Dutch *'BUT'* as a sequential conjunction: Its use as a resumption marker

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In Dutch, the connective *maar* ('but') is recurrently used as a *sequential conjunction* linking turns. In the type of use we will focus on, it alludes to a contrast at the level of discourse organization. The speaker *resumes* a line of development that was abandoned in favor of a competing line of talk, and proposes that the abandoned line become the focus of talk again.

Speakers can return in different ways to an abandoned line of talk. *Continuations* present the return as an unproblematic next step, whereas *resumptions* deal with the return as a task that is not an unproblematic thing to do (section 2). We discuss two prototypical environments in which resumptions occur: after repair-sequence expansion, and after a competing line of topic development. They have in common that the preceding line of talk is oriented to as an alternative to the line that is resumed (section 3). The turn-constructional format is examined in section 4. Apart from the

level of linguistic form - the use of the connective as the turn's first term -, two other levels of format analysis are relevant. First the level of establishing a relation with the context (the way the *tying* with an earlier line of talk is accomplished). Second, the level of unit positioning within current turn (the resumption occurs in turn-initial position and it is preliminary to a next turn-constructional unit in which the resumed line of talk is continued). We compare the construction format with a similar construction type that is used as a vehicle for proposing topic closing in section 5. In the concluding section (section 6), we summarize our analysis and discuss its consequences for the semantics of conjunctions. Instead of a monosemic or polysemic analysis from a perspective that takes its starting point in the language system, we advocate an approach in which utterance types are characterized in terms of sequential features.

1. Introduction

A conjunction such as *but*, *and* or *because* can be used as a device for linking units within the same turn, but can also be used for linking turns. We use the term *sequential conjunction* to refer to the use of connectives - conjunctions, conjunctive adverbs and other types of lexicalized expressions - for specifying relations between turns.[2] A sequential conjunction gives an indication of current turn's relationship to the preceding talk. For the time being, we want to differentiate this type of use from the one in which it is employed to link clauses or phrases within the same turn (e.g., when a

speaker is relating the current turn-constructional unit to the preceding one). Connecting turn-constructional units within the same turn might be different from the work a speaker does when indicating a relationship between the current turn and its interactional context.[3]

Several types of use of the Dutch connective *maar* ('but') as a sequential conjunction can be discerned. A prominent type of use we will *not* deal with in this paper is its use in objections, as in line 66 of the following fragment[4] (the Dutch original is followed by an English translation):

(1) Girls' argument. *Ans and Bea are teenager girl friends in high school. Ans has accused Bea's boyfriend of the theft of her motor bike*.

```
58   Bea:      hij he↑ef't ↓niet expres gedaan
59             0.4
60   Ans?:     mhhHEHhh=
61   Ans:      =>WAAROM zegt ie dat dan <van dat mei:sje die be:ldeh=
62   Bea?:     =Hh
63             0.3
64   Bea:      >OMDAT IE GEWOON DOOR EEN MEI:SJE IS GE↓BEL:D
65             0.3
66   Ans: →    >maar dat kan ie toch ook verzonnen °heb↑beh
67             0.3
68   Bea:      waarom zou die dat verz[inneh
69   Ans:                             [dat weet ik ni↑et
---------
58   Bea:      he didn't do it on purpose
59             0.4
60   Ans?:     mhhhuhhh=
61   Ans:      =then why did he say this about this girl who called him=
62   Bea?:     =Hh
63             0.3
64   Bea:      because he was called by a girl of course.
65             0.3
66   Ans: →    but he could have made that up, right?
67             0.3
68   Bea:      why would he make up a thing like [that
69   Ans:                                       [how should I know?
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In line 66, Ans objects to the claim her friend made in the preceding turn. The objection-making relationship with prior turn is marked from the start by prefacing the turn with *maar* ('but').

The type of use of *maar* we will examine in this paper does not have this objection-making quality, at least not at the level of substantive stance-taking. An example of the type of use we will concentrate on is given in the following fragment. It is from a conversation of the same group of high school pupils as fragment (1). In the arrowed turn (lines 332-33), the story-teller Jan resumes the telling of a story that was suspended after a repair initiation of his recipient (lines 317-331). The turn in which the return is made begins with *maar*:

(2) The-boy-from-my-former-school story. *From the same group of high school pupils as fragment (1). Two boys and two girls are doing homework, sitting around the same table. During work, they talk about other things.*

```
313   Jan:    weet jeh, (.) >op me ouwe school ↑hè (0.4)
314           daar zat zo'n go:zer en die(jie-) die mocht ik
315           niet zo↓:h (0.3) en da was heel grappig:
316           [(want e:h)
317   Ans:    [(°hoe heet(t)↓ieh)°
318           0.5
319   Jan:    ↑wat=
320   Ans:    =en hoe heette die
321           (.)
322   Jan:    alexander,
323           1.3
324   Ans:    >op welke school heb je geze:t:n dan.=
325   Jan:    =op sint maart↓'ns:.
326           (.)
327   Ans:    o↓:h.
328           0.3
329   Ans:    (lage ge↑:)
330           0.2
331   Ans:    goe[d.     [(°>ga verder)]
332   Jan: →     [maar di[e  e : : : : ]:h (.) die e:h (0.6)
333           die (°jongeh°) (0.3) die mocht ik niet zo.=
334           =>da was ook 'n heel vreemde vogel:,< .h
335           en laa↓:tst >toen: zag ik zij↓n:- (.) zijn adres
336           en z'n naam bij CHIN↓a express ↑hè (0.4) omdat
337           ie zich had opge- opgegeveh. (.) bij mijn wer:k,
338           .h[h (°om)dat ie d'r o↑ok wou werke
339   Bea:      [hm°↓m
---------
313   Jan:    listen, (.) at my former school, you know (0.4)
314           there was this guy and he (uh-) I didn't like
315           him very much. (0.3)and this was really hilarious
316           [(because uh)
317   Ans:    [( °what was his name.°)
318           0.5
319   Jan:    what?=
320   Ans:    =°and what was his name
321           (.)
322   Jan:    Alexander,
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323          1.3
324   Ans:   which school was it.
325   Jan:   =Saint Martin's. ((name of the school))
326          (.)
327   Ans:   o:h.
328          0.3
329   Ans:   (Lower Quay,) ((name of the school's area))
330          0.2
331   Ans:   rig[ht.    [(go ahead)  ]
332   Jan: →    [but thi[s  u: : : : ]:h (.) this u:h (0.6)
333          this (°boy°) (0.3) I didn't like him very much.
334          it was really a very strange guy, .h
335          and not so long ago I saw his- (.) his address
336          and his name at China Express you know, (0.4) because
337          he had si- signed himself up (.) at my work,
338          .h[h (because) he wanted to work there too,
339   Bea:     [hm↓m
               (...)  ((story continues))
```

In the turn that begins in line 332, *maar* is used as a *resumption marker*. It prefaces an initial turn-constructional unit in which the speaker returns to his story. Inbetween, the story's delivery is stopped because of the repair initiated by its recipient (lines 317-331).

Contrary to the type of use documented in fragment (1), *maar* is not prefacing a disagreeing utterance here. Note that it does not tolerate (pre-dis-) agreement tokens like *yes* or *no* in front of it. Substantial disagreement is not what is at stake here. Rather, the connective signals some kind of contrast at the level of the organization of the discourse. The current turn is not seamlessly *continuing* the activity the participants were involved in in last turn, but is *resuming* an activity that was abandoned in the talk that led up to it. It is this resuming use of *maar* we will analyse.

2. Continue versus resume

If a next speaker moves on by returning to material further back than prior turn, he can either present his turn as a *continuation* of this earlier talk or do the return as a *resumption* (cf. Jefferson 1972: 319 *ff.*). The decision to present the next turn as one or the other is not made automatically. Depending on how a speaker packages a next turn, the preceding talk is either dealt with as something that can be integrated unproblematically into the ongoing activity (*continuation*) or as something which is moved away from when the abandoned line is picked up again (*resumption*).

Compare, for example, the different ways in which the story-teller in the fragment below goes on after an inserted *repair sequence*. In lines 29-30, the speaker *continues* the telling of his story with *en* ('and'). In lines 53-54, however, the telling is *resumed* by recycling a story component in a turn beginning with *maar*. We will gloss the moves that are of interest in the right margin of the corresponding lines in the translation:

(3) Hiking story. *From a phone call between friends*

22	Bob:	nou↓eh:: (.) we zijn daar aa::ngekomen (0.7)	
23		en eh: (.) we zijn naar 't (.) Lac du la:Gileppe gerejen	
24		(.)	
25	Eric:→	't wa:t=	***repair initiation***
26	Bob:	=Lac du la Gileppe (.)	
27		dat is een heel groot stu:wmeer	
28		1.5	
29	Bob: →	.hh en eh::: (.) nou: da (.) daar was 't o-	***continuation***
30		eh:: (.) hEE:l erg regenweer (.) daar was	
31		ammel snee::uw en eh ha::gel en zo (.)	
32		toen hebben we op een of a:ndere:: (.) mt (.)	
33		afdakje hebben we (.) onder gezeten (.)	
34		hebben we erwtensoe:p gemaakt .hhh	
35		en hebwe:: (.) 'n heleboel gegeten	
36		we hadden voor twee: dagen eten bij (.).hh en eh::	
37		2.0	
38	Bob:	nou: (.) toen- toen werd 't drоо:g (.) wonder	
39		boven wonder (.) hh toen zijn we aa::ngelopen (.)	
40		toen was 't al na:cht (.) of toen was 't al avond	
41		toen was 't al donker (.) toen zijn we aangelopen (.)	

