

CHAPTER 11

**NEGOTIATING CATEGORIES IN TRAVEL AGENCY
CALLS**

HARRIE MAZELAND

MARJAN HUISMAN

MARCA SCHASFOORT

1. INTRODUCTION

Analyzing eight phone calls to a travel agency,¹ we observed that one of the things participants 'negotiate' over in this type of exchange is how *categories* may be described. One of the problems both the person who calls the travel agency and the call-taker have to solve is the delivery of a description of a holiday that is appealing to the caller. This description has to meet the interests of both parties. Customer and employee have to agree upon a description that not only fits the wishes of the former, but also enables the latter to select a particular holiday from the agency's assortment. In other words, the selection of an appropriate category description is a collaborative achievement of both parties.

This chapter focuses on how participants of sales calls to a travel agency negotiate over the categories they use to describe the holiday or excursion of interest to the

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customer. We try to demonstrate that in the calls studied participants use different methods to negotiate categories. We describe category transition by the parties' deployment of two procedures, here referred to as the 'scaling-up operation' and 'attribute transfer'.

For our analysis, Harvey Sacks' (see, e.g., Sacks 1992a, [Fall 1964, Spring 1965, Lecture 6]) work on membership categorization proved to be very useful. Sacks describes how people use orderly procedures to select 'categories'. He not only demonstrates how such categorization devices are used to constitute social order by making observable correct and appropriate descriptions of persons and their actions, he also shows that these devices provide orderly procedures for the constitution of sequential coherence and the making of socially reasonable inferences. In section 3 of the chapter we present a brief characterization of Sacks' work on categorization. However, in order to demonstrate the relevance of categorization work in sales talk, we first discuss a fragment of a call in section 2. In sections 4 and 5 we describe two methods by which category transition is achieved in our data material. Section 6 describes a principle through which participants accomplish cross-sectional coherence with respect to category selection: the principle of *level consistency*. In section 7 the core of our argument is summarized.

2. THE RELEVANCE OF CATEGORIZATION WORK IN SALES TALK: AN EXAMPLE

In the following exchange the caller has asked the employee of the travel agency what it would cost if a group of eleven persons — six adults and five children — were to book a holiday at a particular apartment complex on the Spanish coast. After the Sales woman mentions a first net total price (line 183 in fragment 1a) the caller inquires about the possibility of *reduction for children* (lines 184-186). The call-taker answers this question negatively by informing the customer that there is no reduction for children on the type of holiday she wants to book (*with apartment trips no, there isn't* line 188):

(1a) [Istraat/a/hm] (*simplified translation into English*)²

- 176 A we ll when I'm going to calculate the price (.) five hundred
 177 B [m:m] m:m
 178 A eighty-five times eleven [:
 179 B [m:m]
 180 (0.3)
 181 A that will be:
 182 B [(and-)
 183 A six thousand four hundred thirty-five guilders=

- 184 B→ =er yes and for the children
 185 (0.5)
 186 → so to say er- 'cause is there reduction for children with it or
 whatever:
 187 (0.2)
 188 A with apartment trips no, there isn't
 189 (.)
 190 B o:h y [es.
 191 A→ [(e:) reduction for children only applies up to
 192 six year((s old)) twenty percent with hotel: trips
 193 (0.2)
 194 B o: [h yes
 195 A [but it doesn't apply to apartment trips
 196 (0.5)
 197 B oh:

Following the rejection of the caller's suggestion, the call-taker accounts for this dismissal by relating the matter of reduction for children in several ways to different types of categories: accommodation and transport.

* She first informs the caller that *reduction for children only applies up to six year((s old)) [...] with hotel trips, [...] but it doesn't apply to apartment trips* (lines 191-195). Here the category of the accommodation the caller wants to book is used to account for the non-relevance of a categorial distinction between adults and children. The relevance of price reduction for children is simply presented as a matter of category-bound features of different sorts of accommodation. Moreover, the exclusive attachment of the feature 'reduction for children' to the category 'hotel trips' is treated as something that may be unilaterally defined on the part of the travel world and is put forward as a non-negotiable matter.

* Although the topic of reduction for children could have been closed at this point the call-taker continues to address the subject by asking how old the children are (line 198 in fragment (1b)). After the caller's answer that there are *three children of eight year((s old))* (line 200), *one of [...] about three* (lines 203-204) and *one of fifteen* (line 208) the employee again concludes that there is *unfortunately no reduction for children* (lines 212-213). The subsequent accounts for that conclusion make clear that the Sales woman now addresses the possibility of reduction for children with respect to the transport costs, cf. *eight year((s old)) need a whole bus seat* (lines 213-215; earlier in the exchange the caller has already informed the Sales woman that they want to travel by bus):

selection from the situation-bound collection of categories for different kinds of accommodation (hotel, apartment) that the relevance of the category 'child' can be determined.

* In the second method it is not the relevance of the category 'child' that is at issue but the *applicability* of this category. The feature of being 15 years old is treated as a sufficient condition to determine the inappropriateness of the category 'child' for an individual of this particular age. So, the accounting is accomplished by formulating a rule of category application which establishes the inappropriateness of the category 'child' for a person who is fifteen years old (*who is an adult person with us*). Contrary to the former method of accounting, a particular feature of one of the members of the group of customers is assigned a category-excluding potential, independent of its relation to other collections of situation-bound categories.

* In the third method it is again the *relevance* of the category 'child' that is under discussion: here the feature of 'not being able to share seats' is used as a sufficient condition to determine the non-relevance of the category 'child'. As opposed to the unilateral definitions and rules used in the first two methods, here the non-consequentiality of category incumbency is the result of situated everyday reasoning. Whereas the first two methods of accounting explain the non-applicability of reduction for children by membership exclusion from particular categories (15 year old persons are *not* a 'child', it is *not* a hotel trip), the third method deletes the applicability of reduction by attribute-specification of a subset of the members of the category 'child' (cf. Jayyusi 1984:28).

All these different accounts for the non-applicability or the non-relevance of the category 'child' have at least two things in common: (a) they are all triggered by the use of the term 'reduction for children' in a specific sequential position (after the Sales woman mentions the total price⁵); (b) different features of persons of a particular age or that age itself are made relevant dependent on the category or task to which they are related. The accounts all display a way of reasoning about the applicability or the relevance of the category 'child' relative to categories from categorization devices that are specific for the organization the caller speaks with (is it a hotel trip, or an apartment trip; is the person in question able to share his bus seat with someone else with that same capacity), or of which the application rules are specifically and unilaterally defined by this organization (persons of fifteen are adult persons for us).

