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Precision Timing in Novice-to-Novice L2 Conversations

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That next speakers in talk-in-interaction are capable of precisely timing their entry into the conversational flow is now taken as a given in conversation analytic research. However, the classic studies establishing this fact were based on the analysis of talk between proficient language users, that is, individuals traditionally referred to as "native" speakers. The question then arises as to whether novice-level second language (L2) speakers are similarly capable of precision timing. This paper examines instances of "no-gap" speaker transition, so-called "normal overlap" at transition relevant places, and cases of "turn recycles" in non-pedagogic, casual talk between novice-level Japanese speakers of English (NNS-NNS talk). The primary finding is that novice L2 users can and regularly do start "on time." The paper also explores the possibility that certain inter-turn gaps in the novice L2 data studied here are interactionally occasioned by disfluencies or insufficiencies in prior speaker's turn.

> Someone talks, and I lie back and listen and let them roll for a while. When they're done, there'll be a pause that will flash like a green light to announce that someone else can have the floor.
>
> (Agar, 1994, p. 172)

It is a common belief among the general populace, as well as among many linguists, that people having a conversation just wait for current speaker[1] to stop speaking before taking their turn-at-talk. In other words, they wait for a gap.[2] Yet Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974) in their seminal description of a turn-taking system for casual conversation state that participants in talk-in-interaction demonstrate a clear orientation to "no-gap, no-overlap" speaker transition. They observe that "Transitions (from one turn to a next) with no gap and no overlap are common. Together with transitions characterized by slight gap or slight overlap, they make up the vast majority of transitions" (Sacks et al., 1974, pp. 701-702). This orientation to no-gap, no-overlap transitions is one of the cornerstones of the turn-taking system.

No-gap transitions are a natural and demonstrable outcome of participant orientation to rule 1b of Sacks et al. (1974)—the so-called "pressure rule," which states:

> If the turn-so-far is so constructed as not to involve the use of a 'current speaker selects next' technique, then self-selection for next speakership may, but need not, be instituted; *first starter acquires rights to a turn* [my emphasis], and transfer occurs at that place. (p. 704)

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As Sacks et al. (1974) point out, speaker transfers do not occur randomly throughout talk but rather cluster around specific locations which they define as *transition relevance places* (TRPs). These are the moments in the on-going stream of talk where current speaker's turn is hearably complete (see the section below on timing entry into talk). And while an entry into talk may or may not occur precisely at a TRP for myriad interactional reasons, conversation analytic researchers now take as given that speakers are *capable* of split-second precision timing, and this empirical fact has been well documented (see Jefferson, 1973; Jefferson, 1986; Sacks et al., 1974,). If speakers were not capable of precisely timing their entries into talk, there could be no possible interpretation of either starting too early or too late. It is only by reference to interactionally unmarked positions for speaker transfer, that is at TRPs, that participants can assign meaning to marked positions.

Sacks et al., (1974) do *not* claim that inter-turn gaps do not occur—even a casual glance at any transcript of natural talk reveals that they do occur and occur frequently. Hopper (1992, p. 109) calculates that nearly one-fourth of the speaker transfers in his sample follow a gap. What Sacks et al. (1974) *do* claim is that if gaps do occur, they are not accidental, random or meaningless. In other words, so strong is the orientation towards "no noticeable gap" that the occurrence of an inter-turn gap is treated by participants as performing, or forewarning of, some specific interactional work, such as warning of an incipient dispreferred next action such as disagreeing with an assessment (Pomerantz, 1984), rejecting an offer, or refusing a request (Davidson, 1984).

Are Novice-Level L2 Users Capable of Precision Timing?

All of the classic studies on precision timing listed above are based on observations of "native speaker" conversations, that is to say, talk between two or more highly proficient users of a language. Native speakers routinely manage to project completion of even complex turns-at-talk. Moreover, there seems to be at least rough agreement among conversation analysts on which features of turn-design participants attend to in projecting up-coming TRPs, for example, prosodic features combined with syntactic and pragmatic completion. Yet despite three decades of conversation analytic research, what is really known about the interactional skills of non-proficient, that is to say, novice-level, L2 users? Are novice L2 users also capable of precision timing? Do they too orient to TRPs as interactionally unmarked locations for speaker transfer? If so, what features of turn design do novice L2 users attend to in their efforts to project TRPs?

One preliminary observation is that inter-turn gaps appear to be more common in novice-level L2 talk than in proficient speaker talk. In some sections of the data examined in this paper, gaps accompany the majority of speaker transfers, as in Excerpt 1 below. (For details of the transcription conventions used in this paper, see Appendix A.)

