

Peter Auer
The Neverending Sentence:
Rightward Expansion in Spoken Language

In: Kontra, Miklós and Tamás Várdi (Eds.). 1992. *Studies in Spoken Languages: English, German, Finno-Ugric*. Budapest: Linguistics Institute. Hungarian Academy of Sciences: 41-59.

The Neverending Sentence: Rightward Expansion in Spoken Language

PETER AUER

University of Constance

1

The old question of what is a sentence¹ seems to have lost importance in generative grammar since syntacticians, while working on the basis of their own introspection, have replaced the segmentation problem of language into sentences by the production problem of sentences. Since the generative apparatus DEFINES any terminal strings it produces as sentences, there is no need to define this term in any other operational terms. The question of syntactic units and their boundaries is not easily overcome in corpus-based work on the syntax of spoken language, however, and has repeatedly troubled linguists working in this field, not in the least because many quantitative investigations use the sentence as their basic unit for counting. If such an approach is chosen, it is by no means clear how and on the basis of what criteria sentences can be identified. This is the problem addressed in the present paper.

The aim will be to show that in the analysis of spoken language and in text-based syntactic work, any notion of the sentence as a static, structural unit is ad hoc and of limited use. In particular, it will be argued that any "external" notion of the sentence is bound to fail because any "external" definition of the speaking turn is bound to fail as well, and because some very important, possibly universal features of syntax such as the preference for rightward over leftward expansion have (one of their) basis (bases) in turntaking. There is then, according to this argument, an intimate relationship between turns and sentences. The recommendation is to see syntax (among other things) as syntax-for-conversation, ie. as a technical means to signal turn completion.

Some of the difficulties with identifying sentences in spoken language can be shown in the following small extract from a German telephone conversation;² the ongoing activity is that of an explanation, viz. of what a video aerial connection looks like; F is supposed to fetch such a connection for M.

- 01M: des auf der éinen Seite is also áußen sonne Húlse,
that is on the one side is kind of a sheath on the outside,
- 02F: =j|a,
 03M: |rund,
round
- 04 [1.0; gulps]
- 05 und in der Mitte is bei dem ein η Dócht,
and in the middle this one has a wick,
- 06 η massiver Do|cht, η d'ünner,
a solid wi|ck, a thin one,
- 07F: |m
- 08 un auf der ándern Seite vom selben Kabel
and on the other side of the same wire
- 09 [1.0, gulps]
- 10 is η Docht der hóhl is.
is a wick which is hollow.
- 11 (1.0)
- 12 der η bißl dícker is.
which is a little bit thicker.
- 13 des sin/ die des sin die Kábel.
these are the wires.
- 14 an besten suchs ma nach som mittelbrauen Kabel wo
the best thing to do is to look for a brownish wire with
- 15 vorne und hinten so(n) runder Stécker dran |is. das is
that is
- 16F: |ja. also
 |yeah. so

- 17M denn genau s richtige
exactly the right one
- 18F: nich verschiedene kleine - äh Pinne komm da raus
it's not different little - eh pins sticking out there
- 19 sondern éi[n - dicker Dócht,
but one - thick wick,
- 20M: genau
exactly
- ((etc.))

Although this little piece of telephone interaction is everyday conversation in many aspects, it displays some specific features not usually present in face-to-face interaction. In particular, the disjunction of the two participants' visually accessible fields precludes the use of local deictic expressions, as well as the replacement of verbal descriptions by non-verbal actions.³ The passage therefore contains an elaborated referential description which would have been replaced, in all likelihood, by a DEMONSTRATIO AD OCULOS in face-to-face interaction.⁴