It is also remarkable that the customer — at least at the level of what she displays explicitly — accepts and agrees with these situation-bound methods of categorization

and the ways in which they are accounted for. In other words, there seems to be asymmetry in the possibilities the participants have to classify persons of a certain age at that particular point in the exchange. Incumbents of the category 'customer' do not have the same rights to determine how categories from the stage-of-life (child, adult) device may be applied as an incumbent of the complementary category of the relational pair (customer, Sales person).⁶

3. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND: SACKS' WORK ON CATEGORIZATION

The preliminary observations in the preceding section show that the examination of categorization work of participants is relevant for the analysis of negotiations in at least some kinds of sales talk. They also suggest the usefulness of conversation analytic and ethnomethodological work on categorization. Especially Harvey Sacks' work on *membership categorization devices* (Sacks 1972a,b) and the way Jayyusi (1984) elaborates central aspects of the apparatus developed by Sacks, has been conducive for the analysis we develop in this chapter.

Sacks' analysis of membership categorization devices (MCDs) is a detailed attempt to spell out the informal logic that the members of a culture use to describe persons and the way this logic is intertwined with sequential organization. MCDs are collections of categories plus rules of application. The use of a category in a particular context locates at least one collection of categories of which that category is a member — e.g. the use of a term 'child' might identify a *stage of life* collection of categories, including children, adolescents, adults, and elderly people. In selecting a particular category a speaker displays an orientation to a set of *application rules* that not only govern the contextually appropriate pairing of population members and collection members, but also provide guidelines for methodical everyday reasoning.

Contrary to the hierarchies constructed in lexical semantics (e.g. Cruse 1986), collections of categories may be assembled on a basis other than a taxonomic one. Which set of categories constitutes a collection, or what is oriented to as a categorization device, may be the result of situated and task-oriented interactional work of conversationalists. Categories are grouped together relative to the relevancies of the task at hand (cf. Jayyusi 1984:82). Schegloff points to the possibility of *classes whose co-members are grouped together for a single attribute, and hence may be a class for a single (or limited range of) topic* (Schegloff 1972b:124). The assembly of a collection is thus observably provided for in the talk itself; e.g. the relevant collection in the case of the discussion of the category 'child' in the fragment above seems to be confined to the pair {child, adult}.

- (1b) [Istraat/a/hm] ((continuation of fragment 1a))
- 188 A with apartment tri:ps no, there isn't
189 (.)
- 190 B o:h y [es.
191 A→ [(e:) reduction for children only applies up to
192 six year((s old)) twenty percent with hotel: tri:ps
193 (0.2)
- 194 B o: [h yes
195 A [but: it doesn't apply to apartment trips
196 (0.5)
- 197 B oh:
198 A how old are the childr [en [at the date of depar [ture
199 B e: [:h [let's see.
200 there are: three children of eight year((s: old))
201 (0.2)
- 202 A eight year((s old)) [yes,
203 B [y:es, ·hh and e::r there's one of e::r
204 let's see of e:r about three year:((s old))
205 (0.2)
- 206 A y:es
207 (0.3)
- 208 B and one of: e:r fifteen,
209 (0.4)
- 210 A y:es, ·hh
211 (1.2)
- 212 → no. (0.2) there e::r is unfortunately er nho reduction
213 → for children going anymore. ·h [h eight year((s old))
214 B [o:ah.
215 A nee:d a whole bus seat anyway,=
216 B =yes:y [es
217 A→ [(and) they cannot go together e::r
218 for instance two seats- ·hh or one seat
219 and then two children on it
220 (.)
- 221 B yes [:yes,
222 A→ [hHH (.) and: er fifteen year((s old))
223 is an adult person with us:
224 (.)

- 225 B o:h yes yes, yes of course
226 no that is: er true indeeh:d heh ·hi:hh
227 yes that is: true ind [eed.
228 A [so you really get eleven times
229 e::r five hundrede:h [eighty-five guilders ·h [h
230 B [eighty-five guilders [mm

The rejection of the possibility of reduction for children and the account for this non-application are thus divided over two separate steps. First the 'accommodation' component of the costs of the trip is addressed, and subsequently the part of the price that consists of the 'transport costs'.

Particularly interesting in the second step is the fact that the reasons the Sales woman gives for the non-applicability of reduction for children are partially different. Following the caller she partitions the group of children into different age groups and treats these groups in a specific way by relating them each to a different aspect of the travel business (lines 213-219 and 222-223). In lines 213-215 the Sales woman says that children of eight years old need a whole bus seat. She explains this further by stating that they cannot share one seat (lines 217-219). Subsequently she simply states that *fifteen year((s old)) is an adult person with us* (line 222-223).³

In the case of the fifteen years old the Sales woman does something that is comparable with the way she previously accounted for the applicability of reduction for children on the accommodation part of the costs. She legitimates the rejection by the delivery of an explicit, unilateral definition of what is an 'adult person' for the travel agency. However, in the case of the eight year old the employee accounts for the rejection by giving a functional⁴ description of the way children of this age might be distributed over bus seats. Instead of the formalist, definitional treatment of the applicability of reduction for children on both apartment trips and the transport costs of fifteen year old persons, the account for the non-applicability is now presented as the result of everyday reasoning about a category-bound feature of children of a particular age group, i.e. their possible capacities for seatsharing.

One may conclude that in these fragments the Sales woman uses three methods to account for the non-applicability of reduction for children.

* In the first method, the *relevance* of the category 'child' is made dependent on the applicability of the category 'hotel trip', i.e. on the applicability of one specific member out of another collection of task-relevant categories. The fact that reduction for children is not a possible trait of this particular category from the collection of accommodation-describing categories explains why reduction does not apply. It is only through the

By translating the criterion 'in the vicinity of Venice and Florence' into 'something on the Adriatic coast', the Sales woman does not select a place between Venice and Florence; neither does she provide the name of a region between these two cities, nor the name of a region adjacent to one of these cities, nor, for that matter, the name of a region including one of them. Instead the possibilities are moved into a far more eccentric direction: to a non-adjacent zone geographically below and beside these cities. In other words, the destination of the travel is dislocated.

This dislocation is made possible by the addition *in the vicinity* the customer made to her description of the destination. The employee uses the resources provided by this particular way of describing, to interpret *in the vicinity* as a rather large vicinity: she 'scales up' the target region. We shall call this operation the 'scaling-up operation'.

However, a consequence of such an up-scaling is that the customer must be willing to 'stretch' her requirements in such a way that the offer of the agency is still compatible with them. It is not until the Sales woman refers to actual towns in the dislocated and scaled-up region that the customer starts to negotiate the acceptability of this dislocation. The following data extract shows this negotiation and the accounts the Sales woman gives. These accounts provide some indication about the possible rationality behind the scaling-up operation.