```
42          en eh:: (.) he'we ongeveer vie:r
43          of vij:f kilometer gelopen of zo:=
44  Eric: →=in 't donker?=                          repair initiation
45  Bob:    =ja
46          (.)
47  Eric:   oh (.) wij veronderstelden (.) dat (.) dat jullie
48          uitgewerkt waren (.) zo gauw 't donker waren (.) was=
49  Bob:    =nou (.) we zijn toe:n gewoon doorgelopen
50          want we hadden nog geen slaapplek
51          (.)
52  Eric:   >jaja=
53  Bob: →  =.hh maar toen eh (.) nou toen zijn we gewoon   resumption
54          de b↑o:ssen ingelopen (.) we hadden geen lamp bij
55          en da was wel heel lastig
56  Eric:   jaha
---------
22  Bob:    well uh:: (.) we got there (0.7)
23          and uh: (.) we then drove to the (.) Lac du la Gileppe
24          (.)
25  Eric: → the what=                               repair initiation
26  Bob:    =Lac du la Gileppe (.)
27          that's a very big artificial lake
28          1.5
29  Bob: →  hh and uh::: (.) well there (.) there too-    continuation
30          the weather uh:: (.) very rainy weather (.)
31          it was all snow and uh hail and stuff (.)
32          then we sat at some (.) mt (.)
33          canopy we sat (.) under it (.)
34          made pea soup hhh
35          and ate (.) lots of it.
36          we had two days of food with us (.) hh and uh::
37          2.0
38  Bob:    well: (.) then- then the rain stopped (.) wonder
39          of all wonders (.) hh then we started to walk (.)
40          it was already night by then (.) or already evening time
41          it was already dark then (.) then we started to walk (.)
42          and uh:: (.) we did about four
43          or five kilometers or something:=
44  Eric:→  =in the dark?=                          repair initiation
45  Bob:    =yes
46          (.)
47  Eric:   oh (.) we supposed (.) that (.) that you guys were
48          finished (.) as soon as it were dark (.) was[5]=
49  Bob:    =well (.) we just walked on then
50          because we didn't have a place to sleep yet
51          (.)
52  Eric:   >yes yes=
53  Bob: →  =.hh but then uh (.) well then we just          resumption
54          walked into the woods (.) we didn't have a flashlight
55          with us and it was really very difficult
56  Eric:   yhes.
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The talk after the *repair* sequence in lines 25-28 is marked in several ways as a *continuation*. Bob's weather report in lines 29-30 no longer deals with the trouble source that was remedied in the repair sequence, but is designed so as to be heard as a *next* component of the telling that was suspended by the repair initiation. The unit that delivers the weather report begins with *en* ('and', line 29). Used as a sequential conjunction here, the

connective links the upcoming talk to the preceding talk and adds to it. The weather report does not add to the directly preceding repair sequence, however, but to the telling of the hiking adventures.

After the inserted sequence in lines 44-52, on the other hand, the teller designs his next turn as a *resumption* of earlier talk. The teller is not returning to the telling by simply delivering the *next* component of the story. Instead, he recycles the story component that occasioned the intervening talk. The event that was already talked about in line 41 (*then we started to walk*) is first reinstated into the talk and then used as a set-up for going on with the telling (lines 53-56: *but then uh (.) well then we just walked into the woods (.) we didn't have a flashlight with us ...*).

Continuations provide their own "interactional uninterestingness" (Jefferson 1972: 319). Going on is dealt with as an unproblematic thing to do next. *Resumptions*, on the other hand, indicate that there is "a problem in accomplishing a 'return'" (1972: 319). In the case of the resumption, the picking up of the telling line is not only framed as a kind of contrast with the foregoing (*but ...*), but is observably done as a re-instalment of the position from which the abandoned telling can be 'continued'.

Fragment (3) illustrates each of the different ways to go on with talk that is suspended. The inserted sequence in lines 25-27 is treated as an incidental supplement that is necessary to understand the ongoing story. As a subsidiary sequence, it is integrated into the ongoing talk as something that no longer causes a problem. It is something that can be forgotten because it is "deleted" (Jefferson 1972: 319) in and through continuing the telling of the story.

The talk occasioned by the recipient's understanding check in lines 44-52 is not dealt with as something that can be integrated smoothly and seamlessly into the ongoing talk. Rather, it is dealt with as a digression from which it is necessary to return in order to be able to go on with the telling. It is oriented to as talk in its own right. It is terminated orderly and collaboratively (see, for example, the co-operative manner in which the story-teller responds to the accounting in lines 49-50). It is treated as a different line of development that requires active re-instalment of the abandoned telling.

Resumptions accomplish non-obvious returns to a line of interaction that was abandoned because something else came inbetween. By using *maar* as the turn's first term, the speaker signals the non-incidental, not-unproblematic character of this type of return.