I want to focus on lines 1-12. Their syntactic structure can be visualized in the GRILLES-notation used by Blanche-Benveniste (cf. e.g. Blanche-Benveniste et al. 1979) as follows:

des (=das ist) auf der éinen Seite
 auf der éinen Seite is also áußen sonne Hülse_{js}
 rund_{js}

und in der Mitte is bei dem ein
 n (=ein) Docht_{js}
 n massiver Docht_{js}
 n dünner_{js}

un (=und) auf der ándern Seite vom selben Kabel is n Docht
 der hóhl is_{js}
 der n bißl dicker is_{js}

The utterance contains problems par excellence for any attempt to syntactically "parse" spontaneous language. Take its very beginning, where the speaker blends two syntactic patterns into one utterance which is delivered without hitches, so to speak with a clear surface undisturbed by syntactic trouble. M starts with

das ist **auf der einen Seite**
this is on the one side

a yet unsaturated sentence containing an anaphoric subject (referring to the connection mentioned before), a copula and a local adverbial, but no predicate (such as: *hohl*, or *rund*); but the last adverbial phrase, *auf der einen Seite*, is then used as the beginning of a new syntactic pattern

auf der einen Seite ist außen eine Hülle
on the one side is outside a sheath

i.e. the first construction remains uncompleted. The changing of construction occurs on a phrase which functions both in the first and second pattern. Such "pivots" (as conversation analysts have called them⁵) or "apo-koinu constructions" (to use a more traditional term) are quite frequent in spoken German syntax.⁶ The problem they present for segmentation is of course: does *auf der einen Seite* belong to the first (unfinished) or to the second sentence?

As we go along with the utterance, further problems of segmentation arise. In particular, the speaker repeatedly reaches points of syntactic completion where a full grammatical sentence has been produced (these are marked in the GRILLE-representation by _{IS}), but continues to talk, retrospectively expanding the syntactic pattern accomplished so far. A very simple way of doing this is the use of the conjunction *und*, by which the speaker joins the second and the third line in the GRILLE to the preceding one. A conjunction, by definition, conjoins two sentences, in order to make a new sentence out of them. Before the conjunction, the sentence could be completed. Do we want to mark a sentence boundary here or not?

More typically for spoken language, and more central to the argument of the present paper, are elements that occur around the right margin of the simple sentences. They appear massively in our example. Thus, the speaker adds an appositional *rund* 'round' after the candidate complete sentence *auf der einen Seite is also außen sonne Hülse* 'on the one side is kind of a sheath on the outside'; he adds *η massiver Docht* 'a solid wick' after *in der Mitte is bei dem ein Docht* 'in the middle this one has a wick', thereby elaborating the noun phrase *n Docht* 'a wick' into a more complex one; and after that, he adds an apposition-like *η dünner* 'a thin one' to the whole structure; finally, he modifies the already syntactically complete candidate sentence *auf der andern Seite vom selben Kabel is η Docht* 'on the other side of the connection there is a wick' by the relative clause *der hohl is* 'which is hollow', and again by a second relative clause *der η bißl dicker is* 'which is a little thicker'.

These rightward expansions of candidate complete sentences make the right margin of "sentences" in spoken language rather difficult to determine. Syntactically speaking, *auf der éinen Seite is also áußen sonne Hülse rund* is certainly less wellformed than the same utterance without the appositional *rund* attached to it. Where is the sentence boundary then - before or after *rund*? Or are there two sentence boundaries? Or take the second line of the GRILLE - *in der Mitte is bei dem ein Docht* one sentence, and *η massiver Docht* another, *η dünner* yet a third sentence, because they may be taken as elliptical for *in der Mitte is bei dem η massiver Docht* and *in der Mitte is bei dem ein dünner Docht*, respectively? Do we have three sentences or just one, and if the latter is true, what is the syntactic relation of *η massiver Docht* and *η dünner* to the preceding sentence parts?⁷

3

One could object here that a definition of the sentence that is based on grammatical completeness and wellformedness, as the one implicitly employed here, is wrong (at least for the analysis of spoken language) and that, instead, other criteria have to be used. Semantic and pragmatic completeness are, although often mentioned, rather unpromising candidates. Both are very vague

notions; semantic completeness resembles the old contention that every sentence must express an idea, or thought, or proposition, which would probably (depending on the definition of "idea", "thought" or "proposition") give us very small units as sentences, partly corresponding to syntactic clauses; pragmatic completeness, on the contrary, may be equated with the successful formulation of a speech act or conversational "move", which takes quite a large chunk of talk in many cases. Neither of the two criteria provides an intuitively satisfying definition of the sentence, both criteria are difficult to correlate with syntactic completion.