(2b) [xdrecht/f/hm/ms] ((call-taker has just retrieved some documentation material))

- 168 A e::r to: Italy. so that should
 169 → for instance Cattolica I'll just mention first:
 170 a e::r:- a:-
 170 B [yes but that's rather far: from there
 171 I belie [ve
 172 A [m:yes the nearest by: is the-
 173 → yes Ravennah, but there are no- hh yes
 174 → Rimini [: then is closest by: you know
 175 B [(m [:)
 176 A -h [h [yes
 177 B [really Rimini [:
 178 (0.3)
 179 A Rimini: hh 'cause well you actually are e::r

Fragment (2b) opens with the mentioning of a city which is located about one hundred kilometres south of Ravenna, Cattolica¹⁰ (line 169). When the caller subsequently makes the comment that this city is rather far from *there* (line 170), the Sales woman mentions Ravenna as a next possibility, a city which is slightly more concentric to the line Venice-Florence. However, she also immediately makes a remark from which one might infer

that this is not an appropriate alternative (line 173 *but there are no-*).¹¹

After the mentioning and the subsequent discarding of Ravenna, the Sales woman proposes a third alternative: *Rimini then is closest* (line 174). Rimini is still situated at a considerable distance from Florence as well as Venice and it is at least less concentric than Ravenna. Of the possibilities of the travel organization, however, this seems to be the best compromise which the Sales woman has to offer to meet the wishes of her customer.

Important for the present analysis is the conclusion that one of the obvious reasons why the Sales woman dislocates the travel destination is that this company does not seem to have a travel destination available which fits more concentrically. The necessity of dislocation might have motivated the scaling-up operation. By describing the domain within which the travel destination may be found with a category from a collection of terms for geographical entities of a much larger scale than the cities mentioned initially, the Sales woman has created an intermediate level by which the transition can be made to other collections of city-names which only a very benevolent observer would still call 'in the vicinity'. Through the extension of the search domain the Sales woman has created a latitude that allows for a possible overlap between the possibilities of the assortment of her agency with the preferences of the customer.

The employee is bound to the more or less 'absolute and categorical restrictions' of the assortment of the organization she works for. Within the borders of the current conversation, these restrictions constitute the more or less 'objective' limits of the proposals she is able to make to the prospect. In response to that, the wishes, preferences or demands of the customer are treated not only as 'subjective' criteria, but also as criteria that might be modified, adapted, extended or enlarged. The employee tries to create an overlap between the possibilities of the agency and the preferences of the customer by interpreting the categorization *in the vicinity* of the customer in such a way that it contains categories that satisfy both.

5. CATEGORY TRANSITION BY ATTRIBUTE TRANSFER

In the previous section we discussed one method by which the Sales woman achieves transition to another category. In this section we describe another method: the operation of *attribute transfer*.

In the conversation discussed in the previous paragraph the caller opens the talk by asking about a *brochure for coach trips to Italy* (cf. line 1 in fragment 3a):

An example of a rule of application which also proved to be relevant for the present analysis is the rule which Sacks called the *consistency rule*. According to this rule, categories may be interpreted as 'second items' (cf. Sacks 1992a:150 ff.): *if you can hear a second category as coming from the same device as the first, then hear it that way* (Sacks 1972a).⁷ Thus the use of the category 'adult' in the above fragment (line 223 in fragment (1b)) accomplishes in that particular context the instruction that it is to be interpreted as coming from the collection {child, adult} and not from a collection such as {juvenile, adult}, which might be relevant in talk on, for instance, income policy or delinquency.

MCDs also deliver a basis for making accountable inferences. Categories carry with them clusters of related features. Not all these features have the same relation to their category, nor do they have to be exclusively associated with only one category from a particular collection. Some features may be criterial or — in Jayyusi's terminology — *constitutive* for the determination of category membership. Others may be expectable or *category-bound*, as Sacks called it.⁸ Yet the relevance of other features may have to be established in the discourse itself. The selection of a category or the assertion of category-bound or category-relevant features⁹ allows for situated inferences with respect to the relevancy and applicability of other associated features.

Moreover, conversationalists may *negotiate* the relation a feature has to a category, as is demonstrated in the discussion of fragment (1a/b). Such negotiations may not only result in the exclusion of population members from a category. Jayyusi (1984) analyzes how discussion of categorization may also lead to phenomena such as the deletion of possible inferences, the transfer of attributes to other categories, the transition from one category to another one, or the methodical transformation of categories.

Sacks' work has given an initial impetus to a very promising kind of 'empirical semantics'; that is to say, to an analysis of the procedures that enable conversationalists to produce sense as a situated, methodically ordered and interactionally-based achievement.

In the remainder of this chapter we will try to show how Sacks' work is useful for the description and analysis of the methods by which members of a culture reason about, describe and constitute non-human objects — in this particular case some of the methodical ways through which caller and call-taker deliver a description of the trip the caller wants to make. We describe how negotiation takes place via the collaborative achievement of category transition by the 'scaling-up operation' (section 4) and by 'attribute transfer' (section 5).

4. CATEGORY TRANSITION BY THE 'SCALING-UP OPERATION'

As noted in the introduction, customer and employee have to agree upon a description that meets the wishes of the former and the possibilities of the latter. However, callers are not equally precise in describing their wishes. On some occasions a caller may have a precisely circumscribed idea of their holiday; on other occasions a caller may be less precise. Call-takers, on the other hand, may also be vague about what the agency has to offer, even if the caller is able to provide a precise characterization of a holiday. Therefore, one of the tasks of the participants is to achieve collaboratively a description that satisfies the interests of both parties.

In sections 4 and 5 we look at a negotiation in which the outcome is unclear. In the closing phases of the call the customer only promises to discuss the proposals made by the employee; she does not choose a particular holiday and we would not be surprised if this caller did not call back to the agency. However, somehow the 'unsuccessfulness' of the call yields rich material for the investigation of negotiations on categorizations — possibly precisely because of the problems customer and employee have to cope with in finding a description that satisfies *both* parties. We discuss how the agency employee deals with restrictions of the assortment of the travel organization in a case in which this particular assortment appears to be only partially compatible with the wishes of the caller.

In fragment (2a) the Sales woman asks a mother calling on behalf of her daughter where in Italy this daughter wants to go (line 108). The mother answers that her daughter has a preference for Venice and Florence (lines 110-111), and adds a formulation of a consequence of this preference: *so [...] it should be situated in the vicinity* (line 113). The Sales woman then translates this consequence by saying *then you get something on the Adriatic coast* (line 117):

(2a) [xdrech/f/hm/ms] ((mother calls on behalf of her daughter))

- 108 A and er where she- where in Italy did she want to go to:
(...)
- 110 B what she 's talking about mostly that is e:r
- 111 → Venice and Florence. that's where she would like to go to.=
- 113 =so yes, -hh [it should be situated in the vi cinity er
- 114 A [it should be si- [in the vicinity
- 115 B [[yes
- 116 A [[-hh yes: and then you get Florence
- 117 → yes then you get something on the Adria:tic coast
- 118 (0.4)
- 119 B yes

(3a) [xdrecht/f/hm/ms] ((recording starts at this point))

- 1 B→ ·hh do you have a: brochure for coach trips to Italy and
 2 then: it should be the tee tee (.) travels. is that possible
 3 (0.8)
 4 A tee tee
 5 (1.4)
 6 and what- what should that stand for as abbreviation.