(1) [Carroll-99/J's group]

```
01          A: D'you eat a dinna:
02 ->          (1.9)
03          M: Uh hss::::: mhmm:: no
04 ->          (0.8)
05          A: °°no°°
06 ->          (3.6)
07          M: hah
08             (0.5)
09             how abou $t'you$ (($ symbol marks "smile voice"))
10          A: Heh heh
11          M: didya?
12 ->          (0.8)
13          A: uh yes
14 ->          (1.6)
15          M: what (1.2) what (0.7) kind of food did you eat
16 ->          (2.1)
17          A: er (.) Japanese (0.8) Nabe
18 ->          (0.5)
19          M: nabe (0.5) oh.
20 ->          (1.0)
21          H: nabe? huh
22          A: nabe
23 ->          (.)
24          H: hhh hhh hhh  who did you have a dinner (0.2) wiss
25 ->          (1.5)
26          A: n:::: (0.7) friends
27 ->          (2.1)
28          H: how many are zer
29 ->          (2.5)
30          A: four
31 ->          (0.5)
32          H: four?
33          A: I think (.) four
```

Such data potentially present an analytical problem. Are we to conclude that novice-level speakers are not capable of precision timing because of faulty or limited competence and this is why gaps occur so frequently? Do they perhaps follow a different system of turn-taking than proficient speakers? Conversely, if they *are* capable of precision timing but are purposefully withholding or delaying participation or both, do these gaps carry the same sorts of interactional messages that they do in proficient speaker talk, that is, warnings of upcoming troubles or dispreferred next actions? This paper hopes to provide some insight into these questions.

Problems With the "Nonnative Speaker" Label

Throughout this paper the term "novice-level L2 user" is employed instead of "nonnative speaker." There are basically two arguments against using the nonnative speaker designation. First, the term can be vague and analytically deceptive. Second, it is argued below that where this term is used within conversation analytic research it needs to be understood as an interactionally occasioned identity and as such an analyst wishing to so characterize participants would first have to demonstrate through details of a specific spate of talk that it was this nonnative speaker identity which parties-to-the-talk themselves show to be interactionally salient.

Definitional Problems

In the opening to his entry on "native speaker" in *The Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics* Alan Davies (1994) writes: "The native speaker, like Lewis Carroll's snark, is a useful and enduring linguistic myth" (p. 2719).[3] Nevertheless, conversation analytic research has overwhelmingly focused on talk between so-called "native speakers," whether they be native speakers of English, German, Japanese, Finnish, Italian, Thai, and so forth (Moerman, 1988; Wagner, 1996). This tacit acceptance of the myth of the native speaker is wide-spread in conversation analytic research. This is perhaps a natural consequence of the field's initial focus on mundane, everyday conversation since for many people, particularly in the U.S. and U.K. (geographic centers for conversation analysis), mundane talk is strongly associated with talk among monolinguals. But on a world-wide scale where bilingualism and multilingualism (including varying degrees of "balance"—Baker, 1996; Hamers & Blanc, 1989) are commonplace, the concept of "native speaker" can be problematic (see Auer, 1984, 1998, for conversation analytic approaches to code-switching). In linguistically more diverse societies commonsense understandings of "native speaker" (NS) vs. "nonnative speaker" (NNS) can quickly erode.

A further definitional problem with the NNS designation is that two individuals, both labeled NNSs, can have wildly differing communicative competencies. One individual who might, for some institutional or interactional purpose, be regarded as a NNS may have "near-native" control of the language, while another so-called NNS might have difficulty ordering a meal. Indeed, what degree of competence is required before the NNS label even becomes applicable? Is someone who speaks just a few words of Japanese a NNS of Japanese? And more to the point, can we, on the empirical evidence available, claim that interaction between highly proficient NNSs differs in any significant way from talk among so-called native speakers, or that talk between a highly proficient NNS and a novice-level NNS would not display the same conversational asymmetries and practices as NS to NNS talk?

Doing Being a NNS

Recently, there has been some interest among researchers embracing conversation analytic methodology in trying to reach an interactional understanding of what it might mean to be (or *do being*) a NNS in talk-in-interaction. If the terms NS and NNS are reconceptualized, now not merely as linguistic states-of-knowledge, but rather as interactionally occasioned and negotiated identities, then perhaps their usefulness can be resurrected. Sacks provides one approach to a new understanding of the terms NS and NNS in one of his early lectures in which he discusses *omni-relevant devices* (Sacks, 1992, p. 314 [Spring, 1966, lecture 6]).