A more promising definitional parameter would be prosody; it has been argued (above all, by Wunderli 1979) that sentences should be defined by intonation and rhythm. And in fact, there can be no doubt that prosody is the most basic structure in spoken texts. A number of terms, such as "tone group", "breath group", "intonational group" or "intonational sentence" refer to this level of organization. Indeed, if syntax is taken literally as the way in which linguistic items are arranged (both linearly and hierarchically), then prosody is the most natural (and most basic) kind of syntax. According to such a view (which, incidentally, separates the definition of the sentence in spoken language completely from that of its written counterpart), one may conclude (as Wunderli does) that pauses and sharply falling and rising intonation contours define sentence boundaries in German, whereas "progradient" or level intonation would be typical for boundaries below the sentence. On the basis of such a prosodic definition, the first sentence in our example would be completed after the first relative clause, i.e. after *der hohl is* 'which is hollow' (for the first utterance is followed by falling intonation - marked by a full stop - and a one second silence). But the immediately following utterance *der n bißl dicker is* 'which is a little bit thicker' is also produced with falling intonation, which means that we reach yet another sentence boundary. The latter relative clause would therefore qualify as a full sentence in its own right - a parsing solution running counter to linguistic and lay intuition of what a sentence is.

It is therefore doubtful if we should abandon the syntactic basis of the sentence. True that compared to written language, the importance of syntax is greatly reduced by the availability of prosodic means (rhythm and intonation)

in spoken language. This fact alone, however, is no proof for the non-existence of a syntactic level of structuring sufficiently independent of the others (prosodic, semantic, pragmatic) in order to be investigated in its own right. There is syntactic structure in spoken language that cannot be reduced to semantics, pragmatics or prosody. In order to investigate the possible (and, indeed, highly expectable) interdependences between these layers of linguistic structure, and syntax, it is necessary to take the latter seriously. The interesting question is: do we need the sentence as the basic unit of syntax in the analysis of spoken language, and if so, which concept of the sentence is useful for such a purpose?

4

Let us leave this discussion here for a moment and turn to the definition of turn-at-talk. There, it seems, we are much better off; a seemingly very clear-cut definition suggests itself: a speaker's turn starts whenever he or she speaks, and ends whenever the next speaker starts to speak. At closer inspection, however, this definition runs into serious problems (as has been most convincingly shown in Goodwin 1981). This is because the definition starts from the presupposition that natural conversations are orderly in the sense that one and only one speaker has the turn at a time. A quick look at any reasonably good transcript will show that this presupposition cannot be maintained (cf. lines 15ff of our transcript). For simultaneous talk, the definition fails. Also, it must be asked if we want to classify each and every vocalization by a speaker as a turn; what, for instance, do we want to do with "backchannel signals" such as the *m*'s in our transcript? Do they cut M's utterance into individual turns? The most important critique of such a simple turn definition as a person's speaking time is based on yet another observation. Consider as a very simple example, the question-answer adjacency pair format. After the complete, hearable production of a question, an answer is expectable; the turn goes to the addressed participant so to speak automatically. An addressed participant who does not speak at such a point does not simply do nothing; instead, she or he withholds or refuses to take up his or

her turn in a visible and accountable way. Or in other words: while a second participant may be silent after a question, this emerging silence is his/her silence, i.e. the turn belongs to him or her, although no speaking occurs.