3. Environments of use

The instances of resuming *maar* we came across in our corpus had in common that they all occurred after a kind of digression from the line that was returned to in the resumption. Without claiming to be exhaustive, we shall discuss two types of such environments: (i) after expansion of a repair sequence that is inserted in the course of an ongoing telling, and (ii) after a competing line of topic development.

3.1 Environment of use (i): after an expanded repair sequence

One type of context of resuming *maar*-turns resembles the first two parts of the triplet structure Jefferson uses to characterise *side sequences* (1972: 316). An on-going sequence (O) is abandoned for a side sequence (S), after which a return (R) to the on-going sequence is made. Schematically:

(4) Jefferson's *side sequence*: O - S - R

In fragment (2), for example, the *Ongoing Sequence* part is the telling in lines 313-16 (the relevant part of the fragment is repeated below). A participant projects a 'hilarious' story about this boy from his former school. The story's delivery is halted when the recipient inquires after the name of the boy (line 317). This inquiry opens the *Side sequence* part, which runs until line 331. The teller returns to the story in line 332-33 (*Return*):

(2') *Repeat of the English translation of fragment 2:*
The-boy-from-my-former-school

313	Jan: →	*listen, (.) >at my former school, you know*	
314		*(0.4) there was this guy and he (uh-)*	***Ongoing***
315		*I didn't like him very much. (0.3) and this*	***sequence***
316		*was really hilarious [(because uh)*	
317	Ans: →	*[(°what was his name.°)*	***Side***
318		*0.5*	***sequence***
319	Jan:	*what?=*	
320	Ans:	*=°and what was his name*	
321		*(.)*	
322	Jan:	*Alexander,*	
323		*1.3*	
324	Ans: *	*which school did you go to then.*	
325	Jan:	*=to Saint Martin's. ((name of the school))*	
326		*(.)*	