He cites as an example the omni-relevant device "therapist/patients." Sacks' point is that while these categories are not necessarily the salient identities at any given moment, they are identities which are omni-relevant in the sense that participants are always aware of these identity sets whether or not they overtly orient to them as such (Sacks, 1992). In this sense, then, NS/NNS may function as one of Sacks' omni-relevant devices where the NNS identity only becomes relevant in reference to, in other words in opposition to, the NS identity.[4] The labels NS and NNS are, then, identities that participants may invoke for themselves (and display to co-participants), as in Excerpts 2 and 3 below.

In Excerpt 2, by invoking the NS/NNS device and his role as NNS within that device, the author (a professor of English at a Chinese university) is making relevant a participation structure in which NSs help NNSs. Notice also the use of "us" and "you" where the only possible referents are "we nonnative speakers" versus "you native speakers."

(2) [from the Lang-Use e-mail forum][5]

> A main street lined with shops and commercial buildings in the downtown area of my city is closed to all the vehicles. It is now for pedestrians only. We can probably call it a pedestrian(-only) street" ***But as a NNS, I would like to know*** [my emphasis] if it is acceptable or possible for ***us*** to call it a "walking street"? Or do ***you*** have other names for the street of this kind.

In Excerpt 3, K enacts her NNS identity (which both M, in line 23, and Y, in line 26, co-opt) by claiming "I have no English grammar." and "I speak only broken English" —both, by the way, perfectly grammatical utterances. A few lines later she then mimics being a novice EFL student ("It's White-o." "It's red."). Yet this identity is not demonstrably oriented to throughout subsequent parts of this same recording.

(3) [Carroll, 2000/Group 3] – (talk among three Japanese students of English)

```
01        K:  yah ((eating))   [huh huh huh huh huh huh huh huh  [I have ]=
02        Y:                   [huh huh huh huh huh huh huh huh  [huh    ]
03        M:                   [huh huh huh huh huh huh huh huh
04 ->     K:  =$I have no English grammar$
05            (1.1)
```

```
06        M: I-have-no: Eng  [lish grammar
07        Y:                 [ah huh huh huh .hhh mm
08           (0.8)
09        Y: mi- miss-u (0.4) Yamada s:::aid
10           (0.8)
11        Y: to [her huh huh
12        K:    [a:
13           (0.2)
14        K: yeah (0.3) I:: (0.6)
15        M: ((clears her throat))
16           (0.5)
17 ->     K: I speak only broken English
18           (0.4)
19        M: AHH
20           (0.8)
21        K: °ok° so::
22           (0.4)
23 ->     M: me too
24           (0.2)
25        K: I'm laughing
26 ->     Y: °yeah           [(me too°)
27        K:                 [huh huh  [huh huh huh
28        M:                           [huh huh huh .hhh ah-huh
29        K: ok
30        M: uh-h  [uh ok] ok   [heheh ok          [ay:::
31 ->     K:       [ok ok]      [(   )             [it's whi:te-o huh=
32           =huh [huh huh huh huh huh huh
33        Y:      [huh huh huh hah hah hah
34        M:      [huh huh huh hah hah hah hah hah huh huh
35        K: huh huh huh huh
36           (.)
37        M: .hhh uh-huh huh huh      [uh
38 ->     K:                          [it's r    [e:::d      [(      )
39        M:                                     [u HUH huh huh huh huh huh=
40        Y:                                     [huh huh huh huh huh
41        M: =huh huh hu (0.5) .huh
```

Some readers may feel uncomfortable with the idea of NNS-ship as a negotiated identity versus a linguistic fact-of-life. While the NNS label can be undeniably satisfying (as can race terms such as "white" and "black" or professional labels such as "doctor" or "teacher"), the point here is that the NNS identity is not always and automatically relevant to an analysis simply by virtue of its being true (Firth & Wagner, 1997). In his discussion of *procedural relevance,* Schegloff (1992) states:

> The point is not that persons are somehow *not* male or female, upper or lower class, with or without power, professors and/or students. They may be, on some occasion, demonstrably members of one or another of those categories.

> Nor is the issue that those aspects of the society do not matter, or did not matter on that occasion. We may share a lively sense that indeed they do matter, and that they mattered on that occasion, and mattered for just that aspect of some interaction on which we are focusing. There is still the problem of *showing from the details of the talk or other conduct in the materials* that we are analyzing that those aspects of the scene are what the parties are oriented to. *For that is to show how the parties are embodying for one another the relevancies of the interaction and are thereby producing the social structure.* (pp. 109-110)

In the preceding paragraphs I have argued that the term NNS is most usefully defined in opposition to the NS category and even then may not emerge as interactionally salient during a specific spate of talk. It therefore seems ill-advised to universally apply the NNS label to conversational data in which the language of interaction for all participants involved is a second (or third or nth) language. As this paper concerns itself specifically with interaction between low to low-intermediate level speakers of English as a second language in non-pedagogic situations, I have elected, for the reasons outlined above, not to employ the NS/NNS device/dichotomy but instead characterize the participants in my data as "novice-level" L2 users.