Within an extended repair sequence that is occasioned by troubles with the identifiability of the particular travel brochure (cf. lines 2 and 4-6 respectively in 3a), the employee asks what kind of trip the caller wants to go on (cf. line 30 in 3b):

(3b)[xdrecht/f/hm/ms]

- 30 A→ 'cause what kind of trip did you want to go: [on
 31 B [hh=
 32 =well it (act) is essentially actually
 33 → a teenager tri:p([b:) [=and: e:r (to Ita-)
 34 A [yes ·h= [I do have:
 35 very nice travel brochures for teenagers:

In response to and consistent with the employee's question, the customer now modifies the description of the object she is interested in from a *brochure for coach trips to Italy* to a *teenager trip*.¹² The questioner reacts to this answer by confirming that 'she' (*I*, not *we*) has *very nice travel brochures for teenagers*. Thereby she not only continues to make 'travel brochures' the current topic of the talk,¹³ she also modifies the description of the object the caller inquires about in two ways:

- (i) from *trip* to *travel brochure* ('reis' to 'reisgids' line 33-35);
 (ii) from *teenager trip* to *very nice travel brochure for teenagers* ('jongerenreis' to 'hele leuke reisgids voor jongeren').¹⁴

The way the original modifier 'teenager' is reformulated (from *teenager trip* to *travel brochures for teenagers*) affects the status that is assigned to this specification. At least in Dutch, a speaker has the possibility to build a compound noun construction such as 'teenager travel brochure' (*jongerenreisgids*). However, the Sales woman does not use this possibility. Instead she postpones the 'teenager'-part of the description, presenting it as a subsequent prepositional noun phrase. As a consequence the descriptor *teenagers* is deprived of the functional equivocality it would have had in the description 'teenager travel brochure'. In the latter case 'teenagers' would not only specify the class of intended recipients of the brochure, but also the agent of the travels. In a description such as *travel brochure for teenagers* the 'agent' aspect of the meaning of *teenagers* not only

has disappeared, but the class of intended recipients is now specified *after* having described the type of the brochure.

This difference might be relevant. When a speaker describes an object through a series of three nouns,¹⁵ the speaker still categorizes the object as an exemplar of a 'type' that is constituted through the ordered collocation of these three descriptors. By decoupling the specifier 'teenager' from the ordered series of 'type descriptors' and moving it to a postponed prepositional phrase the Sales woman removes the type-constitutive force of this category. She somehow downgrades its descriptive power to a mere description of the group of intended recipients. Instead of a *category-constitutive feature* of travel brochures the property 'addressed to teenagers' is presented as a *category-relevant* feature of this class of brochures.

These kinds of subtle modifications are not as irrelevant as they may appear to be at first glance. On the contrary, a large part of the negotiations customer and Sales persons accomplish exist out of such 'minor' changes in the description. Through these changes the caller and call-taker may arrive at an acceptable characterization of the travel arrangements. The description itself is assembled out of several categories or descriptors and, in the course of the interaction, is changed by substitution, modification, or changes in the hierarchy of its parts. Each party not only makes a particular, specifiable contribution to the accomplishment of such modifications; each party also appears to play a specific role in the particular modification.

But the Sales woman not only has to find out which categories are essential for or constitutive of the wishes of the customer. When she has discovered them she may also try to adapt them to the possibilities the agency has in its assortment. That is to say, she has to change the categories the customer uses into other, somehow related, categories. One of the ways she may accomplish this is by first determining which attributes of a category are the most relevant for the customer. She then may try to find another category (or a combination of other categories) that fits the relevant attributes of the category used by the caller in such a way that there is some form of reasonable overlap of the attributes of both categories. The overlap of attributes then allows for the transition to the new category.

In the following fragment, later in the talk, the Sales woman proposes a shift in categories and accounts for this shift by informing her co-conversationalist of the transferability of the relevant category-attributes:

(4) [xdrecht/f/hm/ms]

- 65 A→ but: e:r it should specifically be a teenager trip,
 66 'cause you [know it- [often is:.
 67 B [well: that 's not necessary e:r [(fe-)
 68 A when you go for example to Italy

- 69 → and [you just take a e:r shuttle ((trip:))=you know
 70 B [yes,
 71 A so that me [ans ·hh e:r the transport back and forth:
 72 B [yes:
 73 A→ and over the:re e:r accommoda:tion either an apartment
 74 or a hotel: ·h [h you know then: there will be of course also
 75 B [yes,
 76 A a lot of young people am [o:ngst ((them)) of course right?=
 77 B [ye:s
 78 B→ [=so that [doesn't make any difference
 79 A [·hh [ri:ght so those real ·hh you know where you do have
 80 → more older people joining eh that are
 81 those e:r excursion trips [you know which ev- ·hh
 82 B [yes,

In line 65 the Sales woman asks the customer whether it 'specifically' has to be a *teenager trip*. Here the modifying category *teenager* is brought up for discussion.¹⁶ The customer answers with *well: that's not necessary e:r* (line 67). Thus the customer — possibly reluctantly — accepts the Sales woman's discussion of the category. The Sales woman subsequently reformulates the category 'teenager trip', which was used by the customer, by proposing two new categories in combination: *a shuttle ((trip))* and *accommodation* (lines 69 and 73, respectively).¹⁷ She then tells her customer that there *of course* will be 'a lot of young people' amongst the travellers on a trip characterized by such a combination (lines 74-76).

In fact the Sales woman takes the attribute *young travellers* of the category *teenager* and replaces the category with two categories in combination. She then accounts for this substitution by mentioning a feature that overlaps with the specifying category of the description 'teenager trip'. This overlap of attributes thus allows for and is presented as accounting for the transition to the alternative categories. In the present case this transition seems to be successful. The customer herself formulates a consequence of this shift of categories: *so that doesn't make any difference* (line 78). She thereby appears to accept the transition.

It is remarkable that the attribute 'young travellers' here is reduced in status, as was the case with the shift in the description of 'teenager trip' to 'travel brochure for teenagers'. In both cases the attributes are changed from defining, constitutive attributes, to relevant, self-evident, but nevertheless non-defining, non-constitutive properties. We shall call this type of modification *reduction of attribute status*. In this conversation the off-record reduction of attribute status seems to facilitate the transition to another category.

It is worth noting that the Sales woman gives yet another account for the plausibility of the category transition she accomplishes. She contrasts the list of new categories ('shuttle' and 'accommodation') with the category 'excursion trips' by opposing the attribute 'young travellers' of the 'shuttle-and-accommodation' trip to the attribute 'older travellers' of the category 'excursion trips' (lines 79-81).¹⁸ By this contrast the Sales woman seems to give her combination of new categories a higher 'value'. She suggests preference for this product by contrasting it with a product the customer definitely does not want. Thus, the transition to another description of the object the customer is interested in is at least doubly accounted for.