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327   Ans:   o↓:h.
328          0.3
329   Ans:   (Lower Quay,) ((name of the area))
330          0.2
331   Ans:   rig[ht.    [(°go ahead) ]
332   Jan: →    [but thi[s  u: : : : ]:h (.) this u:h (0.6)
333          this (°boy°) (0.3) I didn't like him very much.
334          it really was a very strange guy,
```

Return

The environments in which *maar*-resumptions are done have more in common than merely being side sequences, however. The side sequences are launched by a *repair initiation* of the recipient (Schegloff et al. 1977). In fragment 2, for example, this is the question in line 317. Second, the repair initiation begins a repair sequence that is not closed as soon as repair is provided. Instead, the sequence is extended by *non-minimal postexpansion(s)*, as in lines 323-31 of (2).

Because the notion *postexpansion* (*cf.* Schegloff 1990 and 1997c) is central to the argument, we will briefly elaborate on it. The extended repair sequence in lines 317-331 of fragment (2) has developed from a base sequence with an adjacency pair structure through different types of sequence expansion. The first pair part of the base sequence is the question that initiates the repair (*what was his name?*, line 317), and the answer that is given to it is its second pair part (*Alexander*, line 322). Sequences with adjacency-pair structuring may be expanded before the first pair part (*pre-expansion*), between the first and the second pair part (*insert-expansion*; *e.g.*, the inserted repair sequence in lines 319-20), and after the second pair part (*post-expansion*, as in lines 323-31). The postexpansion in the repair-sequence in fragment (2) is non-minimal. Instead of minimally registering the repair's successfulness, the repair-initiator reacts with yet another question (line 324). This leads to an

expansion of the sequence with at least two more positions (the question turn in line 324, and the answer to it in 325).

Problems in achieving a preferred type of second pair part are a major source for sequence expansion. But even if no direct problem is manifestly observable, sequences may be extended beyond minimal postexpansion. In fragment (3), for example, the recipient of the repair does more than just register its informativeness with the news mark *oh*. The recipient continues and dwells upon the issue that was re-focused in his understanding check (*in the dark?* line 44). He gives a reason for initiating repair (lines 47-48), which promotes further explicatory work on the matter from the storyteller (lines 49-50):

(3') *Repeat of the English translation of a detail from fragment 3:*
Hiking story

41	Bob:	*it was already dark then (.) then we started to walk (.)*	
42		*and uh:: (.) we did about four*	
43		*or five kilometers or something:=*	
44	Eric: →	*=in the dark?=*	***repair initiation***
45	Bob:	*=yes*	***repair outcome***
46		*(.)*	
47	Eric: →	*oh (.) we supposed (.) that (.) that you guys*	***expansion***
48		*were finished (.) as soon as it were dark (.) w<u>a</u>s=*	
49	Bob:	*=well (.) we just walked on then*	
50		*because we didn't have a place to sleep yet*	
51		*(.)*	
52	Eric:	*>yes yes=*	
53	Bob: →	*=.hh but then uh (.) well then we just*	***resumption***
54		*walked into the woods*	

So both in (2) and in (3), we see an inserted repair sequence that has non-minimal postexpansion. Schematically:

(5)

TELLER: *Ongoing telling*

Side sequence: RECIPIENT: Repair-initiation

TELLER: Repair

\+ *non-minimal postexpansion*

TELLER: *Return* to the telling through Resumption

Non-minimal postexpansion of an inserted repair sequence is not obligatorily oriented to as a context for returning through resumption. See, for example, the repair sequence in the beginning of fragment (3). It has a repair initiation as its first pair part (*the what*, line 25), and a possible repair as its second (*Lac du la Gileppe*, line 26). Although the second pair part position itself is expanded with an explication - perhaps due to a lack of recipient uptake -, the return to the ongoing sequence is still done as a continuation, not as a resumption:

(3'') *Repeat of the English translation of a detail from fragment 3:* Hiking story

23	Bob:	and uh: (.) we then drove to the (.) Lac du la Gileppe	
24		(.)	
25	Eric: →	the what=	***repair initiation***
26	Bob:	=Lac du la Gileppe (.)	***repair outcome***
27	→	that's a very big artificial lake	***expansion***
28		1.5	
29	Bob:	hh and uh::: (.) well there (.) there as	***continuation***
30		well the weather w- uh:: (.) very rainy weather	

So not every type of repair-sequence postexpansion provides an environment for doing a return through resumption. There are specifiable features of repair-initiation types, however, that seem to promote the type of postexpansion after which returns are done as resumptions. Note first that questions like *what was his name?* (fragment 2) or *in the dark?*

(fragment 3) actively pursue topical interests of the recipient. They bring about a focus shift. In this respect, they differ from the halting, time-marking type of repair initiation such as the '*the what?*' question in line 25 of fragment (3). This latter class of repair initiation does not promote a recipient-controlled line of topic development. The recipient primarily acts as the listener who tries to keep track of what is being said in prior turn. The repair initiations that promote side-sequence expansion, on the other hand, propose a recipient-governed shift of focus. If there had been no inquiry after this particular aspect, it would not have been topicalised at this very moment in the interaction.

The slightly different line started by this kind of topically-steering repair initiation becomes even more pronounced when it is followed by yet another sequence elaborating upon it. Instead of minimising discontinuity, the intervening talk is extended with a trajectory of at least two more turns. The side sequence begins to lose its primarily subsidiary character and its topic may become consolidated as talk in its own right. If the talk in a side sequence is clearly subsidiary, the participants work towards a point of return to the main line. As soon as the problem that occasioned the insertion is solved, returning is the appropriate thing to do. A potentially competing line of talk, on the contrary, may be elaborated upon until it is exhausted for other reasons. It supplies its own measurement system for closure readiness.

Participants show their orientation to the side sequence's greater potential for independence when they do work that is specialised for terminating it. In fragment (2), for example, extensive closing work is done

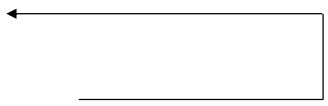
before there is a return to the suspended telling (lines 327-31). The side sequence is not dealt with as a sequence from which an unproblematic return can be made by simply continuing the suspended line of talk. Resumptions attend to this digression potential. They retroactively formulate the elaboration of the repair sequence as a possible departure from the line of talk that the resumption is picking up again.

To summarise: one type of environment in which *maar*-prefaced resumptions occur is (i) after a side sequence that suspends an ongoing sequence; (ii) the side sequence is launched by a repair initiation of the recipient; (iii) the repair initiation is of a type that has topic-shifting potential; (iv) after the delivery of the repair, there is non-minimal postexpansion of the repair sequence, (v) which is oriented to as a possible departure by doing the return as a resumption.

3.2 Environment of use (ii): after a competing line of development

Maar-prefaced resumptions are also used as a device to return from a recipient-proposed focus shift that is alternative to the line pursued by teller. The pattern of this type of use is characterised in (6):

(6) TELLER: *Teller's line*
RECIPIENT: *Competing line*
TELLER: *Return to teller's line*



Apart from describing sequential progress primarily in terms of topical development, the main difference from the pattern for returning from an expanded repair sequence is the second step in the diagram. In the side-sequence instances, the talk intervening between the abandoned telling and its resumption is subsidiary to the delivery of that telling. It is a side line that takes off with a problem that has to be solved in order to be able to pursue the main line. In the type of case outlined in (6), however, there is not a return from a sequence that was subsidiary to an ongoing sequence. Rather, a competitive line of topic development is returned from.

See the fragment below. The steps that were outlined in (6) will be marked again in the right margin of the transcription. The fragment is taken from a phone call between a skipper-family mother - calling from the family's barge - and her 16-year-old son, who is in a boarding school for skipper children. The *Teller's line* starts in line 107, where the mother tells her son that an acquaintance who is a skipper - *Uncle Pascal* - is coming to the harbor where the family's barge is anchored. At first, the son does not really promote this line of development, but then accommodates to it when he asks whether another skipper is coming too (line 115). The part with the *Competing line* begins here. The son's question causes the mother to tell the latest bits of news about the movements of this other skipper (lines 119-131). As soon as she has told all the relevant details she can about the other uncle, she returns to telling more news about the uncle she herself had volunteered to talk about (line 133). This is the *Return-to-teller's line* part:

(7) What-about-Uncle-Karel? *From a phone call between mother and son. The mother is calling from the family's barge. During weekdays, the son is in a boarding school for children from bargee people. He left the family's home the evening before, on Sunday night.*

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103   Ma:     d'r zijn hier >hel:maal geen sche:pen joh!
104           (.)
105   Son:    neˆeh
106           0.2
107   Ma: →   neˇe. oom Pascal is ook onderweg hier naar toeˆ:        Teller's
108           0.2                                                      line
109   Son:    o:ˇh.
110           (.)
111   Ma:     jah. want d'r e:[h
112   Son:                    [daar lag niks in de vluchthaven
113           (tenminste) toen ik 'r met de trein langs ging.=
114   Ma:     =ne:ˆe[ˇ:h
115   Son: →        [oom Karel dan:                                Competing line
116           0.7
117   Ma:     oom Karel (Stijn[ˆ:)
118   Son:                    [jah die achter (Gebien:)=
119   Ma:     =jah. die moet hier ˇloss:en.
120           (.)
121   Ma:     [en in Utrecht.
122   Son:    [aˇhah.
123           0.6
124   Son:    jaA[h
125   Ma:       [die was vanmorgen dan ook nog even op de beurs:=
126   Son:    =°ˇjahˇ
127           0.2
128   Ma:     enne:h .h jah die kwam geloof ik vandaag nog niet
129           leegh hier en dan eh: (j: jah) die hoopt d'r ook
130           zo gauw moglijk (leeg te zijn.) vooral omdat
131           'r nou zo weinig schepeh zijn.=
132   Son:    =uˇhuh.=
133   Ma: →   =.hhh maar oom Pascal komt hier oˆok naar toe            Return
134           want as ie hier vanmiddag geweest was
135             dan had ie al aan de kolen gekund naar Baarˇn
136           0.2
137   Son:    oˇ::h[:
138   Ma:           [want dat is 'n eh schip(er eh) >in IJsselstein
139           èrh ((clears)) in IJsselstein heeft dat aange°nomen.
140           dus eh: hh die zal vannacht hier oˇok wel zijnˇ:
141           0.3
142   Son:    uhuh.
---------
103   Ma:     there are no ships at all over here, you know!
104           (.)
105   Son:    noh,
106           0.2
107   Ma: →   no. Uncle Pascal[6] is on his way here, too:            Teller's
108           0.2                                                      line
109   Son:    o:h.
110           (.)
111   Ma:     yes. because there u:[h
112   Son:                         [there was nothing in the refuge
113           harbor (at least) not when I passed there on the train.=
114   Ma:     =no:[:h
115   Son: →      [so what about Uncle Karel                         Competing line
116           0.7
117   Ma:     Uncle Karel (Stijn[:7)
118   Son:                      [yes the one behind (Gebien:8)
119   Ma:     =yes. he has to unload here.
120           (.)
121   Ma:     [and in Utrecht.
122   Son:    [ahah.
```

```
123          0.6
124   Son:   ye[s
125   Ma:      [he was at the exchange this morning, too=
126   Son:   =yes
127          0.2
128   Ma:    and u:h .h well I don't think he'll be empty today
129          and then uh: (w:- well) he too hopes to be empty
130          as soon as possible. especially since there are
131          so few ships here at the moment.=
132   Son:   =uhuh.=
133   Ma: →  =.hhh but Uncle Pascal is coming this way too        Return
134          because if he'd been here this afternoon then
135          he could have done a coal transport to Baarn already
136          0.2
137   Son:   o::h[:
138   Ma:        [because there is a skipp(er uh) in IJsselstein
139           urh ((clears throat)) in IJsselstein he has accepted
140          this. so uh: hh he will arrive here too tonight.
141          0.3
142   Son:   uhuh.
```

What is happening here is a kind of technical *topic competition* (cf. Sacks 1992b: 348 *ff.*). The scrimmages already start at the moment the mother tells the news about 'Uncle Pascal'. The son does not really embrace this topic (see lines 112-13). Yet - on second thought, so to speak - he goes along with the route his mother took, but not without heading for a slightly different course, however. He inquires after another member from the class of persons his mother was talking about (*so what about Uncle Karel?*). Making a shift to a co-class member - from 'uncle Pascal' to 'uncle Karel' - is a very elegant way of proposing an alternative focus while still doing topical talk (cf. Sacks 1992a: 756 *ff*.).

The mother at first fully complies with the line her son is pursuing. At great length she tells the latest news about Uncle Karel (lines 119-131). Yet when her report reaches a possible saturation point - coming back to something that was already talked about before (*since there are no ships at all here / there are so few ships here*, line 103 and line 131 respectively) -, she again picks up the topic of Uncle Pascal. She recycles the

announcement of his coming and then continues with an explication of the ins and outs of why this is so.