A similar case may be observed in the stretch of interaction considered here as an example; cf. lines 10ff. After *η Docht der hóhl is* 'a wick that is hollow', there is every reason to believe (for us and for co-participant F) that M is ready to pass the turn over to F: his utterance is syntactically, prosodically, semantically and pragmatically complete, and it is up to F to signal if she has understood what a video aerial connection is. However, a one-second silence occurs which is, not just a silence, but F's silence who fails to give such an acknowledgement of her understanding. It is in this situation, where the turn is already with F, that M resumes talking, by elaborating his prior description (*der η bissl dicker is* 'which is a little bit thicker'). There is, then, a complex two-way turn-transition involved here, although no actual speaker change occurs.

If one looks at the transcript as a two-dimensional, i.e. a written document, it is possible, in retrospect, to come to the conclusion that M's turn goes on until line 16 (although F could have taken up the turn again after lines 12 and 13). However, if we try to reconstruct the interaction, on the basis of the transcript, as the one-dimensional, linear, i.e. oral event it actually was, it becomes clear that the extension of a turn is negotiated by speaker and listener and is, in this sense, not predictable. All we can predict are possible turn completion points, where a speaker change COULD occur. If such a speaker change occurs, however, is open to co-participants' handling of the turn-taking system at such places as after lines 12 and 13. Conversation analysts have concluded from this that the "delineation of the turn is not properly an analytic tool for the study of conversation, but rather part of the phenomena being investigated and as such should be approached empirically. <...> an accurate definition of the turn is not independent of a specification of the process through which turns are exchanged" (Goodwin 1981: 20). This implies a wide-reaching shift of analytic perspective: instead of dealing with turns as structural(ist) units, determined by the analyst in retrospect, i.e. on the basis of a written transformation of oral language, Conversation Analysis recommends dealing with

turns as participants' accomplishment in the process of deciding when a turn ends. The category "turn" is made into an explanandum of the analysis.

More practically speaking, this change of analytic perspective means that instead of turns, the focus of analytic attention turns to "turn completion points", i.e. points of possible speaker change. Every turn is principally expandable *ad infinitum*, although possible turn completion points (PTCPs) will have been reached but ignored. This in-principle expandability of turns in time is not a mere accidental fact of interactional structure, but it serves very urgent conversational needs. In particular,⁸ the fact that turn boundaries are negotiable is a way to optimize the equilibrium between a speaker's overtalk (=underestimating the hearer's capacities), and undertalk (=overestimating the hearer's capacities).⁹ As speaking-on is negotiable, the recipient can steer the amount of information conveyed through speaker's talk. Therefore, typical post-PTCP activities are repair work of all kind, elaborating and correcting the previously made utterance according to the needs of the recipient who, by his own "backchannel behavior", provides the relevant cues.

5

Keeping this dynamic notion of turns in mind, we now return to the problem of the definition of the sentence. The situation is very similar. It is possible to predict, on the basis of one's syntactic competence, where a structure is syntactically complete. However, there is no way to predict if a present speaker will choose to continue with an utterance that may turn the already completed syntactic structure into another syntactically completed structure, as occurs so frequently in our transcript. The extension of the sentence is then a matter of local conversational management, just as the extension of the turn is. What is important from an analytic point of view is not so much this extension, but the location of possible syntactic completion points (henceforth: PSCPs), corresponding to PTCPs on the level of turn-taking.