6. CONSISTENCY OF CATEGORY LEVEL

Thus far we have described two methods by which category transition is achieved in our material. We return now to Sacks' work on categorization (see section 3) and propose an extension of his consistency rule.

In the interaction of fragment 2a (see section 4) it is remarkable that both customer and employee immediately agree that the residence of the daughter should not be located in Venice or Florence itself, but in the vicinity of these cities. There are obviously reasons known to both of them — though not necessarily identical for both — why a stay in these cities is not negotiable. Indeed, later in the exchange the Sales woman says something from which one could infer one of the reasons why this is so:

(5) [xdrecht/f/hm/ms]

- 180 A→ Venice is way up in the North. over there you have
 181 excursions organized which go there=
 182 B =y [es,
 183 A [hh you know i- but then: it still is:-
 184 she really wants to go to there more o:ften. or not
 185 (0.7)
 186 B w [ell:
 187 A→ ['cause there are of course no holidays in-
 188 → at [least no e:r [trips to you know
 188 B → [(n:)noh. [no: I know that no
 189 (.)
 190 B no: but she likes to-
 191 yes, well, have seen it once

In line 187 the agency employee mentions as a reason for the exclusion of Venice as a

possible residence, that *there are of course no holidays* in this particular city. She subsequently corrects herself and substitutes *holidays* by *trips* (line 188). 'Holiday' somehow seems to be a more encompassing category than 'trip'. It might be used in a more general sense so that it also may refer to activities called 'trip' elsewhere. Nevertheless, in the present context the Sales woman prefers the category 'trip'. She thereby seems to allude to the possibility that people surely may have their 'holidays' in Venice, but that 'there are no trips' — in her organization — to this city. So 'trip' is used in a situated, institution-bound sense, whereas 'holidays', contrastively and retrospectively, is redefined as either referring to self-organized trips or trips organized by other organizations than the current one.

In this case at least one of the reasons why Venice is excluded as a relevant destination seems to be its non-availability in this travel agency's assortment of travel-destinations. Moreover, both participants appear to know this — as is clear from the response the caller gives: *no I know that* (line 188). This might explain why the caller also presupposes and accepts the transition to somewhere in the vicinity of these cities.

There might yet be another principle of ordered social reasoning which plays a role in the self-evidence with which Venice or Florence are excluded as candidate residences. Sacks has formulated a powerful and insightful rule which participants orient to in selecting categories: the *consistency rule*. It states: 'if you can hear a second category as coming from the same device as the first, than hear it that way' (cf. Sacks 1972a).

Conversationalists do orient to such a principle, both while selecting categories and while interpreting them. For instance, the fact that the Sales woman in the fragments discussed in section 2 eventually returns to the selection of city names to characterize candidate destinations might be the result of an orientation to the consistency rule (cf. Cattolica, Ravenna and Rimini in fragment 2b). After the customer's first characterization of the destination through city names the employee also selects members of collections of city names to describe candidate-destinations. She does not propose names from, for example, collections of region names, tourist beaches or apartment complexes. Which categories are treated as a collection, or what is oriented to as a categorization device, may be sensitive to the task-oriented interactional work of the conversationalists.

However, besides orienting to a consistency-rule that operates on separate devices, participants also seem to orient to consistency principles that operate *across* collections of different devices. One may conclude this from the way this customer initially describes the trip she is interested in:

(3a) [xdrecht/f/hm/ms] ((*detail*))

1 B → hh do you have a: brochure of coach trips to Italy

(3b) [xdrecht/f/hm/ms] ((*detail, simplified*))

32 B =well it (act) is essentially actually

33 → a teenager tri:p(b:) (...) and: e:r (to Ita-)

The caller not only informs the call-taker that she wants to go to Italy, but also that she wants to go by *bus* (line 1, (3a)) and that it should be a *teenager trip* (line 33 in (3b)). Through the use of these latter two categories, the customer has not only provided a complex description of her demand (a *teenager trip/by bus/to Italy*), she has also provided information that allows for category-bound inferences to be made. The category 'teenager trip' not only specifies the class of agents of that type of travel, but also has as a category-relevant — perhaps even category-constitutive — feature that it is inexpensive. Also the assertion of the choice of a bus trip excludes more expensive ways of transport. So, in the present setting the inference might be that this customer requires a trip that is cheap.

Hence, in the assemblage of the description of the desired type of trip, the customer is also consistent in the categories she selects from different collections. All these categories share the feature that they are relatively cheap alternatives compared to the other options that might make up the co-selected, relevant other collections.

Relative to the task at hand the relevant collections may be partially ordered with respect to task-relevant properties; such as, in this case, an ordering with respect to the price dimension. Selections of several categories from different collections that together accomplish a specific task — such as the description of a trip — may be governed partially by a consistency principle that operates across these collections. Each particular category selected from one of the relevant collections has to share or somehow has to be compatible with the feature that also governs the selection of the categories from the other relevant collections. We shall provisionally call this mechanism the *principle of level consistency*.¹⁹

The principle of level consistency might be one of the rationalities behind the self-evidence with which a 'holiday' in Venice itself is excluded (cf. fragment (5)). That kind of holiday is usually rather expensive and does not fit with the level constraints that are implied by the categories the customer has chosen to describe her trip.

The principle might also explain how this customer is persuaded to consider 'regular' trips instead of 'teenager trips'. In the phase of the call in which employee and customer accomplish the transfer of attributes from teenager trips to regular trips (see section 3), the employee also says that the customer could take another, *regular* travel brochure *for the same money* (lines 81a-5 and 87):

(6) [xdrecht/f/hm/ms]

- 81a A → ·h b [ut for the same money- you can
 82 B [yes,
 83 A also say well I take an other travel brochure=
 84 =which maybe does have something nice of Italy
 85 in it ·hh [a:nd
 85 B [(yes)
 86 (0.3)
 87 A from a regular travel brochure,
 88 (0.2)
 89 B yes, yes, yes,

The expression 'for the same money' is equivocal in Dutch in that it could mean 'for the same price' as well as the more general 'it makes no difference'. Although it is mostly used in its non-literal, 'metaphorical' sense, in this context it could also be heard literally. In the literal sense it may imply that the shift to 'regular trips' has no or almost no financial consequences. Part of the method through which the employee accomplishes the shift from 'teenager' to 'regular' trips is via the assertion of level consistency with respect to the price dimension. It is said or at least implied that this feature will not change as a consequence of the transition to the other category.

The principle of level consistency appears to be a more global, cross-sectional device by which the negotiations in sales talk are governed. We think that it might play a substantial role in the negotiation of category transformations and the transfer of attributes to other categories.

