquial unstressed form, the latter is the "canonical" full form and instantiated by the focal stress on it in the question here.

```
03    A:                  [.ja
                           'yeah'

04    B:    ↑ha
            'right'

05    A:    så de e      bra.
            so it  be.PRS good
            'so it's alright.'
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Receipt questions are a heavily used device as newsmarks, and a nearly corresponding use as "responses to informings" exists also in English (Couper-Kuhlen & Thompson 2012).

Like most Germanic languages, Swedish has clauses with verb-first syntax that are declarative rather than interrogative or conditional in their function (see Lindström & Karlsson 2005 and Mörnsjö 2002 on Swedish; Auer 1993 and Diessel 1997 on German). Certain uses of this V1 format have been termed narrative inversion in more traditional accounts because this clausal construction often occurs in stretches of talk longer than a single utterance (cf. Platzack 1987). Extract (3) contains an instance in line 6 which could be regarded as a variation of this pattern. The speaker develops a line of argument concerning a song artist he does not like. He first picks up one of the artist's mannerisms (line 4) and then elaborates the description further with the V1 unit in line 6.

(3) Expansive V1 declarative (GSM; Discussions on music styles with high school students, S=student).

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01  S:     mm (.) men jag tyck-er  inte om Lisa   Ekdahl
           PRT     but I   like-PRS NEG PRT NAME1 NAME2
           'mm (.) but I don't like Lisa Ekdahl'

02         (.)

03         jag vet        inte varför,
           I   know.PRS NEG where.for
           'I don't know why,'

04         hon verk-ar  så kom     å hjälp   mej å dö      på nåt  sätt
           she seem-PRS so come.IMP and help.IMP me to die.INF on some manner
           'she seems so come on and help me die somehow'

05         (.)

→   06     sitt-er hon med *sin   gitarr* så-här
           sit-PRS she with  REFL guitar  so-here
           'she's sitting with *her guitar* like this'

07         (.)
```

08	jaa	men	hon	e	verkligen	sån
	PRT	but	she	be.PRS	really	such

'yes but she's really like that'

In a certain sense the verb-first declarative can be said to "lack" a pronominal (or pro-adverbial) clausal constituent that would normally, or "canonically", precede the finite verb and initiate the clause (cf. *Så sitter hon med sin gitarr såhär* 'So she sits with her guitar like this' as a more full-fledged variant of the case in line 6). It could be argued that what seems like an "initial constituent drop" turns the declarative clause recognizably into an expansion of an on-going activity (like in the sequencing of narrative events) rather than an introduction of a new activity (Linell 2003). Moreover, many verb-first declaratives appear in responsive moves, as in extract (4). H and M are talking about what their little children were able to do at different ages; M responds in line 7 to H's description of past events that she does not remember anything of what H is referring to. In cases like this, the "drop" of the first constituent may indeed indicate responsiveness, which results from the expansion of talk on a subject matter that was initiated by the prior speaker.

(4) Responsive V1 declarative (SAMGRAM 5:1; Conversation between female friends, H and M are sisters).

01	H:	(vi)	åtta	nie	tie	(elva)	månad-er
		at	eight	nine	ten	eleven	month-PL

'(at the age of) eight nine ten (eleven) months'

02		så	bruka-de	hon	härma	h<u>u</u>nd-ar-na,
		so	use.to-PST	she	imitate.INF	dog-PL-DEF

'she used to imitate the dogs,'

03		(0.4)

04	M:	ja,↑

'yeah'

05		pt

06		(1.2)

→	07	komm-er	ja'nte	<u>al</u>ls	ihåg.
		come-PRS	I NEG	at.all	in.mind

'I don't remember (that) at all.'

For the purposes of this study, I limit the scope of verb-first clauses to the categories identified above: Polar questions, receipt questions, conditional protases, expansive declaratives and responsive declaratives. Swedish also has a few other clausal constructions where the finite verb occupies the first constituent position but which make up more special classes both functionally and with respect to their morpho-syntactic features. The most obvious and frequent type is directive clauses with the verb in imperative mood, like *Gå bort* 'Go away', which usually also lack the subject. More marginally in modern Swedish, optative clauses are syntactically V1 with the verb in

present conjunctive mood, like *Leve kungen!* '(Long) live the king!', or desiderative clauses with the verb in past conjunctive mood, *Vore hon här nu!* 'If only she were here now!'.

The clausal patterns exemplified in (1)–(4) are syntactically similar to a high degree, most notably through the presence of the finite indicative verb in the first clausal position, although there may appear some formal variations as regards the presence of constituents in certain subtypes of them (for example, news receipts are structurally sparse). For a quick overview, the reader may consult a list of potential maximal similarities, the example compilation (11), in section 4. Nonetheless, the verb-first clauses are used to carry out different interactional tasks and their use differs especially with respect to the position in the turn and in the sequence of turns, i.e. some of the verb-first clauses occur in initiating moves, whereas others rather constitute responses. As I will argue, the differentiation at the sequential level of interaction is so systematic that it should be included as a part of these verb-first clauses' grammar. The sequential differentiation is therefore an essential basis for the constructional disambiguation of the surface similarity of these constructions.