Why Study Novice-to-Novice L2 Interaction?

While some conversation analytic researchers (Kurhila, forthcoming; Wong, 2000a, 2000b) have begun to consider aspects of so-called NS-NNS interactions in conversational, non-pedagogic settings,[6] there has been remarkably little interest in the interactional practices of "NNSs" conversing with other "NNSs" (see, however, Firth, 1995). Yet, statistically, such NNS to NNS talk is more and more likely in today's global environment. Even where so-called NNS data has been examined the participants are likely to be quite proficient speakers (as in Firth's paper). But where are the studies of novice-to-novice interactions? Do such novices follow the same interactional practices as proficient speakers? Can we support the claim that novice-to-novice talk follows the same turn-taking system utilized in proficient user talk? Do, for example, novice L2 users orient to the no-gap, no-overlap rule? If not, what consequences would this have for their interactions?

The remaining sections of this paper will examine various types of evidence that demonstrate the extent to which novice L2 speakers are capable of precisely timing their entry into talk. In the second section, the reader will find a general description of the data and the methods used in their collection. The third section provides a brief overview of how projection of transition relevance places for turn-taking is possible and reviews the pertinent literature. In the fourth section evidence is presented that novice L2 users are regularly capable of split second precision in the timing of their turn start-ups. Finally, the fifth section explores the possibility that certain inter-turn gaps found in this novice L2 data are interactionally occasioned by features of prior speaker's turn design/production.

THE DATA

The data analyzed here come from two video-taped conversations, each approximately 30 minutes long. Despite the fact that the recordings were done as a class assignment for a university-level conversation class in Japan, the talk is non-pedagogic in nature (for conversation analytic descriptions of classroom interaction, see McHoul, 1978; Mehan, 1979; Seedhouse, 1996). The students (all second year English Department students at Shikoku Gakuin University) were asked to arrange themselves into "friendship groups" (Fetzer, 1997) of three.[7] Each group of friends was then given several in-class opportunities to talk casually with each other both in Japanese and English. Each group then made arrangements to get together informally at one of their homes at a time convenient to them. Finally, they were instructed in the use of the video camera.[8]

The first conversation, which I refer to as "M's group," had as its participants three 19-20 year-old Japanese females. Despite the fact that all three had been exposed to six years of formal English instruction prior to entering university, their conversational level was, at best, what might be called low-intermediate. The second conversation, referred to as "J's group," recorded the interaction between four 19-22 year-old males. Three of the four are Japanese and the fourth (the 22 year-old) was a Spanish national who had lived in Japan and attended Japanese public schools since he was 13 years old. In terms of their conversational level, the three Japanese males are best described as "false beginners;" in other words, despite several years of EFL instruction, they still perform at levels similar to beginners. The Spanish national's English is at a much higher level (see Appendix B).

One subjective impression regarding the two conversations is that the talk from M's group appears much more animated and seems to flow much more smoothly than the talk from J's group. This is worth commenting on because both listening and reading scores of the participants in M's group were somewhat lower (see Appendix B). An objective measure of this sense of fluidity is that talk from M's group included far more instances of overlapping talk (and laughter) than J's group. One explanation might be that Japanese females seek affiliation to a greater degree than Japanese males,[9] or the difference may be due to differences in the shared conversational level of the two groups.

The data are best characterized as non-pedagogic, casual talk. Additionally, the label "non-classroom talk" has also been avoided in line with Schegloff's (1992) discussion of *procedural consequentiality* (pp. 110-116), where he points out how methodologically unsatisfactory place formulations of context can be, for example, "in the hospital" or "in the classroom." Talk in a classroom, for example, even between teachers and students, might, from one moment to the next, change from pedagogic to casual and back again. The participants themselves certainly give no indications that they orient to their interaction as "classroom discourse."

There may also be some question as to whether (or to what extent) talk in English among Japanese participants can be regarded as "naturally occurring" talk.