The occurrence of a PSCP does not imply that what follows is part of another sentence. Instead, other linguistic material can follow which is of the syntactic category S/S - it takes a sentence and produces another sentence, i.e.

we reach another PSCP. Syntactic structures of the S/S-category that occur after a PSCP and lead to another are basically of two kinds. They may be regressive and progressive. Regressive expansions do repair work on the previous utterance, where "repair" is not restricted to "corrections", but includes "elaborations", "clarifications", etc. as well. Regressive expansions add linguistic material to the sentence produced in time, but semantically and syntactically, they establish a loop backwards. Frequently, they recycle some structure (not necessarily, but often, the last one prior to the PSCP) of the previous utterance and develop paradigmatic alternatives. Thus, in our example, *η massiver Docht* 'a solid wick' recycles *η Docht* 'a wick' and is therefore a typical elaborative repair. The same applies to

η massiver Docht → *η dünner [Docht]*
der hóhl is → *der η bißl dicker is*

Progressive expansions lack such an orientation to a structure of the utterance already produced; they add a further structure in a purely syntagmatic way. The syntactic linking of this progressive expansion to the previous part of the utterance may be more or less strongly grammaticalized. For instance, the expansion via relative clause, as in

auf der ändern Seite ... is η Docht → *der hóhl is*

is more grammaticalized than the loose addition of an appositive structure such as

... áußen sonne Hülse → *rund*.

It is useful to recall Bloomfield's famous definition of the sentence at this point (1933: 170), in order to see how the approach chosen here contrasts with a structuralist-taxonomic one:

When a linguistic form occurs as a part of a larger form, it is said to be in included position; otherwise it is said to be in absolute position and to constitute a sentence.

And

A form which in one utterance figures as a sentence, may in another utterance appear in included position. In the exclamation form cited [i.e. *John!*], *John* is a sentence, but in the exclamation *Poor John!* the form *John* is in included position. In this latter exclamation, *poor John* is a sentence, but in the utterance *Poor John ran away*, it is in included position. <...> An utterance may consist of more than one sentence ...

Bloomfield's conception of the sentence is certainly closer to the one proposed here than many others, which refer to e.g. the internal structure of an utterance ("must contain a subject and a predicate", "must contain a NP and a VP") or its semantic structure ("full proposition"). Re-read in conversationally less naive terms, it comes tantamount to saying that a sentence must be a possible turn. And a turn can consist of a single word, such as a summons (*John!*), but it may also contain two or more structures that could stand alone. Bloomfield is very well aware of the fact that a sentence may include other candidate sentences, which fail to have sentence status only because they stand in included position. Applied to our example, this means that the whole of M's utterance is one sentence - for with each expansion after a PSCP, M includes the syntactic structure produced so far into a larger one.

Taxonomists see things "from above", they work on the basis of completed linguistic productions reified into texts. The perspective of the language user, who has to deal with language in time, "on line" so to speak, is lost sight of. Consequently, the fact that PSCPs have been reached is irrelevant. This, however, is unsatisfactory not only from the interactional point of view; for the syntactician, too, it cannot be irrelevant if an utterance is produced in one syntactic projection, or if syntactic projection covers much smaller units, after each of which syntactic closure is reached.

There is, then, a close structural parallel between sentence and turns. Both cannot be delineated by the analyst, but instead, their termination is a problem participants have to deal with. In both cases, there is the in-principle possibility of expanding structure beyond a PTCP or beyond a PSCP. The parallel is by no means accidental, for syntax serves the need of turn-taking. It is a particularly good indicator of turn-taking, for more than on the prosodic, semantic or pragmatic level, language users are able to make projections of when a PSCP will be reached. And projection on various levels is decisive for the establishment of possible turn completion points. Thus, not the least that is done by syntax for interaction is to make turn completion predictable. If it is true that syntax is, among other things, of central importance to turn-taking, it is clear that this function is served best if the most important characteristics of turn-taking in conversation are mirrored and supported by similar characteristics of syntax. One such characteristic is rightward (in-time) expandability. Rightward expandability in syntax, all its cognitive reasons notwithstanding, marvelously suits the needs of turn-taking. In particular, not only can speakers invite participants to take over the turn by keeping their sentences simple and short, thereby multiplying the number of PSCPs; they can also employ syntax for the opposite end by building complex syntactic patterns which provide little opportunity for the speaker(s) to "come in". There is a strong correlation between a "speech style's" syntactic complexity and its turn-taking regularities. The correlation is well-known from so-called simplified registers (like pidgins, foreigner talk, learner languages, motherese) in which recipients' feed-back is particularly important and in which, at the same time, syntactic patterns are usually simple and sentences short.¹⁰ On the other hand, the complex syntax employed in formal speech genres such as panel discussions is well-suited to participants' need in such occasions to keep the turn for a long period.