3. The grammar and the formalism

A grammatical account, whether syntactically or semantically attuned, is typically based on some level of generalization and organized around a standardized formalism which communicates the generalizations in an economic, above all unambiguous manner. Grammars also tend to be rather abstract, disregarding factors that are not supposed to be "grammatical" enough. Traditional grammars, for example, may state that their scope of analysis does not extend beyond the limits of a sentence, thus neglecting textual and contextual factors, which nonetheless surround every sentence that is produced in the real world. Consequently, grammars have been criticized for being non-sensitive to context, detached from real language use and for over-emphasizing the autonomy of syntax and the sentence (see Linell 2005: 66).

However, some recent work within the framework of construction grammar, or more accurately *Construction Grammar Plus* (CxG), has been clearly inclusive regarding contextual factors such as genre, discourse type, textual and sequential relations (see, for example, Fried & Östman 2005; Günthner & Imo 2006; Lindström & Londen 2008; Östman 2005, 2007; Wide 2009). The advantage of this grammatical model is that it deploys parameters and categories which can be extended to embrace factors which appear regular enough not only in the domain of syntax but also with respect to prosody, semantics and pragmatics (see Fried & Östman 2004). Because of this versatility potential I have chosen to adopt an application of the construction grammatical formalism in order to develop a version of a positionally sensitive grammar for the analytic purposes of this paper. While doing this, I refrain from a very meticulous formalism regarding morpho-syntactic detail, which characterizes much of the work done within construction grammar(s). Instead, I will concentrate on the factors that make a real difference at the interface of the sequential organization of turns and their syntax.

The formalism deployed in construction grammar works with a matrix of attributes and values which define the constraints under which a certain construction can be recognized and generated. The very concept of a *construction* is hereby an

abstraction – comparable to a phoneme or a morpheme – and offers a template for instantiations of real-world linguistic expressions, *constructs* (Fried & Östman 2004). That is, when we attempt to define the necessary grammatical conditions of a construction we do not in the first place describe what there is in a single particular utterance but rather in an utterance type. Constructions may also be of any size, varying from words to clauses and texts, and they have *internal features*, like specific syntactic relations, and *external features,* which define how a construction is constrained by context (Östman 2007).

Some basic attributes and values must be introduced to enable the creation of appropriate attribute–value matrixes for sequential constraints on constructions (cf. Lindström & Londen 2008: 123). Since virtually all talk is produced within turns which consist of turn constructional units (TCUs) of varying linguistic shapes (words, phrases, clauses, sentences), it is reasonable to provide an attribute concerning the basic architecture of a turn. We can call this attribute *turn-type* (TT) and it can have values like 1TCU referring to single-unit turns consisting of only one TCU, 2TCU referring to a multi-unit turn consisting of two TCUs, or possibly m-TCU, which would refer to a multi-unit turn when the exact number of the TCUs is not possible or relevant to define. Turns then occur in sequences of turns and therefore we introduce the attribute *sequentiality* (Seq), applicable to any turn in talk-in-interaction. Relevant values for the attribute Seq are PP1 (first pair-part), PP2 (second pair-part), pos2 (turn in second position), pos3 (turn in third position), or antecedent (turn) and subsequent (turn) for less clear-cut sequential cases. Finally, we enter the analysis of TCUs and for this purpose we simply introduce the value TCU, which refers to the sequentiality relations *within* a turn. In multi-unit turns this value must be specified as regards its position, like TCU1 (first TCU in the turn, or an antecedent TCU), TCU2 (second TCU in the turn, or a subsequent TCU) and so on. The linguistic category (cat) of a TCU, i.e. what the basic grammatical building block of it is, can be defined with the values S (sentential), C (clausal), Ph (phrasal) and L (lexical),[3] but this may be superfluous because the linguistic formation will be defined properly in the syntactic domain of the constructional analysis, as will be described below.

Having defined these attributes and values, we could try and analyze an interrogative utterance type like *Ska vi göra det?* 'Shall we do that?'. The descriptive matrix would look as follows, here completed with the additional attribute *sem* from the semantic domain of analysis, which refers to the semantic value of the expression[4] (see Fried & Östman 2004: 30):

TT   1TCU
    cat=C

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[3] This linguistic categorization of the make-up of TCUs resonates with the classic formulation in Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson (1974: 702), according to which the types of turn constructional units are identified as sentential, clausal, phrasal, and lexical. In this adaptation, *sentential* means a clause complex which houses more than one clause, while *clausal* refers to a single clause unit, corresponding to *simple sentence* in traditional grammatical accounts. Further, sentential unit-types include those which consist of a phrasal or a parenthetical element which is combined with a clausal unit, e.g. *Well, I don't think so*.

[4] In fact, an attribute like *action* could be appropriate here, perhaps with a value like *request* or *suggestion*. It is, however, not clear which kinds of actions we can and should recognize in an interactional grammar (cf. the taxonomies in the theory of speech acts, Searle 1975; see also Couper-Kuhlen, this volume). In the end, action statuses can only be analyzed in real-world contexts of occurrence where an utterance type's action potential is realized.