Returning to *Uncle Pascal* by way of a *maar-prefaced* resumption retroactively formulates the shift to *Uncle Karel* as a competing line of topic development.[9] The talk about *Uncle Karel* was not just a topical alternative, but a line of development that pushed aside the line the mother was pursuing when she launched an elaboration of the *Uncle Pascal* news.

Thus, *maar*-prefaced resumptions are also used to mark the return from a competitive line of topic development. Although a competing topic is not subsidiary to the talk it is following, there are similarities with the pattern described for returns from expanded repair sequences. First, when the mother launches into an elaboration of the Uncle Pascal news (see her *because there u:h*, line 111), something which is about to become 'ongoing' comes to a halt. Although this onset is interrupted without treating its abandonment as suspending an ongoing sequence, it is later on repeated as a re-instatement of a line of talk that could not get through the first time. After the mother has recycled the news of Uncle Pascal's coming, she continues with a next turn-constructional unit that has the same beginning as the one that was abandoned earlier on (see lines 133-34: *but Uncle Pascal is coming this way too. <u>because</u> ...*). This might be a way of showing 'this-was-what-I-was-about-to-say-the-first-time'.

Second, as in the side-sequence cases, the 'owner' of the abandoned line fully complies with pursuing the line of topic development that is proposed by the recipient. Again, the focus shift is proffered in a way that makes it hard not to comply with. It is formatted as a question. Note,

however, that the mother is still the one who does the telling, albeit with respect to a referent that is supplied by her son.

Third, the line pursued by the son is oriented to as talk in its own right that is to be terminated before the abandoned line can be returned to. Only after the recipient has acknowledged the relevancy of the news about Uncle Karel (line 132) does the mother return to her own line of telling.

So both types of environment discussed in this section correspond with respect to the following features: an ongoing activity is abandoned for another one (subsidiary and/or alternative), which is oriented to as an activity in its own right. This line first has to be terminated. The ensuing return to the abandoned line is done as a resumption, not as a continuation.

4. Tying modes: *skip-connecting* and *resuming*

The *default* device to tie one turn to another one is simply placing it after the one it is referring to. Jefferson (1978) calls this *next-positioning*. Unless there are indications that point to the opposite, a recipient will assume that current turn is to be interpreted against the background of prior turn. A speaker has to use special devices for tying a current turn to some other-than-last turn.

Some of these devices are discussed in Harvey Sacks' *Lectures on Conversation* (Sacks 1992a/b). Particularly the tying mode he calls *skip-connecting* has several features in common with how resumptions tie to

earlier talk. In this section we will compare skip-connecting with resuming as a way to discover the relevant similarities and differences.

Sacks characterises *skip-connecting* as follows: "... a speaker produces an utterance that is indeed related to some prior utterance, but it's not related to the directly prior utterance, but some utterance prior to the directly prior utterance" (Sacks 1992b: 349). Although this description allows for the inclusion of a whole range of ways of tying a current turn to a pre-prior one, Sacks seems to reserve the notion for a particular type of tying. He discusses a fragment from a multiparty discussion in which there is competition between two participants with respect to the line of development that gets taken:

(8) *Example from Sacks 1992b: 348*

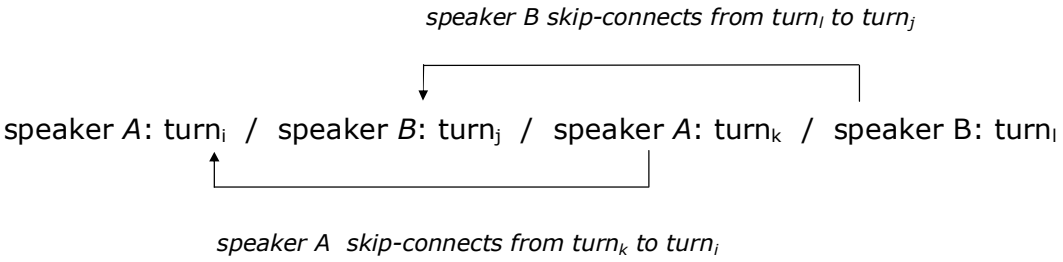
```
Roger:  ((About the new Pike)) Oh this place is disgusting.
        [ Any day of the week.
Jim:    [ I think that Pop is [depressing, it's just-
Roger:                        [But you go- you go- take-
Jim:    Those guys are losing money. hehh
Roger:  But you go down- dow- down to th'New Pike there's a buncha
        [ people, oh:: an' they're old, an they're pretending
((Jim)) [((cough))
Roger:  they're having fun, but they're really not.
```

Roger's remarks are about the amusement park called the Pike, and Jim's are about Pacific Ocean Park, another amusement park that gets called 'Pop'. In each next turn, current speaker relates his utterance to his last one, not to the prior one of the other speaker. Sacks (1992b: 348) diagrams this as:

Roger:	Pike
Jim:	Pop
Roger:	Pike
Jim:	Pop
Roger:	Pike

Sacks notices two sorts of facts about skip-connecting utterances: speakers tend to skip-connect to one of their own utterances; and they do not skip-connect unless their own utterance was last-but-one (1992b: 349). We diagram this one more time in (9):

(9) *(mutual) skip-connecting:*



Sacks' first observation - speakers tend to skip-connect to their own utterances - also holds for resumptions: speakers tend to resume their own tellings. In fragment (2) it is the teller of the story about the boy who resumes the telling; and in (7), it is the mother who returns to telling about Uncle Pascal. However, resumption of an abandoned line of talk may be done by its recipient, at least under the kind of conditions we will describe for the fragment below. It is taken from an interaction in a tattoo shop. The fragment begins just after the tattooist has made a remark about the name of a Dutch rock musician on his customer's T-shirt (*Herman Brood*, in some Dutch music scenes a real legend). The customer then starts talking about a performance he once attended (lines 43-53):