7. CONCLUSION

In this chapter we have attempted to show how negotiations between a travel agency employee and her customer are, at least partially, realised by categorization work. What seems to be clear from our analysis is that participants, by subtly negotiating categories, collaboratively try to arrive at descriptions — and thus holiday bookings — that satisfy both parties.

We attempted to demonstrate the 'scaling-up' operation and the operation of 'attribute transfer', two methods by which employee and customer collaboratively achieved transition from one category to another and thereby negotiated a description that could satisfy the wishes of the customer and the possibilities of the employee. We described how the Sales woman tried to dislocate the customer's destination in order to

be able to offer her a trip. To be able to realize this dislocation, the Sales woman had to 'scale up' the target region of the customer's destination. By means of the scaling-up operation the Sales woman could realise the transition to another category out of the collection of city names.

With the operation of attribute transfer we described how the Sales woman convinced the customer that she might as well take a 'shuttle-trip with accommodation' instead of a 'teenager-trip' because both categories have the attribute 'young people'. Here the overlap of attributes allowed for the transition to the other categories. We also noticed that in the sales person's description the status of the attribute was reduced, from category-constitutive to category-relevant. It might very well be that this reduction of attribute status facilitates the transition to the other category.

In the final part of the chapter we proposed an extension of Sacks' 'consistency rule': the 'principle of level consistency'. This principle seems to be a more global, cross-sectional device restricting and governing the margins of the negotiations. In the negotiations we described the participants seemed to orient to the restriction that the holiday had to be relatively cheap.

The principle of level consistency also confirms a very central observation Sacks (1972b) has made: members organize knowledge in a 'categorically localized' way. They orient to the position a category occupies in task-ordered collections as an aspect of the meaning of that category.

Future research needs to examine how and in what way a description, which is agreed upon by both participants, is connected to the successfulness of the negotiation as a whole: whether a deal is agreed upon which satisfies both parties. It might also be interesting to study categorization work in other contexts and to examine which methods participants use there; because the methods we discovered in our material of travel agencies are task-related and context-bound, it may very well be that participants in other contexts orient to specific other methods.

NOTES

1. Our data consist of transcriptions of 8 unsolicited telephone calls to a travel agency. The recordings were made by employees of the travel organization itself in three branches in three different Dutch cities. The aim of the recordings was to obtain materials for an internal examination of the effectiveness of telephone calls with customers. The call-takers knew their conversation was recorded; the customers were not informed of this.

Five of the transcribed conversations lasted between 5 and 10 minutes; the other three were relatively short (between 1 and 3 minutes). Not only because of the restricted size of our corpus, but also because of the limited time we had to prepare the current chapter, our analysis has to be regarded as a

preliminary exploration of the richness of this kind of material.

2. The appendix contains the original Dutch versions of the transcripts.

3. One may ask how it is possible that the employee at one moment asks how old 'the children' are and thus is able to refer unproblematically to such a group of persons, whereas a few moments later she declares that one of the individuals so characterized cannot be classified as such. Obviously the same categories may be used with different senses on different occasions, or, to be more precise, these categories are submitted to different rules of application on different occasions. Moreover, not only the ways in which a selection of a specific sense is accomplished, but also how such a variation in selection methods is accounted for, may vary across occasions.

Also noticeable in this particular case is the fact that the sales woman does not say anything about the three year old child. The functional account she gives for the eight year old children might not hold for this child. Without discussing this type of child she simply concludes that her client has to pay full amounts for all members of the group (cf. lines 228-30). The client does not object to this.

4. Cf. Wygotski's distinction between 'functional' and 'scientific' concepts (Wygotski 1969:119 ff.).

5. Price announcements may constitute distinctive sequential slots in sales talk. Pinch and Clark (1986:171ff.) e.g., describe how price announcements constitute 'Sales Relevance Places' in the sales routines of market pitchers. That is to say, in this type of sales talk they establish a point where buying actions occur.

6. Differences in the distribution of rights to apply categories in specific, situated ways also account for the use of 'institutional' participant categories such as 'customer' and 'Sales woman'. These characterizations appear to be 'procedurally consequential' in the present context (cf. Schegloff 1991). For example, the fact that the call-taker speaks of 'us' when she tells the caller that fifteen years old count as 'adults' in her organization (see line 223 in fragment (1b)) probably is not accidental. The call-taker stresses her membership of the organization that defines this distinction precisely on a point where the everyday and the institutional use of the category is distinguished.

7. Jayyusi gives the following 'relevance version' of the consistency rule: *If the hearable task or concern at hand can be fulfilled or accomplished by following a first category with a second drawn from the same device, then do so* (Jayyusi 1984:81).

8. Originally, Sacks (1972a) has described the relation of category-boundness only with respect to activities (category-bound activities). Jayyusi (1984:35ff.) proposes an extension to category-bound features.

9. The distinction between category-relevant and category-constitutive features is also based on Jayyusi (1984).

10. Cattolica is at least 200 kilometres south of Venice and about 150 south-east of Florence.

11. The fact that call taker does not finish the comment in line 173, but withdraws its completion before she has explicitly said that 'there are no trips to Ravenna' is probably a methodically motivated withdrawal. 'There are no trips to Ravenna' would have meant that her firm does not cater for trips to Ravenna. The call-taker might avoid the delivery of information that would allow for the making of inferences pertaining to restrictions or deficiencies of the company she represents.

12. In the original Dutch version the participants use the word 'jongeren' which is etymologically related to the English 'youngsters'. However, in Dutch 'jongeren' is normally used to refer to adolescents and young people up to twenty or twenty-five years. 'Teenagers' might thus be a partially appropriate equivalent.

13. This persistence in making the 'travel brochure' the primary topic might be encouraged by an equivocality in the talk of the caller. In line 33 it is unclear whether the caller only says 'teenager trip', or that the 'g' that follows 'trip' is the initial consonant of the Dutch word for 'brochure' ('gids'). In the latter case the caller might have been providing a kind of 'leakage'-self-correction (cf. Jefferson 1987): without actually saying 'teenager trip brochure' she gives a cue that might work as a kind of recognition point of the planned-but-observably-withdrawn delivery of the noun for 'brochure'.

14. The modification from *trip* to *travel brochure* ('reis' to 'reisgids', ln.33-34a), is a change from a:

(i) [single noun] to a [noun + noun] format.

Whereas the modification from *teenager trip* to *very nice travel brochure for teenagers* ('jongerenreis' to 'hele leuke reisgids voor jongeren') goes from a:

(ii) [noun + noun] format to the format [[adjective + [noun + noun]] + prepositional noun phrase].

The reason for the second transformation could in part be semantical-grammatical. By the first transformation the single noun *travel* is assigned the function of a subject specifying description of the class of objects described in the newly added head noun:

(ia) from *trip* to *travel brochure*:

from an [activity describing noun'] format to a [subject specifying noun' + class noun'] format (identical indexes indicate identity of the lexeme used).