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Seq    PP1
       sem=Q
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This utterance (construct) then represents a turn-type which consists of one clausal TCU, which is sequentially organized as a first pair-part and has the basic semantic value of a (polar) question (Q).

However, when we consider TCUs we must be aware that no linguistic structure is *a priori* a TCU: What is treated as a TCU in a real-world interaction is a joint achievement by the speakers. Unithood cannot thus be a necessary condition for a *construction* – indeed, it is perhaps more properly a feature of a *construct* – but it may be a necessary abstraction with which we are able to recognize interactionally and grammatically possibly relevant stretches of talk. That is, also actual speakers in an interaction (and not only analysts) seem to orient towards possibly completed units because the possible point of unit completion may warrant turn transition.[5]

With the attributes TT and Seq we have basically dealt with the contextual, external features of a construction. For a fuller grammatical description we need to operate with attributes and values relating to the internal constructional features that concern the linguistic form itself. A few of these are explicated below and basically adapted from Fried & Östman 2004. Since this study concentrates on a clausal pattern, an attribute for syntactic relations (Syn) is used as a point of departure. Its possible primary values are S (a clause complex) and C (a single clause). Clausal structures may be further broken down into their constituent parts: A clause complex (S) may be made of two clauses (2C), for example, a combination of a superordinate and a subordinate clause, or a clause may also be "complicated" by the presence of extraclausal elements like discourse markers (Dm). A Swedish (simple) clause has mandatory primary constituents like T (topic), V_{fin} (finite predicate verb) and the subject, which is here defined as a grammatical function (gf) of a linguistic unit from a relevant category, typically a noun phrase (NP). Thus, a clausal construct like the declarative *Det kan vi göra* 'We can do that (lit. 'That can we do') may be formalized as follows (for the sake of clarity, the linguistic forms realized are presented here as values for the attribute *lform*, i.e. 'linguistic form'):

```
Syn    C
       T      gf=obj      V      fin            NP     gf=sbj
              cat=P              md=ind                cat=P
                                 cat=aux-m
              lform=det          lform=kan             lform=vi

                          V      n-fin
                                 cat=inf
                                 lform=göra
```

To explain the content of the notation above, the clause (C) is initiated with a topic constituent (T) – i.e. the normally obligatory first constituent in Swedish declaratives – whose grammatical function in this clause is that of an object (gf=obj); the object is retrieved from the parts of speech category pronoun (cat=P), i.e. the demonstrative *det*

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[5] The question of unit types has been central in conversation analytic work since it was raised by Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974) and their relevance has been confirmed in later work on the recognisability of turn transition places (see Ford & Thompson 1996).

'that'. The following constituent is the finite verb *kan* 'can' (V with the value "fin") inflected in indicative mood (md=ind) and retrieved from the category of modal auxiliaries (aux-m). The third primary constituent is a pronominal noun phrase (the NP *vi* 'we'), which has the grammatical function of a subject – a normal position for the subject in a declarative when it is not produced as the topic (T). Finally, an infinitival verb form (V with the value "n-fin"), *göra* 'do', is produced as a complement to the finite predicate verb.

The constituent symbols (T, V, NP) are arranged horizontally and vertically to illustrate basic linear and hierarchical relations. According to the flat syntactic model familiar from Scandinavian positional syntax (cf. Diderichsen 1946 on Danish), the "mandatory" constituents topic, finite verb and subject are presented on a horizontal axis on a par with each other, although the topic in cases like above is a verb phrase complement (object). This choice is made because of the descriptive strength of a flat syntactic account when applied to V2 languages which have a strong word-order fixation around the topic, the finite verb and the subject. Verb phrase complements other than the topic are arranged below the finite verb; the vertical order thus signals a hierarchical relation.

All this may appear technical, but it does not mean that it is complicated. The system of notation is intended to be condensed and exact, albeit it is by no means a complete apparatus.[6] Its purpose is to detect distinctive features of constructions that will stand out as "minimal pairs" in relation to each other in a way reminiscent of phonemes in phonetic accounts. Of course, we can – and will in the following – present these things verbally as well, but a verbal account cannot have the lucid force of a formal language that is designed for its specific purposes.

4. A positionally sensitive grammar for verb-first clauses

To return to our case of verb-first clauses (hereafter abbreviated V^1C), we can start the comparison between the different functional variants by examining the exchange in (5), extracted from (1), where a polar question (line 1) and a reply to it occur:

(5) Polar question (GIC: 16634; Call to the Poison Control Centre, P=pharmacist, C=caller.)
$\rightarrow$

    03 P: kan   de va-ra mer än   f<u>e</u>m frö-n?
                 can.PRS it be-INF more than five seed-PL
                 'can it be more than five seeds?'

    04   (1.3)

---

[6] For example, attributes and values regarding intonation could be introduced in the prosodic domain of constructional analysis (cf. Fried & Östman 2004). However, we do not have unequivocal information concerning in what way, say, a certain kind of intonation distinguishes constructions. For example, polar questions and declaratives often have a falling intonational contour in Swedish (Huhtamäki 2012). Falling intonation may be a constructional feature as such, signalling unit closure, but since intonation cannot be operationalized as a distinctive marker for the different verb-first clauses, the prosodic domain is not included in the present analysis.