(10) Tattoo-shop. *The tattooist is preparing his customer's skin for a tattoo. From time to time, he and his customer also engage in talk about things other than the tattoo. Further persons present are Rose (the customer's girlfriend), and John (a friend of the tattooist).*

```
 43   Customer:       >d'r was op gegem:n moment e::h was die
 44                   erg's e:hm (1.6) w↑aht waz ↓'t (0.4)
 45                   [E m m e h      ]
 46   Rose:           [(°>'k was 'r ni]et bij. oh god!)
 47                   0.3
 48   Customer:  →    <Emmeh Compascum=
 49   Tattooist:      =>jhUh!
 50                   (.)
 51   Customer:       o↓h
 52                   1.5
 53   Customer:       jaah, da'r was e:h- (.) ['n dik fee:↑st
 54   Rose:                                   [>(   ) niet te hoog? >↓oh
 55                   sorry. mag ik me m'rmee bemoeie?
 56                   0.4
 57   Tattooist:      °ja hoor.

                (...) ((1.5 minutes))

134   Customer:      (moet) ↑niet gaan trainen. nou niks meeh doen.=
135   Rose:          =.h heh ↑H[Uh
136   John:                    [geen eh swartseneger wordeh,
137                  0.9
138   John:          °da mag nie.°
139                  1.2
140   Tattooist:     nouh! (0.3) [(plof ma-)] plof maar effe ne:↓er hh:
142   Customer:                  [Oké↑:     ]
143                  3.6
144   John:          ↑woe:oeh ((imitates sound of tattoo needle))
145                  2.4
146   Tattooist:     turn it off agaihain, ((singing))
147                  2.6
148   Tattooist: →   MAar- (.) °was. (m-) °>hij was in Emmer Compascu↑um
149                  0.2
150   Customer:      ja:h joh. (0.5) daar was toen 'n de een of andere
152                  feest eh wee:k. met eh .hh jah norma↑al die trad
153                  op. en eh de sie:n. herman brood.
---------
 43   Customer:      there was at some point u::h he was
 44                  somewhere u:hm (1.6) where was it (0.4)
 45                  [E m m e h    ]
 46   Rose:          [(I wasn't the]re. God!)
 47                  0.3
 48   Customer:      Emmer Compascum= ((name of a little town))
 49   Tattooist:     =jhuh!
 50                  (.)
 51   Customer:      oh
 52                  1.5
 53   Customer:      yeah, there was uh- (.) [a huge party
 54   Rose:                                  [(  ) not too high? oh
                                  ((about the position of the tattoo))
 55                  sorry. you mind if I meddle?
 56                  0.4
 57   Tattooist:     no not at all.

                (...)   ((1.5 minutes about other things))

134   Customer:      (should)n't start working out now. leave it alone.=
135   Rose:          =.h heh h[uh
136   John:                   [not uh become a Schwartzenegger,
137                  0.9
138   Rose:          °I wouldn't want him to.°
139                  1.2
```

```
140   Tattooist:      right! (0.3) [(just si-)] just sit down hh:
142   Customer:                  [okay      ]
143                   3.6
144   John:           woo:oh ((imitates sound of tattoo needle))
145                   2.4
146   Tattooist:      turn it off agaihain, ((singing, an English song
                       line))
147                   2.6
148   Tattooist: →    but- (.) was. (m-) >he was in Emmer Compascum
149                   0.2
150   Customer:       yes man. (0.5) there was some
151                   festival uh week. with uh .hh well Normaal* played.
152                   and uh the Scene*. Herman Brood*.
                      ((* Dutch pop groups))
```

In line 148, the tattooist recycles the first part of the telling his customer had begun about 1.5 minutes before: *but ... he was in Emmer Compascum* repeats the customer's *at some point he was somewhere ... Emmer Compascum* in lines 43-48. The delivery of this telling was interrupted by a remark from the customer's girlfriend about the position of the tattoo (line 54). After this, the tattooist goes on with his work, but now and then, they also engage in talk about other things, as in lines 134-38, where the customer talks with the participants in the 'audience' about the consequences of a fresh tattoo and working out.

Note that the tattooist recycles a telling part that is immediately recognised and directly taken up by the participant who told it the first time. The mentioning of the fact that *he*[10] - the singer - *was in Emmer Compascum* suffices to prompt the former teller to continue to tell about the musician's performance. In his response, he recycles the sole other orientational description he has already given (*there was u:h ... a huge party*, line 53), but in such a way that new information is also supplied (*there was some festival uh week,* lines 150-51).

The tattooist's role as prompter of the return may be a way of 'doing-being-a-party' within the setting of the tattoo-shop. He and his customer

have their own participation framework. It can be intruded on from outside (as in line 54), it can dissolve into a plenary participation configuration (as in lines 134-38), but it can also be re-installed by resuming talk that was done primarily as something between the two of them.

Sacks' second observation about skip-connecting utterances - speakers tend to skip-connect to an utterance of theirs that was last-but-one - does not hold for resumptions. Resumptions usually go back to the *sequence* that came before another - subsidiary, alternative, and/or competitive - sequence came inbetween. Unlike the 'turn-over-turn' type of skip-connecting Sacks discusses, resumptions do tie over long distance, albeit still under some kind of a 'last-before-intervening-line-of-talk' constraint. Schematically:

(11) *Resumption:*

participant A: $line_i$ / *B and A:* $line_j$ / *speaker A:* return to $line_i$



return to the abandoned line of talk

Resumptions do long distance tying. But they do not skip-connect. They *re-install* a move from the abandoned activity. This explains why the practices by which they are done are so different from the techniques that are used to skip-connect. The skip-connecting in the fragment from Sacks is done by way of such techniques as full noun repeat (Roger's *New Pike*), or adding

particulars that can only apply to the referent the current speaker was already talking about.

The prevalent way for doing a resumption is a same-speaker recycle of the last telling unit before the speaker's telling was abandoned in favour of a different line of talk. In fragment (7), for instance, this was the news about Uncle Pascal (lines 107 and 133). As a rule, the last telling unit before the telling came to a halt is recycled. Not always, however. In fragment (3), for example, the speaker recycles the utterance about starting to walk again (line 41), and not the very last utterance of the telling before it was suspended (about having walked about four or five kilometres, line 43). Although the telling part that is recycled should be as late as possible in the telling so far, it is only eligible to be recycled if it can serve as a basis for continuation of the telling.

Resumptions typically are done as the first turn-constructional unit in a multi-unit turn. After this initial unit, the speaker continues the abandoned line of talk. When the unit with the recycled telling line is possibly complete, the speaker does not wait for a response that attends to it independently, nor does the recipient treat the recycled unit as an action that should be receipted separately. The resumption is oriented to as 'preliminary' to a specific type of next (cf. Schegloff 1980). It is *targeting a next action* that uses the recycled telling part as the base to which a next telling part can be attached.

Most of the resumptions we have discussed inherit this property of 'activity-incompleteness' from when they were done the first time (cf. Houtkoop and Mazeland 1985). The utterances that are recycled in (2), (3)

and (10) are recognisably not done as independent, stand-alone announcements, but as a part of a larger telling that is not yet complete. Even if the recycled telling does not inherit the property of 'ongoingness' from the source telling, it is oriented to as prefatory, as shown by the telling about Uncle Pascal in fragment (7). The repeating of the 'news' about his coming after a competing line of talk (Uncle Karel's coming) and its framing as being in contrast with this line by prefacing it with *maar* makes it analysable as preliminary to the delivery of more tellables about the refocused event.

In sum: As a rule, resumptions are done by the speaker of the abandoned line of talk. They do long-distance tying by recycling the last telling component that is suited to serve as a basis for the kind of continuation the speaker is working towards. They are done after possible termination of the intervening line of talk. They not only inherit a property of ongoingness, but as a resumption, they are oriented to as prefatory to some kind of elaboration.

Most recycles are done by repeating material from the source turn. The recycles in (2), (7) and (10) have almost the same wording as when they were said the first time. A repeat is a tying technique that is relatively independent from a turn's actual position. It locates some prior turn as its source by the matching of lexical and constructional materials. What action the repeat is doing, however, is dependent on how it is framed and formatted, where it is used and by whom. Repeats can implement different sorts of actions. When participants repeat a part of the turn of a prior speaker in their next turn, for example, these repeats do such different

actions as initiating repair on a trouble source in prior turn, registering the receipt of what prior speaker has said, or targeting 'a next action' - such as rejection or correction - in the next turn-constructional unit (cf. Schegloff 1997a: 527 *ff*.). The kind of repeat we are dealing with is done by the same speaker and over a long distance. It not only locates an earlier turn-constructional unit by same speaker as its *product item* (cf. Jefferson 1972). It *recycles* the action for which it was the vehicle and re-installs it in the context of the activity for which it was abandoned. The abandoned line of talk is retroactively revealed as alternative to and competing with the activity that took its place.