Possible turn completion is signalled by closure on a number of linguistic levels - semantic, pragmatic, prosodic and syntactic. These factors, however, do not always co-occur. It is quite frequent for PSCPs to occur within larger projectable pragmatic or prosodic units. These PSCPs are not simply ignored as irrelevant to turn-taking by participants; instead, they seem to invite recipient's "continuers" even where no turn-transition is possible. (Cf. line 02.) And indeed, withholding continuers in such places can lead to rightward expansion.¹¹

For both cases, there are examples in our transcript. In line 05, a PSCP is reached, which is not a PTCP (cf. the semantic structure opened by *auf der einen Seite* 'on the one side' and not yet completed at that point). F does not acknowledge this part of M's explanation. As a response to this withholding of a "continuer", M expands his sentence beyond the PSCP, thereby giving a more detailed description of the item in question and, at the same time, avoiding silence. Thus, withholding a "continuer" can be seen as being responded to by an expansion. In line 10, another PSCP is reached, but this time it is a PTCP as well. Nevertheless, F fails to respond a second time, and a one-second silence occurs. M deals with the silence in the same way as before: he adds another component to his previous syntactic structure, expanding it both after a PSCP and a PTCP.¹²

Thus, the speakers and recipients cooperate in the construction of turns AND of sentences. The result of their joint efforts is the typical syntactic structure of spoken language; at the surface, it may look fuzzy and unstructured, but at a closer look, a minute synchronization of both participants can be discovered which hinges on the expandability of sentences as turn units. The same content expressed in written language, i.e. something like

Antennenkabel haben auf der einen Seite einen runden massiven Docht in einer runden Führungshülse, auf der anderen Seite einen hohlen, etwas dickeren Docht.

would preclude any collaboration between speaker and recipient and would therefore be unsuited for oral language use.

8

If syntax is not only the servant of semantics, but also the servant of turn-taking, as has been argued here, we have a very strong natural reason for the (universal) preference of rightward vs. leftward expansion in syntax. This preference is not part of Universal Grammar, i.e. of a self-contained language ability independent of other cognitive abilities, but it follows from the structure of interaction - in particular, from the fact that the extension of turns is negotiable, and has to be so, in order to optimize the balance between over-talk and undertalk.

As turn-taking is a universal problem of human communication, one would expect a strong linguistic pressure on individual languages to allow post-PSCP continuations of syntactic structure. Indeed, the possibility of using this position as a repair position (for regressive expansions in the above-mentioned sense) seems to be universal. (In the literature, the term often used here is "afterthought position".) On the other hand, progressive expansions of syntax across PSCPs are more subject to inter-language variation, for they stand in a syntactically tighter connection to the preceding part of the utterance than regressive expansions. But even in languages which put rather strict restrictions on rightward expansion of syntactic patterns, it can be expected that more "natural" forms of talk will be more in line with the exigencies of discourse than more "conventionalized" ones. The prediction is that even in a language which does not permit progressive rightward expansion in its formal varieties, vernacular varieties will loosen these restrictions for the sake of discourse.¹³ In order to test this prediction, it is useful to have a look at languages which rely more or less exclusively on leftward expansion in syntax. Rigid SOV languages, such as Turkish, are of this kind; in particular, "subordinated clauses" (or their equivalent, mostly gerundials, participles and infinitives) stand to the left of the structure they modify; rightward ex-

pansion in the sense of Indo-European relative clauses and other subordinated dependent clauses is prohibited.