05 C: ja de vet >ja inte<
       PRT that know.PRS I NEG
       'well I don't know about that'

06 ja ska gå: å frå̱ga (dom e) i m̱at-sal-en
    I shall.PRS go.INF and ask.INF they be.PRS in food-hall-DEF
    'I'll go and ask (they're) in the dining room'

Table 1 gives an account of the sequential and syntactic organization in (5) according to the guidelines presented in section 3. To enhance the illustrative force, the constructional analysis comprises the polar question as well as the reply.

Table 1
Sequential and syntactic construction of a V^1C polar question followed by a response to it

Sp	Construction	Construct

P:	TT 1TCU
	      cat=C
	Seq PP1
	     sem=Q
	
	Syn C
	    V fin NP gf=sbj
	      md=ind cat=exp
	      cat=aux-m
	    V n-fin
	      cat=inf
	    A gf=adv
		kan de vara mer än fem frön?

C:	TT 2TCU
	      cat=S
	Seq PP2
	      sem=D
	TCU1
	Syn S
	    Dm C
	        T gf=obj V fin NP gf=sbj SA cat=neg
	          cat=P md=ind cat=P
	TCU2
	(not analyzed)
		ja de vet ja inte
		
		(TCU2 not analyzed: *ja ska gå å fråga, dom e i matsalen*)

To summarize the formal description, a V^1C functioning as a polar question is sequentially a first-pair part, making an answer conditionally relevant (or sequentially implied) as a second pair-part. Syntactically the clause type is characterized by an empty topic position, which leaves the first realized constituent position for the finite verb, and the verb is then followed by the subject (an expletive subject in 5).

The TCU forming the answer is a declarative with some characteristic responsive features. It is initiated with the discourse marker (Dm) *ja* 'well', which acknowledges the question rather than answers it. The clausal part of this "complex sentential" TCU begins with the anaphoric pronoun *det* 'that' as the topic and it has the grammatical

function of an object. This kind of topic constituent links the contribution from its onset quite clearly back to the prior question and what was the target of it (Teleman et al. 1999: 433). The polarity of the reply is negative, expressed with the sentence adverb (SA) *inte* 'not'.

The V^{1}C polar question construction may then be compared to a V^{1}C receipt question, exemplified in extract (6) in line 8. The speakers A and B play on amateur football teams and they discuss the teams' success on the telephone.

(6) Receipt question, second position (PTS; telephone conversation between friends).

	01	A:	Hönnsta ä ju favori:t-lag-et,
			NAME be.PRS PRT favourite-team-DEF
			'Hönnsta is of course the favourite team,'

| | 02 | | (0.3) |

| | 03 | | mm: pt.h[h- |

| | 04 | B: | [spöa: |
| | | | 'beat' |

| | 05 | | (0.2) |

| | 06 | A: | va¿ |
| | | | 'what¿' |

	07	B:	spöa Kimmelby me tie noll ida,
			beat.PST NAME with ten nil today
			beat Kimmelby ten to nil today,

→	08	A:	gjorde ni?
			do.PST you.PL
			'did you?'

| | 09 | | (0.5) |

	10		nä: e re säker-t?
			no be.PRS it certain-ADV
			'no: is it sure?'

| | 11 | B: | j(h)a |
| | | | 'yeah' |

Table 2 shows the attribute–value matrix for this type of V^{1}C construction within the exchange in (6).

Table 2
Sequential and syntactic construction of a V^1C receipt question preceded by a prior turn

Sp	Construction	Construct

A:	TT 1TCU
	        cat=C
	Seq subsequent[7]
	        sem=D
	
	Syn C
	        V fin
	              md=ind
	        NP gf=obj
	              cat=prop
	        A gf=adv
		spöa Kimmelby me tie noll ida,

B:	TT 1TCU
	        cat=C
	Seq Pos2
	        sem=Q
	Syn C
	        V fin NP gf=sbj
	            md=ind cat=P
	            cat=pro
		gjorde ni?

Receipt questions have certain characteristic morpho-syntactic features: They usually limit themselves to two or three constituents – only the predicate and the subject are produced in (6) – and the constituents are "pro-forms". The predicate either repeats the finite auxiliary verb produced in the prior utterance (like the perfect tense marker *har* in ex. 2) or, alternatively, the verb *göra* 'do' is deployed to link back to a content verb in present or past tense, like the past tense form *gjorde* 'did' in (6): *spöa Kimmelby – gjorde ni?*. In sequential terms, the V^1C receipt question is characterized by its occurrence in second position turns, in a way as an extended feedback token, like *oh*, *uhhuh*, *really*. The semantics of the construction is basically that of a "question", but receipt questions differ from polar questions in that they are not truly first-pair parts. They do not make an answer conditionally relevant, although a third position acknowledgement token may occur at times, like in extract (2). For example, the receipt question in (6) is not responded to directly; instead, a response is produced when B has pursued it with a follow-up question in line 10 ("is it sure?"). The sequential second position, shortness of form and pronominal constellation thus strongly mark the responsive quality of this V^1C construction type.