That English would not have been the language of choice does not automatically invalidate the talk or imply that the participants did not view the talk as socially meaningful and consequential. On the contrary, the details of the interaction demonstrate that participants used this talk to enact their social lives, create and reinforce relationships, display identities, etc. Moreover, in any conversational situation there are always constraints of some sort in operation. Bilingual speakers, for example, are rarely free to select one code over another in accordance with personal whim but rather are acquiescing to social or institutional pressures. Seen from this perspective, the data presented here are certainly as natural as those reported on in a number of other conversation analytic studies.

Transcription conventions are provided in Appendix A. However, it is necessary to comment at the outset on one noticeable feature of these transcripts: the general paucity of punctuation indicating intonation. The orthodox symbols for representing pitch movements (in particular those at syntactic boundaries) in conversation analytic research are (.) or (\) for "final falling," (?) or (/) for "final rising," and (,) for "slight non-final rise." Unfortunately, such a limited symbol set does not begin to cover the range of pitch contours present in this novice L2 data (see Cooper-Kuhlen & Selting, 1996, for a critique of current CA prosodic notation practices). The prosodic features, such as rhythm and pitch, of this talk are often significantly different from what one might expect from so-called native speakers. Japanese speakers of English can often seem to be "speaking in a monotone" —in particular there is often a marked lack of strong final pitch movements. In these transcripts, falling pitch (.), rising pitch (?), or slight non-final rises (,) are indicated only when they could clearly be distinguished as such. Where there is no "line final" punctuation this indicates a "flat and level," interactionally ambigious pitch status. Finally, it is not at all clear whether these participants orient to prosodic features of the talk in exactly the same way that native speakers would. While this represents a significant area for future research, it is simply beyond the scope of the present paper.

HOW IS IT POSSIBLE TO PRECISELY TIME ENTRY INTO TALK?

In order for next speakers to make the sorts of timely entries into conversation that they regularly do, they must be capable of *projecting*, not just waiting for,[10] upcoming possible transition relevance places (TRPs), that is, those locations in the on-going talk where current speaker's turn-so-far is hearably complete. Understanding how TRP projection is possible is, therefore, of central concern and has evolved into something of a sub-field within conversation analysis (see Couper-Kuhlen, 1993; Ford, forthcoming; Ford, Fox, & Thompson, 1996; Furo, 1998; Goodwin, 1981; Goodwin & Goodwin, 1987; Jefferson, 1990; Lerner, 1991, 1996; Local & Kelly, 1986; Sacks et al., 1974;[11] Schegloff, 1996; Selting, 1996, 1998).

Stated briefly, Sacks et al. (1974) argue that next speakers are constantly

monitoring the fine details of current speaker's turn-in-progress for clues as to when in the future this turn might reach a state of completion. According to Sacks et al. (1974), turns are composed of one or more, with a built-in bias towards one (Schegloff, 1996), *turn-constructional units* (TCU) where the essential quality of a TCU is its inherent projectability. Sacks et al. (1974) appear to stress the role of syntax in TRP projection by citing "sentential, clausal, phrasal, and lexical constructions" (p. 702) as examples of unit-types for English. However, subsequent research (Ford & Thompson, 1996; Selting 1996, 1998) highlights that it is the interplay of syntactic, prosodic and pragmatic completion which signals upcoming TCU completion. As next speakers monitor current speaker's turn-so-far they are constantly updating and revising their estimate regarding a next possible point of completion.

(4) [Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1978, p. 28]
01 A: I'm glad//I have//you//for a friend.//
02 B: That's because you don't have any others.

(5) [Sacks et al., 1978, p. 28]
01 A: It's not//break time//yet.//
02 B: I finished my box, so shut up.

In Excerpts 4 and 5, A's turns are syntactically complete (in a decontextualized way) at any of the points marked with a double slash. However, the specific content of prior talk may render one or more of these points of syntactic completion *pragmatically incomplete*. Furthermore, prosodic features — including pitch contour, intensity, and speed — contribute to participants' selection of which among several points of syntactic completion to orient to as points of transition relevance. In other words, it is the co-occurrence of syntactic, prosodic and pragmatic completion that signals to next speakers that current speaker's turn might be coming to an end and that they might begin speaking at that point.

EVIDENCE OF PRECISION TIMING IN NOVICE-LEVEL L2 CONVERSATIONS

In talk among proficient users, no-gap transitions are so ubiquitous it is easy to overlook the fact that each instance is a unique conversational achievement. Each demonstrates that next speaker, by virtue of having carefully attended to current speaker's turn-so-far, has been able to successfully project a possible completion point and has precisely timed his or her speech production to begin at just that instant and not a fraction of a second sooner or later.