The new primary specifier *travel* pushes away the original agent-specifying noun *teenager*:

(iia) from *teenager trip* to *travel brochure for teenagers*:

from an [agent-type specifying noun³ + class noun'] format to a subject specifying noun' + class noun' + class of recipients specifying prepositional noun³ phrase] format.

The rationale behind this kind of displacement probably is that in the case of multiple pre-specification of nouns describing reading material (such as 'brochure') the subject-describing specifier usually requires the position of primary specifier (thereby downgrading the position-possibilities of the other competing specifications). 'Travel teenager brochure' sounds strange, whereas 'teenager travel brochure' seems to be more natural from a common sense perspective.

Note also that when the category *teenager* specifies *trip* it is characterizing teenagers as the agents of the activity formulated in the head; however, when *teenager* specifies *travel brochures*, it rather seems to characterize the target group of the brochure. So depending on which category is made the head of the description, the feature 'teenager' is 'transformed' with respect to its semantical-functional status/implications. With a variation on the notion 'category-transformable features' as developed by Jayyusi (1984:107ff.), one could call this kind of changes in 'sense' category-dependent transformation of features'.

15. In such a series of three nouns the first functions as a kind of secondary specifier, the second as the primary specifier and the third as the head that describes the set of objects of which the foregoing specifiers cumulatively delineate a more restricted subset. Starting 'backwards' from the head, each following specifier delineates a smaller subset of the subset delineated by the foregoing specifier.

16. Note that in the question 'does it *specifically* have to be a *teenager* trip' (lines 65-66), the questioner makes the specifying category *teenager* the problematic item by such procedures as the use of the adverb 'specifically' and the contrastive stress on *teenager*.

17. The Sales woman proposes these two new categories *shuttle trip* and *accommodation* in the format of a short two-part list ('and you just take a shuttle trip, you know, that means the transport back and forth and over there accommodation, either an apartment or a hotel', lines 69-74). The receptionist clarifies each item of this list by the embedding of either an explanation of the meaning of the previous item, or the specification of the alternatives contained in the collection indicated by the device category. Such 'multiple embedding' of item within item not only seems to work as 'practical translations' of the categories proposed by the Sales woman (cf. Jayyusi 1984:96ff.); as a translation it might also have a function in the interactional constitution of an expert/lay-relationship between called and calling participant. By observably taking a 'didacticizing' stand to the terminology she uses the Sales woman displays herself as the 'insider', the one who knows what these expressions amount to. Meanwhile she puts the caller in the complementary position of an outsider to whom these terms presumably are not familiar.

18. Cf. Atkinson (1984:73ff.) for the use of contrasts.

19. The principle of level consistency might be oriented to as a 'preference for level consistency' if preference organization is regarded as a ranking order of a set of more or less preferred alternatives. In fragment (6) we encounter an indication that the principle of level consistency works as a kind of preference organization. There the travel agency employee has to do extra 'work' to accomplish the transition to a possibly less preferred alternative (cf. line 81a). However, because more work has to be done before the difficult concept of 'preference' can be appropriately used to characterize the current mechanism, we prefer the more neutral and more cautious notion of 'principle'.

Note also that the principle of level consistency might be seen set-theoretically as the intersection of all these subsets of categories from the relevant collections that are oriented to, and may be

seen as falling within the constraints of the level that might be inferred from the participants' selections of categories.

APPENDIX

Original Dutch versions of the transcripts

(1a) [lstraat/a/hm]

- 176 A no [u als ik de prijs ga uitreken [e (.) vijfhonderd
177 B [m:↑m [m:↑m:
178 A vijfentachtig maal elf [:
179 B [m:↑m
180 (0.3)
181 A da [t is dan::
182 B [('en-)
183 A zesduizend vierhonderd vijfendertig gul↑deh=
184 B → =ehj↑ah ·h >en voor de kinder↑eh
185 (0.5)
186 B → zeg maar eh- >want is 'r kinderkorting< bij °of zo↑°
187 (0.2)
188 A bij appartementsrei:zen ↓niet ↓nee:
189 (.)
190 B o:h °j ah.°
191 A → [(a:) kinderkorting geldt alleen twe↑e tot en
192 A met zes jaar twintig procent bij hotel:↓rei:zeh
193 (0.2)
194 B o: [h jah
195 A [maar: >appartementreize nie↓:t
196 (0.5)
197 B °o↓:°

(1b) [lstraat/a/hm]

- 188 A bij appartementsrei:zen ↓niet ↓nee:
189 (.)
190 B o:h °j ah.°
191 A → [(a:) kinderkorting geldt alleen twe↑e tot en
192 met zes jaar twintig procent bij hotel:↓rei:zeh

- 193 (0.2)
 194 B o: h jah
 195 A [maar: >appartementreize nie↓:t
 196 (0.5)
 197 B o↓:
 198 A hoe gud zijn de kinder [↑eh [op vertrekdat [↑um
 199 B [e: [:h [eve kijken.
 200 d'r zijn: drie kindere van acht ja↑ar: d'rbij↑:
 201 (0.2)
 202 A acht jaar [:jah,°
 203 B [j:↑ah, ·hh en e::h d'r is één van e::h
 204 even kijkeh ↓hoor van e:h ongeveer drie jaar: d'rbij↑:
 205 (0.2)
 206 A j:↑ah
 207 (0.3)
 208 B en één van: e:h >↓vijftien,
 209 (0.4)
 210 A j:ah, ·hh
 211 (1.2)
 212 → nee. (0.2) daar e::h zit hejahasheh gheghn
 213 → kinderkorting meer bij. h [h >acht jaar hebbe
 214 B [°oo:ah,°
 215 A sowieso 'n hele busplaats no:dig,=
 216 B =°ja↑:°↓j ah
 217 A → [(en)> die kunne niet bij elkaar e::h
 218 >bevoobeeld twee stoeleh- ·hh >of éen stoel
 219 en dan twee kindere d'r ↑op
 220 (.)
 221 B °ja [:jah,°
 222 A → [hHH (.) en: eh >vijftien jaar
 223 is 'n volwassen iemand bij↓ons:
 224 (.)
 225 B o:h jah °ja° jah natuurlijk.
 226 neg dat is: eh inderdaah:d ↓zhoh heh-hi:hh
 227 ↓jah °dat is: inderdaad z [o.°<
 228 A [dus u krijgt echt elf keer
 229 iijfhonderde:h [vijftientig gul↑deh ·h h
 230 B [vijftientig guldeh [m↑m

(2a) [xdrecht/f/hm/ms]

- 108 A → en eh waar ze- waar in Italië wilde ze naar toe gaan:
 (...))
 110 B >waar ze 't meest over heeft dat is e:h
 111 → Venetië en Florence. daar wil ze graag naar toe.=
 113 =dus jah, ·hh ['t zou daar in de bu [urt eh moete
 114 A ['t moet dar- [in de bu:urt moete
 115 B zij↓:n: jah
 116 A zijn: °hh ja:° en >dan krijg je Florence
 117 → >jah dan krijg je iets aan de dra:tische ku↑:st
 118 (0.4)
 119 B jah,