Indeed, as shown elsewhere in more detail, this structural requirement is greatly relinquished in spoken Turkish (cf. Auer, 1990).¹⁴ There can be little doubt that this is due to the pressure put on syntax by discourse requirements. (That factors of cognitive processing also play a role goes without saying.) Thus, whereas textbook subordinated structures at the sentence level would look like the invented examples (2)-(4),

(2) (yemeğ-e (gid-en)) (adam)

to eat going man

= the man who goes eating

(3) gel-diğ-i (biz-i (çok (sev-in-dir-di)))

his coming us very pleased

= we were pleased that he came

(4) Ali ((Mehmed'-in (Ankara'-ya (git-tiğ-in-i))) (yaz-dı))

Ali Mehmed's to Ankara going wrote

= Ali wrote that Mehmed was/would be going to Ankara

colloquial utterances like (5)-(7) (taken from tape-recorded informal conversations) often "de-grammaticalize" the leftbranching structure, either by placing the subordinated clause to the right, as in

(5) bakıyo nasıl yaptıklarına

*he watches how they-making (nominalization by *dik*-participle)*

or by using the semantically subordinating but syntactically coordinating particle *ki* (not permitted in standard Turkish), as in

(6) sen şimdi dedin ki e// elektrikler kesiliyo

you now said 'that' the electricity they cut

= now you said that there was an electricity cut

or by avoiding hypotaxis at all, as in

- (7) bazıları karnemi istoyo(r)lar/ karnem iyi/ o/ bi şeyler buluyor
some the certificate want / the certificate is good/ it/ something they find
=some (employers) want to see (my) certificate; but although it is good,
they find something (to refuse me).

It remains to be seen if this finding can be generalized to other rigid SOV languages.

9

Ten years ago, Schegloff pleaded for a new kind of syntax, a syntax-for-conversation. As the foremost characteristics of such a syntax, he mentioned recognizing "that its sentences will be in turns and will be subject to the organization of turns and their exigencies" (1979: 281). I have presented some ideas of how this could be done above.

NOTES

- 1 Cf. Ries 1933 for a summary of the discussion in traditional linguistics.
- 2 The present paper will focus on this single extract in order to develop a theoretical argument concerning the relationship between turns and sentences. It pays only little attention to the question of how German sentences can be expanded in spoken syntax and what conversational functions these expansions may have. The reader interested in a more comprehensive account of rightward expansion in German syntax is referred to (Auer 1991).
- 3 Telephone interactions are therefore less "situated" talk than face-to-face conversations. On "situated" vs. "displaced" speech, cf. Auer 1988.