It bears repeating that according to the Sacks et al.'s (1974) turn-taking system, inter-turn gaps are *always* interpreted by participants as interactionally significant; that is, there are no accidental or random gaps.[12] On the contrary, inter-

turn gaps are a valuable interactional resource available to participants as the following excerpts illustrate:

(6) [Pomerantz, 1984, p. 77]
01 B: ...an' that's not an awful lotta fruitcake
02 -> (1.0)
03 B: Course it is. A little piece goes a long way.
04 A: Well that's right

(7) [Pomerantz, 1984, p. 77 (also Sacks, 1987, p. 64)]
01 L: D'they have a good cook there?
02 -> (1.7)
03 L: Nothing special?
04 J: No. –Every- everybody takes their turns.

In Excerpts 6 and 7 the gaps at the arrows communicate meaning just as clearly as any spoken reply might have.[13] In Excerpt 6, B's first turn (at line 1) is a first pair part[14] assessment and as such calls for a second pair part assessment. The second pair part is not merely absent, it is "officially absent" (Schegloff, 1972) thereby displaying to B incipient disagreement (Pomerantz, 1984). B responds to the gap by realigning herself with the position projected by A's silence. Only at this point does A proffer agreement. A similar official absence is noticeable in Excerpt 7 (at line 2); however, in this case it follows L's first pair part question. In line 3, L demonstrates her interpretation of this as meaning "no" (Sacks, 1987) which J then corroborates in line 4. What is apparent, then, is that inter-turn gaps communicate information of the "some trouble here" kind, for example, upcoming disagreements, rejections, refusals, etc. The corollary, of course, is that no-gap transitions are purposeful, skilled achievements specifically executed as such to avoid the implications gaps can signal.

Examples of No-Gap Transitions in Novice L2 Conversation

No-gap transitions are noticeably less common in the novice L2 data examined in this paper (in particular in J's group) than they are in much proficient user talk. Nevertheless, they do occur and as such represent one category of proof that novice L2 users are sensitive to and capable of, at least on occasion, precisely timing their entry into talk. As the following excerpts reveal, the general level of syntactic complexity of the turns in both the J's group and M's group material is relatively low. Turns in the J's group data typically consist of no more than two or three words. Speaker J is the only participant in his group who uses compound structures (Lerner, 1991) such as *if/then* statements. On the surface, the talk from M's group might appear linguistically more sophisticated. However, other than a slightly wider range of active vocabulary, the turns in this talk, though occasionally longer, are also, in general, syntactically uncomplicated (e.g., no compounds, no *if/then* or relative clauses, etc.). We might say that participants in M's group are

just making more out of the same limited resources than are the participants in J's group.

No-Gap Transitions in J's Group Data

The J's group transcript contains no instances of no-gap transitions following syntactically complex turns. However, there are several instances of no-gap transitions following simple turns and each should be valued as the interactional achievement it represents.

In Excerpt 8 below, we see both J and M accomplishing a no-gap transition. In line 2, J grants A's request (in line 1) and does so using the preferred turn shape described by Pomerantz (1984)—with no gap and the preferred action coming early in the turn—in this case making up the entire turn. M (the person who actually brought the chips referred to in line 1 and therefore the one with official rights to say they can be opened) then repeats the granting utterance also allowing no gap after J's turn.

(8) [Carroll-99/J's group]
01 A: can I open it?
02 -> J: yeah
03 -> M: yeah yeah
04 (1.9)
05 J: It's not mine but heh heh heh

In Excerpt 9, in line 3, A answers H's question stating that four friends came over to dinner. H seeks confirmation in line 5. A, despite being the weakest English speaker in this group, is nevertheless able to start up immediately. M's news-receipt token also allows no gap. J's turn is particularly interesting since prior to the moment he actually utters "have a look at this" he has already been staring down at the "mess" for quite some time. He has strategically delayed his "public noticing" (see Sacks, 1992 [Winter 1969, Lecture 1]) until such time as the prior topic has been concluded and M has completed his turn in line 7. J has precisely timed his noticing to begin with no gap but ends up in slight overlap because M stretches out his production of "un" (similar to "yeah," which in this sequential environment functions as a receipt token). J's actions demonstrate a high level of conversational finesse.

(9) [Carroll-99/J's group]
01 H: how many are zer
02 (2.5)
03 A: four
04 (0.5)
05 H: four?
06 -> A: I think (.) four
07 -> M: un [:::
08 -> J: [have look at this (0.2) what a mess (0.2) UUEGH!