　　However, it must be observed that receipt questions may also occur in a sequential third position, typically when the speaker has asked a question, then receives a newsworthy answer and marks the receipt of the news with the receipt question. An

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[7] This TCU is analyzed as a subsequent in relation to the prededing TCU *Hönnsta ä ju favoritlaget* produced by the same speaker. This sequential status is also reflected in the V1 syntax of the unit *Spöa Kimmelby me tio noll ida*. In the sequential organization of turns this TCU is, however, an "antecedent" to the receipt question *Gjorde ni?*

example is given in extract (7), line 4. The speaker A asks B if she has got new spectacles, which B denies. The denial is treated as an (embarrassing) surprise with the negatively polarized receipt question and with the accompanying laughter (for an analysis of the extract, see Norén 2010: 60).

(7) Receipt question, third position (Norén 2010: 60; Coffee with friends.)

```
          01    A:    ha-r'u        få-tt     ny-a      glas-ög-on
                      have-PRS'you get-PRF new-PL glass-eye-PL
                      'have you got new spectacles'

          02          (.)

          03    B:    ↑näe.
                      'no.'

→         04    A:    *ha-r       du  inte* ((laughs))
                       have-PRS you NEG
                      '*haven't you*'

          05    B:    dom e::    så rom börja      bli         för gaml-a nu.
                      they be.PRS so they begin.PRS become.INF too old-PL  now
                      'they're so they begin to be too old now.'
```

A receipt question in third position can therefore be given the value Pos3 when specifying the attribute Seq (cf. the analysis of the receipt question in second position in Table 2).

As noted earlier, the V^1C structure also appears in utterances that are by no means questions but rather declaratives. Two sub-types of this construction may be identified: Verb-first declaratives produced by the same speaker (an expansive variant) and verb-first declaratives produced as responses to another speaker's contribution (a responsive variant). The former type was exemplified in (3) and a further example is seen in the second TCU in the speaker S3's contribution in extract (8), line 12. The contribution is a response to the moderator's question in line 1–2, preceded by some jocular comments by the other participants.

(8) Expansive V1 declarative (GSM; Discussions on music styles with highschool students; M=moderator, S1-2-3=students).

```
          01    M:    m (.) ö:h förknippa-de ni       nån särskild   grupp av
                      PRT   PRT associate-PST you.PL some particular group of
                      'did you associate any particular group of'

          02          eh ungdom-ar        eller så me den här  musik-en?
                      PRT young.people-PL or    so with this here musik-DEF
                      'young people or so with this music?'

          03    S1:   Helena ((laughs))
                      NAME1
```

```
04    S2:    *ja*
              'yeah'

05    ?:     m

06    ?:     *ja* ((giggles))
              'yeah'

07    M:     *ja* ((laughs))
              'yeah'

08    S3:    nä-men de e      liksom min-
              no-but  it be-PRS PRT     my
              'oh well it's sort of my-'

09           dom flest-a    av min-a  kom-
              DEF  most-DEF of  my-PL (mate?)
              'most of my mate-'

10           dom flest-a    som lyssna-r   på detta av min-a kompis-ar (.)
              DEF  most-DEF REL listen-PRS on this   of my-PL mate-PL
              'most of them who listen to this of my mates (.)'

11           ha-r      i-alla-fall inv- invandrar-bakgrund (.)
              have-PRS in-any-case    immigrant-background
              'have anyway im- immigrant background (.)'

→     12     tycke-r   jag e       lite intressant.
              think-PRS I    be.PRS little interesting
              'I think it's pretty interesting.'
```

The two declarative clauses produced in S3's turn in (8) are accounted for in Table 3; the false starts, or abandoned constructional trajectories on line 8–9, are discarded in the structural analysis.

While V^1C is the only clausal form available for polar questions, V^1C declaratives are an alternative to another form of a declarative, namely the more "regular" verb-second declaratives. However, verb-first and verb-second syntax is not a matter of free variation in declaratives. When one studies declarative V^1C constructions in their sequential contexts, it becomes apparent that they have their specialized locus as subsequent units/actions. (Lindström & Karlsson 2005; Linell 2003). Accordingly, in extract (8) the speaker S3's turn houses a V2 declarative as its first complete TCU, and the subsequent TCU ("I think it's pretty interesting"), which comments on its antecedent, has the form of a V^1C.[8] Verb-first declaratives thus are a device by which speakers expand their on-going turns.

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[8] The syntactic analysis in Table 3 may not do full justice for the formation of this V^1C. This TCU is analysed as S because it is a result of a special cleft structure typical of spoken Swedish: The predicate+subject *tycker jag* 'think I' is followed by the "rest" of a complement clause *e lite intressant* 'is pretty interesting', while the subject of this clause is omitted in the sentence initial position. A canonical variant would be: <u>*Det tycker jag e lite intressant*</u> 'That I think is pretty interesting'. However, the crucial point in the sequential perspective is that the form of the TCU is V^1C as a result of a "topic constituent drop" (cf. extracts 3 and 4).

As these V^{1}C are typically subsequent TCUs in a multi-unit turn, they may be understood to be responsive to what has preceded them in the turn (Linell 2003). This functional potential comes to the fore in uses where the verb-first declarative clearly responds to another turn, like in (9); cf. also extract (4) above.