(2b) [xdrecht/f/hm/ms]

- 168 A e::h naar: >Italië. °dat moest dus°
 169 → >bevoorbeeld Cattolica< ↓ik noem zo maar eerst even:
 170 'n e::h:- [°n:°
 170 B [ja maar dat ligt daar vrij: ↑ver: vandaan:
 171 ↓>geloof [ik
 172 A [m:jah 't dichtste bij: is de-
 173 → ↑jah Ravennah, maar daar worden geen- ·hh jah
 174 → Rimi↑ni [: is dan 't dichtste bij: ↑hè
 175 B [(°m↑° [:)
 176 A ·h [h [jah
 177 B [toch Rimini [:
 178 (0.3)
 179 A Rimini: ·hh want jah je zit dus eigenlijk e::h

(3a) [xdrecht/f/hm/ms]

- 1 B → ·hh heeft u ook 'n: >gids van busreizen naar Italië
 2 >en dan:< moet 't zijn de tee tee (.) reizeh. kan ↑dat
 3 (0.8)
 4 A tee TE↑e
 5 (1.4)
 6 en wat- wat moet dat z↑ijn voor ↑afkorting.

(3b) [xdrecht/f/hm/ms]

- 30 A >want wat voor soort reis wilde u ma:k [eh
 31 B [.hh=
 32 =nou 't gaat (aan) principe eigenlijk om
 33 → 'n jongerenreis: ([g:] =en: e:h (°naar Ita-°)
 34 A [ja↑.h= ['k heb wgl:
 35 hgle leuke reisgidseh voor jongereh:.

(4) [xdrecht/f/hm/ms]

- 65 A → maar: >e:h< 't moete:h spec↑iaal 'n jongerehreis
 66 zijn, want w [eet je wat 't wgl:-
 67 B [nou: >dat hoeft niet e:h [fe-) >vaak is:
 68 A als je bijvoorbeeld naar Italië gaat
 69 → en [u neemt gewoon 'n e:h pendelre↓is:=hè
 70 B [ah,
 71 A dus dat be [tkennt .hh e:h 't vervoer heen en trug:
 72 B [ja↑.h
 73 A → en daar: e:h accomoda:tie >hetzij 'n appartement
 74 of 'n hotgl: -h [h hè dan: >zit daar dus natuurlijk
 75 B [jah,
 76 A ook veel jongelui daar [tusse:h ↓natuurlijk hè=
 77 B [ja: wgl:
 78 → [=dus dat [maakt nie uit
 79 A [.hh [hè: dus die echte .hh e:h weetje waar je
 80 → dus meer oudereh mense meehebt. eh dat zijn dus
 81 die e:h >excursiereizeh< [hè die dus el- .hh
 82 B [jah,

(5) [xdrecht/f/hm/ms]

- 180 A → >Vengtië is helemaal in 't noordeh. daar worden
 181 wel: excursies dan: naar toe gemaa↑:kth=
 182 B =j [ah,
 183 A [.hh hè i- >maar dan:< is nog wgl:-
 184 >ze wil 'r echt ↑va:ker toe. °of nie↓:t°
 185 (0.7)

- 186 B n ou:
 187 A → [want daar zijn natuurlijk geen vakanties na-
 188 → >°ten° [minste geen e:h [reizeh naar toe ↑hè
 188 B → [(°n:)neeh.° [nee: >dat weet ik. nee.
 189 (.)
 190 nee: maar >ze wil dat-
 191 jah, >toch wel 'n keer gezien hebbeh

(6) [xdrecht/f/hm/ms]

- 81a A → .hh >ma [ar voor 't zelfde geld- kunt
 82 B [ah,
 83 A u ook zeggeh nou ik neem 'n andereh reisgids=
 84 =>waar misschien< wgl iets leuks van Italië
 85 instadat .hh [en:
 85 B [(°jah°)
 86 (0.3)
 87 A uit 'n gewoneh reisgids,
 88 (0.2)
 89 B jah, jah, jah,

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WORKPLACE

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PREFACE

This book has its origins in a 3-day research symposium held at Aalborg University, Denmark, 11-13 May, 1992. Entitled 'Negotiations in the Workplace: Discourse and Interactional Perspectives', and attended by over 100 academics from 11 countries, the symposium was a truly international and interdisciplinary event, reflecting the relevance and importance of 'negotiation' throughout the social sciences. At Aalborg the attempt was made to marshal the special interests of a group of scholars for whom 'negotiation' had hitherto remained of largely peripheral interest; these were scholars of discourse analysis and language-in-social interaction, researchers that people the departments of linguistics, anthropology, sociology, and communications in our universities and colleges. Although the term 'negotiation' appears in numerous studies in discourse analysis, pragmatics, and language-in-social interaction, its use has been mainly metaphorical and incidental; somewhat surprisingly, 'negotiation' has rarely been studied and investigated as a discourse-based *activity* in its own right. The brief communicated to the presenters at the symposium was intended as a form of 'corrective' to this state of

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LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

- Bell, D. V. J. Department of Political Science, Faculty of Environmental Studies, York University, 4700 Keele Street, North York, Ontario, Canada M3J 1P3
- Bilmes, J. Department of Anthropology, University of Hawaii at Manoa, Honolulu, HI 96822, U.S.A.
- Boden, D. Department of Sociology, Lancaster University, Lancaster LA1 4YL, U.K.
- Button, G. Xerox EuroPARC, 61 Regent Street, Cambridge CB2 1AB, U.K.
- Firth, A. Department of Languages and Intercultural Studies, Aalborg University, Havrevangen 1, DK-9100 Aalborg, Denmark
- Fredin, E. Department of Communication Studies, Linköping University, S-581 83, Linköping, Sweden
- Huisman, M. Department of Dutch Linguistics, Faculty of Arts, Free University of Amsterdam, De Boelelaan 1105, 1081 HV Amsterdam, The Netherlands
- Jones, K. Department of East Asian Studies, The University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ 85721, U.S.A.
- Linell, P. Department of Communication Studies, Linköping University, S-581 83, Linköping, Sweden
- Marriott, H. E. Department of Japanese Studies, Monash University, Clayton, Victoria 3168, Australia
- Mazeland, H. Department of Language and Communication, Rijkuniversiteit Groningen, P.O. Box 716, 9700 AS Groningen, The Netherlands
- Schasfoort, M. Department of Dutch Linguistics, Faculty of Arts, Free University of Amsterdam, De Boelelaan 1105, 1081 HV Amsterdam, The Netherlands
- Sharrock, W. Department of Sociology, Faculty of Economics and Social Studies, University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9PL, U.K.

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