In sum, the position in which the recycle is done (long distance after the possible termination of an intervening sequence), the relation of its speaker to the telling that is re-installed (same speaker), the type of features of the original action that are inherited by the recycle (ongoingness, retroactive formulation as prematurely abandoned), the format of the turn-constructional unit (recycling an integral telling part and framing it as an action that is in contrast with its context), and the continuation without delay with a next turn-constructional unit in which a next telling part is delivered (constituting the recycled telling as preliminary to continuation of the activity it is re-installing), are all features that jointly contribute to the interpretability of the utterance as a resumption.

5. Furthering versus closing the topic

The construction format [turn-initial *maar* + recycled telling component] thus appears to be used as a practice that implements a specific type of action in specifiable types of environments. Quite similar formats can be used to do very different actions in other types of environments. In the fragment below, a set of similar features is to be found in an utterance that proposes topic closure. A comparison with the use of this latter type of turn will help to understand what kind of practice it is that speakers use as a vehicle for doing resumption.

The fragment is from the same mother-and-son call as fragment (7). It opens with a topic proffer from the mother (*were you in time for the train yesterday?*, line 212). At the end of the fragment, the mother initiates closure of the talk about this topic by re-addressing the very same issue she started with (*but anyway you were on time, weren't you*, line 238):

(12) In-time-for-the-train? *From the same phone call as fragment 7, but more towards the end of the call.*

```
212   Ma: →   was je op tijd gistere voor de tre↑in:
213           0.6
214   Son:    e:h: ja↓::h. >°nou jah.=
215   Ma:     =jah. was 't nie zo ve↑r:
216           0.4
217   Son:    neu↓:. 'k geloof dat het dertig kilometer ↓was.
218           °<↓toch nog wel.
219           (.)
220   Ma:     toch nog:
221   Son:    hjah
222           0.4
223   Ma:     o↑:h
224           (.)
225   Son:    of zesentwintig °↓of zo:. >zag 'k op de borden staan.
226           Leiderdorp. zesentwintig kilometer. °dus eh:
227           0.3
228   Ma:     <j:aA↓jah. (.) nou jah. >jaAh, ·h >maar ja goed. >dat
229           is misschien 't centrum. hè:? >dan ben je natuurlijk
230           ook weer 'n eindje van het centrum af:.=
231   Son:    =NEE. TOEN ZATEN WE:eh- jaA:h. (is ook weer iets.)
```

232		0.2
233	Son:	°ja↓:hh
234		(.)
235	Ma:	ja↑:
236		0.3
237	Son:	(jah)°↓ja
238	Ma: →	**maar** je was in ieder geval wel °↓op tijd.
239	Son:	j:a:h
240		(.)
241	Ma:	okÉ.
242		0.2
243	Son:	jah?
244	Ma:	nouh, verder heb ik geen bijzonder(s).
---	---	---
212	*Ma: →*	*were you in time for the train yesterday*
213		*0.6*
214	*Son:*	*u:h: yes. well yes.=*
215	*Ma:*	*=yes. it wasn't that far, was it?*
216		*0.4*
217	*Son:*	*no. I think it was about thirty kilometers.*
218		*still that much.*
219		*(.)*
220	*Ma:*	*still.*
221	*Son:*	*yes*
222		*0.4*
223	*Ma:*	*o:h*
224		*(.)*
225	*Son:*	*or twenty six or so. saw it on the signs.*
226		*Leiderdorp. twenty six kilometers. so uh:*
227		*0.3*
228	*Ma:*	*well well. (.) yes okay. yes, °h okay, fine. but*
229		*that's probably the centre, isn't it? so you're some*
230		*distance away from the centre of course.=*
231	*Son:*	*=no. then we were uh: yes. (that could be.)*
232		*0.2*
233	*Son:*	*yes*
234		*(.)*
235	*Ma:*	*yes*
236		*0.3*
237	*Son:*	*(yes)yes*
238	*Ma: →*	***but** anyway you were on time, weren't you.*
239	*Son:*	*yes*
240		*(.)*
241	*Ma:*	*okay.*
242		*0.2*
243	*Son:*	*yes?*
244	*Ma:*	*well, I've got nothing special left to tell.*

The mother proposes topic closure by returning to the question that launched the topic. Returns to the start of the sequence or the topic are among the most common turn types that serve to initiate sequence-closing (see Schegloff 1997c: 189 *ff.*). The return is packaged as a request for confirmation (... *you were on time, weren't you?,* line 238). By confirming it, the son aligns with the closure proposal it is implementing (*yes*, line 239). The ensuing talk - in particular the mother's announcement that she

does not have anything left to tell (line 244) - shows the participants' orientation to the current state as next to a possibly closed topic.

The construction format of the turn in which the mother proposes topic closure is very similar to the one used for doing resumptions. The utterance occurs as the first turn-constructional unit, it is prefaced by *maar* and it is followed by a repeat of earlier materials. The wording of the mother's original question is copied almost literally. However, this time not as a question, but as a request for confirmation (of something the addressee has already committed himself to, by the way). Although there is a return to the issue the initial action was about, the action itself is not *recycled*, nor is the activity it was part of *re-installed*. The properties of an utterance do not have to be inherited when only its content is *repeated*.

In sum: although at first sight very similar to the construction type of resumptions, both the construction format of *maar*-prefaced closings and the environment in which they are used do differ with respect to essential sequential features. These account for the fact that this type of turn implements a very different type of action.

6. Discussion

We have analysed the properties of a specific type of use of the Dutch connective *maar*. When it prefaces a turn it marks a relation between turns, not between same-turn units. In order to characterise its use in utterances that resume an abandoned line of talk, we first distinguished different

procedures deployed to return to a suspended line of talk (*continue* versus *resume*). We then described two types of environments in which resuming *maar* occurs: after repair sequence expansion, and after a competing line of topic development. In section 4, we showed that, as a rule, resumptions are done by the speaker of the abandoned activity and over a long distance. The resumption is accomplished by recycling the last unit of the abandoned activity that is suited as a base for its continuation in the next turn-constructional unit.

In text-linguistic literature on the use of *maar*, it is pointed out that *maar* usually triggers the conversational implicature that the *maar*-part of an [assertion$_1$, *maar*-assertion$_2$]-utterance is to be considered as the carrier of the utterance's relevant information (Foolen 1993: 117-118 and Spooren 1989). By prefacing a *turn* with *maar*, a speaker proposes a similar kind of ranking, but now at the level of sequential and topical organisation (see also Schiffrin 1987: 173-75). Resumptions bring about a relevancy structuring of participant agendas. By *maar*-prefacing a re-instalment of his own line of talk, the speaker formulates the intervening talk - that is to say, the talk between the resumed and the resuming utterance - as alternative to, competitive with and/or a departure from the line of talk that is picked up again.