Throughout the data from J's group it is minimal turns, (e.g., confirmation tokens, receipt tokens, repetitions of various sorts, etc.), which participants are most consistently able to accomplish as no-gap transitions. While the instances below (Excerpts 10-13) may look deceptively simple, these novice L2 (next) speakers are not merely recognizing lexical items under construction; it can be argued that they must also be making the much more sophisticated determination that the turn-so-far (and ultimately the "turn-as-projected"), be it a single word, phrase, clause or sentence, can stand alone as a pragmatically complete whole within the conversational sequence under way.

(10) [Carroll-99/J's group]
01 J: so eh it's (2.5) eh my work starts at eh-u f::ive um (0.6)
02 five thirty and (1.0) finish eh at um:: eight thirty
03 (0.4)
04 M: eight thirty
05 -> J: yeah
06 -> M: mmm

(11) [Carroll-99/J's group]
01 J: Uuahh:: it's:::
02 M: mm very (0.8) very (.) hard
03 -> J: very hard

(12) [Carroll-99/J's group]
01 J: not everyday
02 -> M: not everyday

(13) [Carroll-99/J's group]
01 J: one hour
02 -> M: one [hour
03 J: [one hour

In excerpts 10, 11, and 12, next speakers (at arrows) demonstrate through the timing of their turn beginnings an acceptance of the just prior turn as at least minimally complete in terms of pragmatic content. If this were not the case, it would have been highly unlikely that these next speakers would have begun speaking at these points.

Taking Excerpt 13 as an example, J's first turn might have been extended in any of hundreds of ways, such as "*one hour* is all it took," "*one hour* by car," "*one hour* and you're there," "*one hour* and fifty minutes," "*one hour* if you don't count the rest stops," or "*one-hour* photo labs don't do a very good job, do they." On what basis does M decide that "one hour" is complete? For this we need to consider the preceding talk:

((M has been telling J about one of his three "part-time" jobs. This one, from 8am - 5pm on Saturday, involves doing construction work and J has commented previously that it's a hard job.))

(14) [Carroll-99/J's group]

```
01        M: but (0.7) um (0.8) but (1.5) mmm (0.9) often
02        J: mhmm.
03        M: we can (1.0) mm rest
04           (0.3)
05        J: mhmm
06        M: mm (1.4) and sleeping.
07        J: mm sleeping.
08        M: mheh heh
09           (0.3)
10        J: one hour?
11 ->     M: one [hour
12        J:     [one hour
13           (0.2)
14        M: mm one two [(     )
15        J:            [hour
16           (0.6)
17        M: break
18           (0.6)
19        J: break
```

In Excerpt 14, M's first turn (spanning lines 1, 3, and 6) attempts to explain, not without considerable difficulty, that his job is not so hard because he can rest and even sleep during working hours. Since M's English level is low, producing anything but the most minimally communicative turns is challenging. As a result, speaker J, who has a higher English level, appears to be helping M along—in much the same way, it should be added, that so-called "native speakers" assist "non-native" speakers. In line 2, J produces a continuer (Heritage, 1984a; Schegloff, 1982) at a point where M's turn (in line 1) is not syntactically complete.[15]

Following M's turn at line 3, J again encourages M to continue first by his lack of uptake and then by providing another continuer in line 5. J then repeats (line 7), *but does not correct,*[16] M's sequentially ungrammatical turn in line 6. In other words, the on-going turn being developed by M would run "But often we can rest and sleeping." J's repetition (falling pitch marks it as a repetition as opposed to a challenge) appears also to function as a continuer returning the floor back to M. Nervous laughter (notice that J doesn't reciprocate this laughter) followed by a silence indicates that M is having some trouble formulating the sort of elaboration J seems to be encouraging. In light of the foregoing discussion then, J's turn in line 10 would appear to be a candidate elaboration regarding how long M can rest or sleep while at work which M ratifies in 11 and then manages to actually expand on in 17 (possibly also in 14). So it is the sequence as a whole up to that point which allows M to determine that J's turn "one hour" in line 10 is, in fact, pragmatically

complete.

In summary, the talk from J's group contains several instances of no-gap speaker transition demonstrating that even novices at an extremely low conversational level are capable of immediate start up. This is no small accomplishment. In order to have managed this interactional task participants in this talk must be carefully monitoring the moment by moment production of current speaker's turn as well as attending to the overall trajectory of the sequence.

No-Gap Transitions in the M's Group Data

The talk from M's group would strike most observers as noticeably more fluent, in terms of the turn transitions, than talk from J's group. Therefore, instead of looking at isolated instances of no-gap transitions as we did with the J's group materials, it is worth examining a more extended (and more or less self-contained) spate of talk. Looking at a more extended episode of talk will also provide a better feel for the nature of the Japanese-Japanese novice L2 talk examined in this study.