Table 3
Sequential and syntactic construction of a V^{1}C declarative preceded by a V2 declarative

Sp	Construction	Construct
S3:	TT 2TCU 　　　cat=S Seq　PP2 TCU1 Seq　antecedent 　　　sem=D Syn　C^9 　　　T gf=sbj　V　fin　　　SA cat=conj 　　　　cat=NP　　md=ind 　　　　　　　NP gf=obj	*dom flesta som lyssnar på detta av mina kompisar har iallafall invandrarbakgrund.*
S3:	TCU2 Seq　subsequent 　　　sem=D Syn　S 　　　2C 　　　C 　　　V　fin　　　NP gf=sbj 　　　　md=ind　　　cat=P 　　　C　gf=obj	*tycker jag e lite intressant.*

(9) Responsive V1 declarative (GSM; Discussions on music styles with highschool students; M=moderator, S=student).

```
      01   M:   gö-r      man     nåt         särskilt
                do-PRS PRO.GNR something particular
                'do you do something special'

      02        när    man     lyssna-r  på den här typ-en   av musik?
                when PRO.GNR listen-PRS  on this here type-DEF of music
                'when you listen to this kind of music?'

→     03   S:   tro-r     man     laga-r    mat.
                believe-PRS PRO.GNR make-PRS food
                '(I) think you cook food.'
```

---

^{9} Note that the syntactic analysis here is strictly clausal. Therefore, the antecedent TCU in (8) is analysed as being made of a single (main) clause although the topic constituent of it, the subject, is a complex NP housing a relative clause.

The sequential and syntactic account of the V^{1}C on line 3, as well as the turn preceding it, is presented in Table 4.

Table 4
Sequential and syntactic construction of a V^{1}C declarative preceded by a polar question

Sp	**Construction**	**Construct**

M:	TT 1TCU
	        cat=S
	Seq PP1
	        sem=Q
	
	Syn S
	        2C
	        C
	        V fin NP gf=sbj
	              md=ind cat=P
	        NP gf=obj
	        C gf=adv
		gör man nåt särskilt när man lyssnar på den här typen av musik?

A:	TT 1TCU
	        cat=S
	Seq PP2
	        sem=D
	
	Syn S
	        2C
	        C
	        V fin
	            md=ind
	        C gf=obj
		tror man lagar mat.

This sequential type of V^{1}C then differs from expansive verb-first declaratives in that instantiations of it are truly responsive as second pair-parts, sometimes also as latter responses in a series of responsive turns in a multi-part conversation. The instance in (9) also shows a syntactic variation of V^{1}C declaratives in which the subject is unexpressed, here in the matrix clause (*jag*) *tror* '(I) think' (cf. Mörnsjö 2002; Wide 2014).[10] Canonically the subject should be housed in the topic position, which is now "empty". Observe that a V^{1}C of this kind cannot form a syntactically felicitous polar question, since the subject must be expressed in polar questions (e.g. *Tror <u>du</u> man lagar mat?* 'Do <u>you</u> think they cook food?'). Nonetheless, the syntactic forms of verb-first declaratives and polar questions are in many cases, like in (3), at least superficially identical, i.e. the "topic constituent" position is empty and the finite predicate verb and the subject constitute the start of the clause (and the whole clause in some cases).

The last clause type with a V^{1}C structure under consideration here is the conditional protasis. V^{1}C provides an alternative to conditional protases which are

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[10] *Tror* 'believe' in (9) is barely analyzable as a discourse marker or a parenthetical, since it does not appear in this bare form in other utterance positions, different from *glaub* in German (cf. Auer & Günthner 2003: 11). Rather, the form is a result of a positionally sensitive "omission" of the first clausal constituent (the topic) in a response position; what is happening here therefore is not so much a "subject drop" but a "topic drop", like in (8), which preserves the subject since it is not the topic of the clause.

introduced by a subjunction and have the syntax of a subordinate clause with the verb always following the subject, e.g. *om det kan vara mera än fem frön* 'if it can be more than five seeds'. The syntactic form of conditional V^{1}C coincides with polar questions and verb-first declaratives (the subtype shown in (9) excluded). The instantiation in line 7 in (10) is familiar from extract (1) above but presented here with the preceding sequential context. The pharmacist (P) at a poison control centre explains to the caller (C) which amounts of a certain plant's seeds are hazardous if eaten. Note that a V^{1}C conditional is produced also in line 2–3.