- 4 On the conversational structure of such reference establishing sequences, cf. Auer 1984.
- 5 Schegloff 1979: 275f. Franck (1985), who gives a more detailed, although somewhat problematic account of these "pivots", speaks of "syntactic double bind".
- 6 Cf. Sandig 1973: 46f.
- 7 Because of these and related difficulties, some linguists have suggested to abandon the sentence as a linguistic unit completely (mainly based on the argument that it is a unit of written language rather irrelevant to spontaneous spoken language), and to define a new primary unit of analysis. E.g. Crystal (1979) argues for the "clause" as such a primary unit which, in his opinion, is both more cognitively real and easier to define in linguistic terms than the sentence. This, however, is only partly true. For although the "clause" avoids the segmentation problem in complex "sentences", the problem remains of how to classify expansions of simple sentences like the ones discussed in the last paragraphs.
- 8 There are other purposes served by turn expansions, as Goodwin (1981, ch. 4) shows in some detail. Particularly, he analyzes how present speakers use turn expansions to secure a recipient's gaze.
- 9 Cf. Sacks & Schegloff 1979, Auer 1984.
- 10 Cf., among others: Müller (MS), Auer 1989.
- 11 Cf. Schegloff 1982 and others.
- 12 Incidentally, F withholds her acknowledgement even then such that M has to go on with his description until line 16, where she produces a "formulation" of his description, checking her understanding of it.
- 13 Cf. Givón's hypothesis that the "pragmatic mode" is better realized in child language, pidgins/creoles, and vernaculars than in adult, standard languages of the fully developed type (cf. Givón 1979).
- 14 Also cf. Antinucci, Duranti & Gebert (1979) who argue that in a change from SOV to SVO, a language will first give up leftward expansion in relative clauses.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Antinucci, Francesco, Duranti, Alessandro & Gebert, Lucyna (1979). Relative clause structure, relative clause perception and the change from SOV to SVO. *Cognition* 7, 145-176.
- Auer, Peter (1984). Referential problems in conversation. *Journal of Pragmatics* 8, 627-648.
- (1988). On deixis and displacement. *Folia Linguistica* XXII, 3-4, 263-292.
- (1989). Über Natürlichkeit und Stil. In: V. Hinnenkamp & M. Selting (eds.), *Stil und Stilisierung*. Tübingen: Niemeyer, pp. 27-59.
- (1990). Einige umgangssprachliche Phänomene der türkischen Syntax und Möglichkeiten ihrer Erklärung aus 'natürlichen' Prinzipien. In: W. Boretzky, W. Enninger & Th. Stolz (eds.), *Spielarten der Natürlichkeit - Spielarten der Ökonomie*. Vol. II., pp. 271-298. Bochum: Brockmeyer.
- (1991). Das Ende deutscher Sätze. Rechtsexpansionen im deutschen Einfa-chsatz. *Zeitschrift für Germanistische Linguistik*, 19.2, 139-157.
- Blanche-Benveniste, Claire, et al. (1979). Des grilles pour le français parlé. In: *Recherches su le français parlé* 2, 163-205.
- Bloomfield, Leonard (1933). *Language*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
- Crystal, David (1979). Neglected grammatical factors in conversational English. In: S. Greenbaum, G. Leech & J. Svartvik (eds.), *Studies in English Linguistics for Randolph Quirk*. London: Longman, pp. 153-166.
- Franck, Dorothea (1985). Sentences in conversational turns: a case of syntactic 'double bind'. In: M. Dascal (ed.), *Dialogue*. Amsterdam: Benjamins, pp. 233-245.
- Givón, Talmy (1979). From discourse to syntax: grammar as a processing strategy. In: Idem (ed.), *Syntax and Semantics*, Vol. 12 = *Discourse and Syntax*, New York: Academic Press, pp. 81-111.
- Goodwin, Charles (1981). *Conversational Organization*. New York: Academic Press.
- Müller, Klaus (MS). *Pragmatik des Lernens*. Unveröffentl. Habilitationsschrift, München.
- Ries, J. (1931). *Was ist ein Satz?* Prag.

- Sacks, Harvey & Emanuel Schegloff (1979). Two preferences in the organization of reference to persons in conversation and their interaction. In: Gg. Psathas (ed.), *Everyday Language*. New York: Irvington.
- Sandig, Barbara (1973). Zur historischen Kontinuität normativ diskriminierter syntaktischer Muster in spontaner Sprechsprache. *Deutsche Sprache*, pp. 37-57.
- Schegloff, Emanuel A. (1979). The relevance of repair to "syntax-for-conversation". In: T. Givón (ed.), *Syntax and Semantics*, Vol. 12 = *Discourse and Syntax*. New York: Academic Press, pp. 261-286.
- Schegloff, Emanuel A. (1982). Discourse as an interactional achievement: some uses of 'uh huh' and other things that come between sentences. In: D. Tannen (ed.), *Analysing Discourse: Text and Talk*. Washington: Georgetown University Press, pp. 71-93.
- Wunderli, Peter (1979). Satz, Paragraph, Text - und die Intonation. In: J.S. Petőfi (ed.), *Text vs. Sentence*. Hamburg: Buske, pp. 319-341.