

Spoken interaction modelling:

the functions of feedback repetitions
in spontaneous dialogue

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Communication modelling and talk-in-interaction

Analysis of communication should focus primarily on talk-in-interaction rather than the decoding of linguistic signs, but should do this by investigating the norms and conventions which speakers in interaction observably orient to as the resources by which to establish or cement their mutual communicative understanding.

Hutchby, Ian 2001. Conversation and technology: From the telephone to the internet.

Cambridge: Polity Press

Feedback in interaction

Feedback – listener's vocalisations marking receipt of the previous talk, but not contributing to topic; highly influential „listener's behaviour“ that is used not only for the listening, but also for more or less implicitly guiding the conversation.

Gardner, Rod 1998. Between speaking and listening: The vocalisation of understandings. *Applied Linguistics*, 19(2), 204-224.

Feedback items

- response particles (*ahah, jah, mhmh, nii*);
- assessments (*selge, hästi*);
- **(echoe)repetitions;**
- etc.

Method: Conversation Analysis

- observation of authentic interaction;
- attention paid to concrete examples, the sequential structure of conversation, prosody and interactional functions of the items;
- qualitative approach;
- the choice and classification of data is based upon interaction, not other factors;
- description and interpretation takes the perspective of interlocutors (demonstrated in their sequential reactions).

ten Have, P. 1999. *Doing Conversational Analysis: a Practical Guide*. London: Sage.

Schegloff, E. A. 1993. Reflections on quantification in the study of conversation – *Research on Language and Social Interaction*, 26(1), 99-128.

Feedback repetitions: functions

- **acknowledgement**
- **repair initiation**
- agreement or confirmation

Perrin, Deshaies, Paradis 2003. Pragmatic functions of local diaphonic repetitions in conversation. – Journal of Pragmatics 35, 1843-1860

Context for repetitions: preciseness

1. H: tere, `andke palun `Pärnus `Selveris on üks=e
elek`troonika (.) [`pood.]

*H: hello give me please there is an electronics shop in
Pärnu in Selver*

1. /---/

2. V: number > kinnitamata andmetel < neli neli (.)
kaks? (0.5) üheksa kaks? (0.2) kaks (0.2) viis.

V: the unconfirmed number is 4 4 2 9 2 2 5

1. (0.8)

2. H: {--} **üheksa kaks kaks viis**, < aga siis `öelge
on=e > (.) { `Narva} `kaubahoovis (0.8)
elek`troonikapood.

*H: **9 2 2 5**, and then tell me is there an electronics
shop in Narva hypermarket*

inquiry service

Context for repetitions: surprise

1. H: e e ma tahtsi- aga öelge kas ma näiteks tema juurde saan järje[korda.]

H: er I wante- oh tell me can I for instance register to her waiting list

1. V: soovite panna.

V: you wish to put

1. H: ma tahaks jah. (.)

H: I'd like to, yeah

1. V: nii, [ee]

V: OK, er

1. H: [õe] panna.

H: put (my) sister

1. V: **õe**, kas te tema nüüd, kuidas tal nimi on.

*V: **sister**, now do you (know) her.., what is her name* **outpatient's dep.**

Feedback repetitions: functions

- **acknowledgement** (no need for a reaction from interlocutor)
- **repair initiation** (does need a reaction)
- **agreement or confirmation**

Perrin, Deshaies, Paradis 2003. Pragmatic functions of local diaphonic repetitions in conversation. – Journal of Pragmatics 35, 1843-1860

Wrong repetition always initiates a repair

1. V: seitse? (.) neli neli?

V: 7 4 4

1. (0.5)

2. H: [jah]

H: yes

1. V: [sei]tse kaks null kuus.

V: 7 2 0 6

1. H: **seitse neli neli? (0.2) neli (0.2) [kaks?]**

H: 7 4 4 4 2

1. V:

['ei,]

2. (0.5) ` **seitse** kaks null kuus.

inquiry service

V: **no, ... 7 2 0 6**

Intentional repair initiation – confirmation/rejection needed

1. V: kuidas ´nimi on.

V: what is the name

1. H: ee ´Kuusk (.) ´Kerttu

H: er Kuusk Kerttu

1. (2.0)

2. V: ´**Kertu.**

*V: **Kertu***

1. (0.3)

2. H: **jah, ´Kerttu. (.) kahe ´teega**

H: yes, Kerttu. Two T-s.

outpatient's dep.

Right repetition does not need a confirmation

1. H: tere, `andke palun `Pärnus `Selveris on üks=e
elek`troonika (.) [`pood.]

*H: hello give me please there is an electronics shop in
Pärnu in Selver*

1. /---/

2. V: number > kinnitamata andmetel < neli neli (.)
kaks? (0.5) üheksa kaks? (.) kaks (.) viis.

V: the unconfirmed number is 4 4 2 9 2 2 5

1. (0.8)

2. H: {--} **üheksa kaks kaks viis**, < aga siis `öelge
on=e > (.) { `Narva} `kaubahoovis (0.8)
elek`troonikapood.

*H: **9 2 2 5**, and then tell me is there an electronics
shop in Narva hypermarket*

inquiry service

Feedback repetitions in institutional interaction (right ones!)