(10) Conditional protasis (GIC: 16634; Call to the Poison Control Centre, P=pharmacist, C=caller).

```
01   P:    och att  eh (0.7) de  som vi vi  eh (1.2) säj-er  då, de  e     att
            and that PRT     that REL we we PRT       say-PRS then that be.PRS that
            'and what we say then is that'

02         e     de m e r  då  än  ett p a r ¿ de vill     säj-a   tv å  frö-n (.)
            be.PRS it more then than one pair it  want.PRS say-INF two seed-PL
            'be it more than a couple of¿ that is to say two seeds'

03         eller a n-dra  växt-del-ar  som barn-et [ha-r     få-tt    i  sej=
            or    other-PL plant-part-PL REL child-DEF have-PRS get-PRF in REFL
            'or other parts of the plant that the child has got in him/herself'

04   C:                                            [ja
                                                    'yeah'

05   P:    =då  ska       man      ge      medicin-skt k o::l,
             then shall.PRS PRO.GNR give.INF medicin-ADJ coal
            'then you must give medical coal'

06         (0.2)

→ 07 P:    kan      de va      mera än  f e:m frö-n
            can.PRS it be.INF more than five seed-PL
            'can it be more than five seeds'

08         då   ska       man       in ti sj u k-hu:s,
            then shall.PRS PRO.GNR in to sick-house
            'then one has to go to the hospital'
```

Table 5 gives a constructional account of this type of V^{1}C, based on the second instantiation in line 7. The general sequential status of V^{1}C conditional turns may be neutral (or undetermined), but they seem to occur in clarifications of a circumstance that has been actualized; therefore, conditional clause combinations possibly constitute subsequent rather than antecedent actions.

The conditional protasis differs from the rest of the V^{1}C constructions in sequential as well as syntactic terms. From a sequential point of view, verb-first conditionals are not TCUs of their own but housed within a TCU, that is, they do not appear as turns in their own right (otherwise the structure is interpretable as a polar

question or a declarative, depending on the context). The syntactic reflection of this is that verb-first conditional protases are embedded as adverbial topic constituents in a clause combination where the subsequent consequent clause (apodosis) is the superordinate clause. The embedding is slightly loosened in the instantiation in (10), which presents the conditional topic (*kan de vara mera än fem frön*) as left dislocated, and it is reprised by the anaphoric adverb *då* 'then' as a "dummy" topic (see Teleman et al. 1999: 440 for dislocations in Swedish). This particular feature of the left-dislocation construction does not, however, obscure the fact that conditional protases are typically constituents, of TCUs and in clause combinations.

Table 5
Sequential and syntactic construction of a V^1C conditional protasis followed by apodosis

Sp	**Construction**	**Construct**

P:	TT 1TCU
	     cat=S
	Seq neutral/subsequent?
	     sem=cond
	
	Syn S
	    2C
	    C1
	    T gf=adv
	    ↓
	    V fin NP gf=sbj
	      md=ind cat=exp
	    V n-fin
	      cat=inf
	    A gf=adv
	
	    C2
	    (T) gf=adv V fin NP gf=sbj
	             md=ind cat=P
	          PP gf=adv
		Kan de va mera än fem frön dä ska man in ti sjukhus.

Having now analyzed the sequential–syntactic main characteristics of different variations of Swedish V^1C constructions I present a summary of their generic grammatical profiles in Table 6.

The summary in Table 6 shows that the V^1C compared here are most expressly constrained by the sequential domain. Polar questions are typically first pair-parts whereas receipt questions are responsive in their orientation occupying second or third position turns in a sequence. Verb-first declaratives are characteristic subsequent units in multi-unit turns or in sequences of turns by expanding, commenting or responding to a prior move (in some cases as second pair-parts). Verb-first conditional protases are not potential turns at all but parts of TCUs that build a turn.

The syntactic differentiation is not as unequivocal, since there is in principle a potential similarity of form in all cases. The minimal V^1C consists of a finite verb as the predicate and a noun phrase as the subject, for example as in the string *kan jag* 'can I',

which could occur as a polar question (11a), receipt question (11b), responsive declarative (11c) and conditional protasis (11d):

Table 6
A comparison between V^{1}C constructions with reference to the sequential and syntactic domain.

Domain	Polar question	Receipt question	V1 declarative	V1 conditional
Sequential	TCU PP1	TCU 2/3 position turn	TCU Subsequent/PP2	Non-TCU

Syntactic	C
	V fin
	    md=ind
	+
	NP gf=sbj
		C
		V fin
		    md=ind
		    cat=aux/P
		+
		NP gf=sbj
		    cat=P
			a. C
			    V fin
			        md=ind
			    +
			    NP gf=sbj
			
			b. C
			    V fin
			        md=ind
			     +
			    V compl
				C
				T gf=adv
				↓
				V fin
				    md=ind
				+
				NP gf=sbj

(11) The V^{1}C string *kan jag* in different sequential positions (constructed).

a.   A: *Kan jag*?
            'Can I?' (taste this food)
      B: Ja, var så god.
            'Yes, please.'

b.   A: Du kan gärna smaka på alla sorter.
            'You can taste all sorts for sure.'
      B: *Kan jag*?
            'Can I?'

c.   A: Kan du föra den här boken till biblioteket?
            'Can you take this book to the library?'
      B: *Kan jag* (väl).
            'I can (I suppose).'

d.   A: *Kan jag* kan du.
            'If I can, you can.'