In an attempt to maintain a unified description of the meaning of *maar* that would also account for its discourse-organising uses, Redeker (1994) proposes the following characterisation: '*Maar* as a segmentation signal constrains the expectation that the ongoing discourse segment will be continued'[11] (1994: 219). We think that this account is too narrow. It

might even turn out to be inappropriate. In most of the fragments we have discussed, the participants have already been working towards closure of the intervening sequence (see the discussion of fragment 2 and 3 in section 3). It seems rather unlikely that the participants would foster the expectation that the current discourse-segment will be continued in an environment in which they are already engaged in terminating it.

If there is anything that is contradicted in resuming-*maar* turns, it is rather the expectation that the re-installed activity has been terminated. Although it was abandoned, it is still on the agenda of the current speaker. Resuming-*maar* re-structures local discourse-organising relevancies. It lends priority to the resumed activity and formulates the intervening sequence as a competitive side line.

Our criticism of an attempt to provide a unified description of some kind of 'basic meaning' of the conjunction does not imply, however, that we are in favour of a *polysemic* approach, that is, a modelling of the meaning of the conjunction according to which different types of use are based on different meanings that are interrelated in more or less systematic ways. The polysemy model puts too much weight on the meaning of isolated words as part of the language system. Instead, some types of uses of the conjunction may contribute to repeatedly occurring, constructionally specifiable types of utterances. They can be thought of as *practices* that accomplish specific types of *actions* in sequentially specifiable types of environments (cf. Schegloff 1997a: 504 *ff.*).

The construction format [*maar* + recycling an abandoned telling] used in an environment of the possible closure of a potentially alternative

line of development is one such practice. It may be used as a device for resuming an abandoned line of development that came before the alternative one. The construction format [*maar* + return to the start of the topic] is another type of example. It may be used to propose topic closure in an environment of topic talk that has reached the stage of topic exhaustion (see Jefferson 1981).

What a word is doing in an utterance must eventually be determined by *sequential reasoning*: why is this said by this participant in this position in this manner? The action an utterance implements governs how the linguistic elements of the utterance itself are dealt with when they are made sense of. It is not the other way around. The action quality of an utterance is not to be deduced from linguistic form. Linguistic form contributes to the utterance's construction type, but the features that make it a construction type are at least partially and unavoidably derived from its situated use in talk in interaction.

We want to conclude with two methodological remarks. First, an utterance property such as the use of a technique to recycle an earlier utterance appears to be central in determining the features of resuming-*maar* utterances. An utterance can only be recognised as a recycle or as a return, however, when the utterance's environment is taken into account. Analysing an utterance as recycling a previous one is a function of the <utterance, context> pair. It is not an inherent property of the utterance per se. In order to be able to describe at least some kinds of uses of connectives in turns at talk in interaction, it appears to be necessary to

include sequential properties into the description of the utterance-type that is examined.

Second, we looked at just one type of use of *maar* as a sequential conjunction. It was essential to describe the sequential properties of the utterance-type in order to be able to determine how it is used. We think this might prove to be a productive approach for research into the use of connectives. Instead of claiming a basic meaning for the connective *per se*, its workings in sequentially specifiable types of utterances have to be examined. The meaning of words may then really turn out to be a function of their use in utterances in turns at talk in specifiable sequential environments.

Notes

[1] The paper is a thoroughly revised version of Mazeland and Huiskes 1997. It is partially based on Mike Huiskes' master's thesis (Huiskes 1996). We are very grateful to Gail Jefferson for commenting on some of the analyses we had doubt about. We presented the paper at the CCCC workshop at the University of Konstanz in October 1998 (*Cause, Condition, Concession and Contrast: Cognitive and discourse perspectives*). We thank the participants of this workshop, particularly Peter Auer, who acted as the discussant for this paper, for their comments and a stimulating discussion. Finally, we thank Claire van den Donk and Marjolijn Verspoor for taking a look at the way we use(d) the English language. And, of course, we thank the editors for their careful readings.

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[2] The first time we encountered the term *sequential conjunction* was in Jefferson (1981).

[3] Heritage and Sorjonen (1994) describe how *and*-prefaced questions do not just link a question to the preceding turn, but to the preceding question/answer-pair(s) as a next step in an agenda-based course of action in interactions in institutional settings. The use of the conjunction is analysed by taking the interactional context into account, "including, most importantly, the sequential and activity context" (1994: 2) together with the speech act type of the utterance that is prefaced by the connective.

[4] The transcription fragments (1) and (2) come from a corpus of high school pupil talk in a homework class, recorded and transcribed by Henrike Padmos. Fragment (3) comes from a small corpus of telephone conversations between friends transcribed by Heidi van Mierlo and Chris Driessen. Fragment (10) is from recordings made in a tattoo-shop, transcribed by Rozemarijn de Kruijf. The fragments (7) and (12) come from a corpus of phone conversations transcribed by Harrie Mazeland, who also did a second transcription round for the other transcriptions.

The base corpus that was used for this analysis consists of two small corpora with recordings of phone calls. In the course of our research, the collection was extended with a corpus of high school pupil conversations transcribed by Henrike Padmos, and a couple of transcriptions that were made for student assignments.

[5] By saying *was* after his turn has already arrived at a possible completion point, Eric does a transition-space self-repair substituting the plural *'were'* with the grammatically correct singular '*was*' (cf. Schegloff 1997b).

[6] We have the impression that in this family - or perhaps in this skipper subculture -, some of the acquainted skippers are referred to as 'Uncle X' in interactions between parents and their children (where X usually is a surname, that may be followed by the family name if further identificational material is needed, as in line 117).

[7] *'Uncle Karel (Stijn)':* 'Stijn' is probably a family name.

[8] *'Gebien'*: perhaps a geographical name.

[9] Gail Jefferson pointed out that the mother also packages the return to the telling about uncle Pascal as a *next* when she says that *Uncle Pascal is coming this way* ***too*** (line 133), - as if she is adhering to her son's topic (Uncle Karel), instead of the other way around.

[10] The tattooist's resumption in fragment (10) exhibits an interesting instance of the use of a personal pronoun as a tying device. In '*but- ... <u>he</u> was in Emmer Compascum*' (line 148), the *locally subsequent reference form* 'he' is used on an occasion that is not an obvious *locally subsequent reference position* (cf. Schegloff 1996: 450 *ff.*). This 'mismatch' between reference form and reference position, however, contributes to the turn's interpretability as a resumption. One and a half minutes after the talk about this person is abandoned, the tattooist refers again to the rock musician

with a personal pronoun (line 148). Inbetween, several other, possibly competing referents were talked about (see, for example, the mention of *Schwarzenegger* in line 136). Still, the shop-owner's utterance supplies sufficient cues to enable the recipient to identify the rock musician as the referent of *he*. By saying that *he* was *in Emmer Compascuum*, lexical material is repeated that is unmistakably associated with the customer's former telling about the rock musician. However, referring via a next-time reference form to a person not talked about for some time shows that the talk about this subject was not closed yet (see Fox 1987: 16-32). The incongruent, and thereby marked use of a *locally subsequent reference form* in a *locally initial reference position* contributes to the utterance's recognisability as a resumption. The use of a marked reference form thus may have discourse-organising effects. (See also Mazeland 1996.)

[11] Our translation. The original quote goes as follows: "*Maar* als segmentatiesignaal legt een restrictie op de verwachting dat het lopende discourse-segment gecontinueerd zal worden" (Redeker 1994: 219).

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