	<i>Caller's Rep.</i>	<i>Caller's Rep. + Conf.</i>	<i>Official's Rep.</i>	<i>Official's Rep. + Conf.</i>
inquiry service (Est), 60	36	6	2	4
outpatient's department (Est), 60	4	13	14	2
outpatient's department (Rus), 60	7	27	17	9

Official's repetition – no caller's confirmation

1. O: 'mis=kell te tahate 'tulla.

O: when would you like to come

1. C: .hh õõ kuskil kahe 'teistkümne paiku.

C: er somewhere around 12

1. O: **kahe 'teistkümne paiku.** no 'kaksteist täpselt?

*O: **around 12.** Well, 12 exactly?*

1. C: jah

C: yes

1. O: sobib kuidas 'nimi on.

O: OK what's the name

1. C: .hh Pilleke 'Saabas.

2. (.)

3. O: **Saabas.** 'nii, olete 'kirjas.

outpatient's dep.

*O: **Saabas.** OK, you're registered*

Official's repetition – no caller's confirmation

1. O: ega te ei 'saa kuskilt 'otsida. (.) täendab=e 'mis aastal te 'sündind olete, [nii saab ka.]

O: can't you look it up somewhere.. I mean er what is your birth year, it can be (found) that way

1. C: [e nelikend] (.) seitse null kuus kolmteist on need numbrid.

C: er 47 0 6 13 are those numbers

1. O: **nelikend seitse**, (0.5) 'kuu on null 'kuus [jah?]

*O: **47** ... month is 0 6 yes*

1. C: [jah]

C: yes

1. (.)

2. O: hh nii vaatame

O: OK let's have a look

outpatient's dep.

Caller's repetition – official's confirmation follows

1. O: (nii)=on pakkuda: (0.5) ´kümme kaks
´kümend.

O: OK I can offer.. 10.20

1. (0.2)

2. C: ´kümme kaks ´kümend, =

C: 10.20

1. O: =**jah.**

O: yes

1. (1.0)

2. C: .hh no okei.

C: well OK

outpatient's dep.

Caller's repetition – official's confirmation follows

1. C: kas te ütleksite (.) doktor 'Maiuspala
'telefoninumbri.

C: would you tell the number of dr. Maiuspala

1. (0.5)

2. O: kaheksakend neli üks seitse üheksa.

O: 84 1 7 9

1. C: **kaheksakend neli üks seitse üheksa**
[ai]täh

*C: **84 1 7 9** thanks*

1. O: **[jah]**

*O: **yes***

1. O: palun?

O: you're welcome

outpatient's dep.

Caller's repetition – official's confirmation follows

1. O: щас я вам теле'фончик дам просто проконсуль'тируйтесь? (.) вот, телефончик двадцать шеснацать сорок два.

O: now I'll give you the number you can just consult.. here, number 20 16 42

1. (.)

2. C: **двацать шеснацать сорок два**, [a:] ЭТО К кому это {звонить}?

C: 20 16 42, and who will I get there

1. O: [МХМХ]

O: mm-hm

outpatient's dep.

Official's repetition – no caller's confirmation

1. O: .xx кодовый 'замочек 'есть в дверях? =

O: *do you have a code lock in the door?*

1. C: =нет да нет.

C: *no yes no*

1. O: теле 'фончик дома?

O: *phone at home*

1. (.)

2. C: сорок семь восемьсот восемь.

C: *47 807*

1. O: **сорок семь восемьсот восемь.** (0.2) 'ждите доктора.
(0.5) до 'часу. [мхмх]

O: **47 807.** .. *wait for the doctor. before one o'clock. mm-hm*

1. C: [{звните} пожалуста.] **outpatient's dep.**

C: *I'm sorry*

Feedback repetitions in institutional interaction (right ones!)

	<i>Caller's Rep.</i>	<i>Caller's Rep. + Conf.</i>	<i>Official's Rep.</i>	<i>Official's Rep. + Conf.</i>
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Conclusions

The usage of repetitions and confirmations is formalisable to two models: **acknowledgement structure** (no confirming reaction follows in case the repetition is a right one) and **confirmation request structure** (confirming reaction follows).

The choice of structure depends on the prosodical features of a repetition turn (the intonation contour, but even more the presence of “hesitation pause” before the utterance and “reaction pause” after the utterance) in the **minimal model** used by callers(customers) and inquiries service officials: *if the repetition is right and there is no explicit request for reaction, no reaction is needed; if the repetition is wrong, repair it.*

If the institutional role of a speaker is associated with greater responsibility and greater conversational authority than average, (s)he uses the **extended model**: *if the repetition is right, whatever the conditions, give a confirmation; if the repetition is wrong, repair it.*

Model differences based on the institutional roles of interlocutors override linguistic differences.