In practice, there are certain syntactic constraints, or at least preferences, concerning some of the constructions. The possibility to introduce constituents in the clausal structure is most open (or productive) in polar questions, declaratives and conditional protases; indeed, they code typically more information and thus more constituents than just a highly anaphoric finite verb and subject. Receipt questions in contrast limit themselves to the minimal syntactic form and to the use of pronominal constituents that have their antecedents in the prior turn of a sequence. Conditional protases again are constituent clauses, always housed in the topic position of a main clause, or

alternatively dislocated from this position with a pronominal link in a main clause. There is also some characteristic variation in the form of verb-first declaratives, which basically look like polar questions with an "empty" topic position (type c). However, these declaratives may drop also the subject from the same position, which leaves the clause without one of its basic "obligatory" constituents, i.e. V1 declaratives of type b in Table 6 (see Wide 2014). Dropping the subject is not an intrinsic constructional option for the other types of V^1C.[11]

Although there are some syntactic features that constrain the formal scope of some of the V^1C discussed here and potentially, but not always necessarily, differentiate between them, it is nonetheless the sequential domain that provides the most robust constraints. The present analysis therefore shows that matters related to sequential organization are of grammatical importance. Consequently, a grammatical account should include positionally sensitive attributes and values if adequate constructional accounts are to be achieved.

5. Conclusion

This study has proposed a model for a grammar that combines regularities of sequential organization with a clausal syntactic analysis. The sequential and syntactic axes of analysis together constrain the clausal constructions and provide the "templates" by which the speakers produce the actual utterance forms in the appropriate sequential locations. By presenting this model, nothing absolutely new has been said about sequence organization or syntactic structures as such. The facts concerning sequentiality that have been presented here may even appear banal to someone who has studied interaction in conversation, and a grammarian is hardly impressed by the adapted sketchy flat syntactic notation.

I would like to argue, however, that by bringing together what we know about sequential organization and clausal syntax, it is possible to discover new essential aspects of the orderliness in the use and structure of grammatical constructions of a language, in this case the Swedish verb-first clauses. For example, it has not been widely recognized in grammars that the locus of declarative verb-first clauses is subsequent TCU:s in multi-unit turns or in responding turns in a series of turns. Further, the integration of sequentiality and syntax in the analytic model clearly revealed decisive distinctive features between interrogative, conditional and declarative verb-first clauses which are not expressly distinguished by syntax alone. These distinctive features were systematically captured in a notation that builds on attribute-value matrixes familiar from the framework of construction grammar. Formalism or a certain kind of notation should not, however, be an end itself in a positionally sensitive grammatical analysis. Nonetheless, the definition of relevant attributes and values helps to point out distinctive constructional features in a lucid and economic manner and this practice forces the analyst to tease out these features from the particular instantiations that the data provide. Therefore, the above analysis is not to be taken as a mere intellectual exercise. It has actualized questions of paramount importance for an

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[11] However, specific dialogical circumstances may license utterance forms that are elliptical (or to put it more properly, positionally sensitive) in various ways depending on what the speaker chooses to focus on. For example, an echo-question, signalling incredulity, might be expressed without the subject: *Hon kommer inte i dag* 'She's not coming today.' – *Kommer inte?* 'Not coming?'.

interactional linguistic account; for example, what kinds of units constitute turns in interaction, how are they dependent on sequential position and what kinds of sequential relations can be recognized and operationalized?

Data

GIC: Telephone conversations to the Poison Control Centre in Sweden. Department of Scandinavian Languages, FUMS, Uppsala University. Data included in the core corpus of the project *Grammar in Conversation: A Study of Swedish.*

PTS: A corpus of private telephone conversations compiled by Anna Lindström. Department of Scandinavian Languages, FUMS, Uppsala University. Data included in the core corpus of the project *Grammar in Conversation: A Study of Swedish.*

GSM: *The language and music worlds of high school students*. Audio recordings collected at the Gothenburg University, Department of Swedish.

SAMGRAM 5:1: A get-together with three female friends. Department of Scandinavian Languages, FUMS, Uppsala University. Data included in the core corpus of the project *Grammar in Conversation: A Study of Swedish.*

Appendix 1: List of transcription symbols

[	a point of overlap onset
=	a single continuous utterance or two "latching" utterances
.	a falling intonation contour
,	a continuing (flat) intonation contour
?/¿	a rising/slightly rising intonation contour
↑	prosodic up-step
w<u>o</u>rd	a stressed syllable
wo:rd	a stretching of a sound
word	smile voice, possibly accompanied with a laughter
>word<	compressed or rushed talk
wo-	a hearable cut-off
(word)	uncertain transcription
?:	uncertain speaker identification
hh	a hearable out-breath
.hh	a hearable in-breath
pt	a smacking sound
(.)	a micropause, less than 2/10 of a second
(1.3)	a pause measured in tenths of a second
((laughs))	transcriber's comments

Appendix 2: List of grammatical abbreviations

ADJ	adjectival
ADV	adverbial
AUX	auxiliary
AUX-M	auxiliary, modal
CONJ	conjunctional
DEF	definite form/article
EXP	expletive (subject)
FIN	finite
NAME1/2	first name/second name (surname)
N-FIN	non-finite
GNR	generic
IMP	imperative
IND	indicative
INF	infinitive
NEG	negation
OBJ	object
PL	plural
PRF	perfect tense
PRS	present tense
PST	past tense
PRT	'particle'; discourse marker
PRO	pronoun
PROP	proper name
REFL	reflexive
REL	relative
SBJ	subject

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