

WEAK CESURAS: WHAT FUZZY BOUNDARIES CAN ACCOMPLISH IN TALK-IN-INTERACTION

EDITORS

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DESCRIPTION

Notions like TCU, turn, action, activity, project, and practice, are basic terms in Conversation Analysis and Interactional Linguistics (IL). While analytically highly valuable, such concepts suggest that participants interact by using clearly identifiable building blocks. Moreover, they are often considered Gestalt-based chunks, created by converging unit boundaries in various linguistic dimensions (e.g., Sacks et al. 1974, Ford/Thompson 1996, Schegloff 2007, Szczepek Reed 2010). Yet, research has pointed out that everyday talk is difficult to cut into chunks (e.g., Auer 2010, Deppermann/Proske 2015): missing boundary cues blur unit ends in single dimensions and diverging (sub)unit ends make Gestalt-based chunks such as the TCU fuzzy (see, e.g., Couper-Kuhlen/Ono 2007, Walker 2007, Li 2014, Pekarek Doehler et al. 2015). Both phenomena create **weak cesuras** (see Barth-Weingarten 2016)

This special issue would like to draw attention to such fuzziness and show that it can indeed be interactionally functional (Ford 2004: 31, Clayman 2013: 158). Resulting from an international workshop in 2018 and a follow-up IEMCA panel last July, six papers plus an introduction to the topic will highlight relevant interactional phenomena with detailed systematic analyses. Adopting the cesura concept (Barth-Weingarten 2016) to capture the form side, the papers highlight various practices involving fuzzy boundaries participants use for interactional purposes such as managing specific aspects of turn-yielding, informing, questioning, assessing, and quoting in languages such as English, German, French, Chilean Spanish, and Mandarin Chinese. We set out to argue that, while the assumed "challenges for segmentation" can be considered symptoms of language change (grammaticization, e.g., Hopper 1998), they are first and foremost an integral part of talk-in-interaction as they afford the participants with greater flexibility in, and more resources for, accomplishing action. Moreover, taken seriously, they allow us some new insights into notions central to CA/IL.

- ▶ Auer, P. (2010): Zum Segmentierungsproblem in der gesprochenen Sprache. In: InLiSt 49.
- ▶ Barth-Weingarten, D. (2016): Intonation units revisited – Cesuring in talk-in-interaction. Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- ▶ Clayman, St. E.: (2013): Turn-Constructional Units and the Transition Relevance Place. In: Sidnell, J./T. Stivers (eds.) (2013): The Handbook of Conversation Analysis. Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 150-166.
- ▶ Couper-Kuhlen, E./T. Ono (2007): Incrementing in conversation. A comparison of methods in English, German and Japanese. In: Pragmatics 17: 505-512.
- ▶ Deppermann, A./N. Proske (2015): Grundeinheiten der Sprache und des Sprechens. In: Dürscheid, C./J.G. Schneider (eds.): Handbuch 'Satz, Schema, Äußerung'. Berlin: de Gruyter, 17-47.
- ▶ Ford, C.E. (2004): Contingency and units in interaction. In: Discourse Studies 6: 27-52.

- ▶ ---/ S.A. Thompson (1996): Interactional units in conversation: syntactic, intonational, and pragmatic resources for the management of turns. In: Ochs, E./E.A. Schegloff/S.A. Thompson (eds.): Interaction and grammar. Cambridge: CUP, 134-184.
- ▶ Hopper, P.J. (1998): Emergent grammar. In: Tomasello, Michael (ed.): The new psychology of language, Vol. 1. Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum, 155-175.
- ▶ Li, X. (2014): Multimodality, Interaction and Turn-taking in Mandarin Conversation. Benjamins: Amsterdam.
- ▶ Pekarek Doehler, S. et al. (eds.) (2015): Time and emergence in grammar. Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- ▶ Sacks, H/E.A. Schegloff/G. Jefferson (1974): A simplest systematics for the organization of turn-taking for conversation. In: Language 50: 696-735.
- ▶ Schegloff, E.A. (2007): Sequence Organization in interaction. A primer in conversation analysis (Vol. 1). Cambridge: CUP.
- ▶ Szczepek Reed, B. (2010): Intonation phrases in natural conversation: A participants' category? In: Barth-Weingarten, D./E. Reber/M. Selting (eds.): Prosody in interaction. Amsterdam: Benjamins, 191-212.
- ▶ Walker, G. (2007): On the design and uses of pivots in everyday English conversation. In: Journal of Pragmatics 39: 2217-2243.

LIST OF CONTRIBUTIONS:

Dagmar Barth-Weingarten (Potsdam, Germany), Richard Ogden (York, UK)
Practices with weak cesuras in talk-in-interaction

Elizabeth Couper-Kuhlen (Helsinki, Finland)
OH+OKAY in informing sequences: From multi-unit turn to turn-initial particle

Simona Pekarek Doehler (Neuchâtel, Switzerland)
From multi-unit to single-unit question: prosodic and bodily-visual cues for delimiting units

Dagmar Barth-Weingarten, Uwe-A. Küttner (Potsdam, Germany), Chase W. Raymond (Boulder, USA)
Cesuring in pivot constructions: How prosody and phonetics can inform action analysis

Daniel Mandel, Oliver Ehmer (Freiburg, Germany)
Fuzzy boundaries in quotations

Xiaoting Li (Edmonton, Canada)
The linguistic-bodily formats for syntactically incomplete assessments in Mandarin conversation

Verónica González Temer (Santiago de Chile, Chile), Richard Ogden (York, UK)
Multimodal constructions as a participant device for sense-making

DEADLINES:

February 2020: first drafts for internal review

April 2020: deadline for revised versions

May 2020: submission to Open Linguistics

HOW TO SUBMIT:

Authors are kindly invited to register at our paper processing system at:
<http://www.editorialmanager.com/opli/> and submit their contribution.

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