In the following extended excerpt there are only 13 instances (marked with an arrow) of no-gap speaker transition. However, if we include transitions where laughter forms the next turn (marked with "L"), transitions at TRPs but in overlap (marked with "O"), and transitions involving very brief silences (measurable[17] but possibly "unnoticeable" for participants; marked with "*"), this brings the total of no-gap transitions to 38 out of approximately 70 speakers' transitions. It seems very likely that it is this higher incidence of no-gap transitions which creates the impression of fluency in the casual observer's mind.

(15) [Carroll-99/M's group]

```
01        S:  un:: Madoka?
02            (0.6)
03        M:  $yeah?$ (($ symbol marks "smile voice"))
04            (0.8)
05 O      S:  you: [::
06        M:       [$wha's za matter$
07 L      K:  huh huh huh hum
08        M:  hhh
09            (0.5)
10        S:  you don'(t) to:: (1.2) to: eat-u sweet-u food
11            (0.6)
12        M:  ohn [::
13 O      S:      [o-a (("or")) (0.4) you:: (0.5) get(0.4)-o (0.4)
14            you'll get (.) bad (.) teeth
15 ->     M:  °°ohn ohn°°
16            (1.0)
17        K:  don'tchu? (.) don'tchu e-eat? (0.4) don't eat too much=
18            =chocolates
19 ->     M:  no(.) $why?$ hah hah
20        K:  .hhh or you(hu) wi(h)ll ha(h)ve-a (0.6) no slim
```

```
21 ->    M: NO? ha-hu-huh
22          (0.6)
23       S: no [slim?]
24 O     M:    [NO: ] no: no problem (0.5) my teeth is very=
25          =beautifu [l
26 L     K:            [h-huh [huh huh
27       S:                   [BEAUtiful?
28       M: ye:s and-u (0.2) if I:: (0.6) eat a lot-a I don't eat=
29          =a lot (0.7) uh: it's all right
30          (0.3)
31       S: u::n [n::?
32 O     M:      [do you $think so(h)$?
33 *        (.)
34       K: do you have a bad teeth?
35          (0.4)
36       M: no
37          (0.4)
38       K: no me too
39          (1.0) ((gazing at S))
40       K: do you have [(   )
41       S:             [o::(hn
42          (1.0)
43       K: °do you have-a (.) bad teeth°
44 *        (.)
45       S: Bad teeth? um:: a little
46 L     K: [[huh huh huh huh huh
47 L     M: [[huh huh huh
48          (0.8)
49       S: so I::: (.) my teeth i:s: (1.1) [um
50       M:                                 [un
51          (0.9)
52       S: [[I-I   sink-u          ]beau-beautiful
53       K: [[number number one ]
54 *        (.)
55       K: $number one in Kagawa pre(h)fecture(h)$ [heh heh heh=
56 O     S:                                         [(aah oh!)
57 ->    S: [yes  [yes  [I:::
58       K: [=heh [.hhh [huh huh huh [huh
59       S:                          [Whe:::::n]
60       K: hhh huh huh
61          (0.3)
62       S: un:: when I was (0.8) my::
63          (2.8)
64       M: eh? your elementary school?
65          (0.3)
66       S: un elementary [school
67 O     M:               [me too! me too!
68       S: elementary schoo::l
```

```
69          (0.6)
70      M:  goo [:: g    ]ood child-uren
71      S:       [when ]
72          (0.6)
73      S:  so [(                )          [I'm=
74      M:     [degrees of good chi:ld [re:n
75      S:  =grand prix
76 L    K:  [[hah hah hah hah hah hah hah hah hah
77 L    M:  [[hah hah
78      S:  [[I-I attend grand prix (.) ch  [of-u    ] (0.4) Kagawa=
79      K:                                  [huhch ]
80      S:  =pre [fecture
81      K:       [huh huh
82 ->   M:  Oh-oh-oh oh-oh-oh! ((K claps hands))
83 ->   K:  that's great
84 ->   M:  that's grea::t ((claps hands))
85 ->   S:  but-u::: zese days (0.3) my teeth is mm::::
86 ->   M:  bad-o heh heh
87      K:  [[huhm ]
88      S:  [[hm    ]
89          (0.7)
90      S:  little dirty::
91 L    M:  [[heh heh heh heh heh heh
92 L    K:  [[heh heh heh heh heh little dirty
93 ->   S:  dirty
94 ->   K:  [[no
95 L    M:  [[hmm
96 ->   S:  no
97 ->   K:  very beautiful
98 ->   M:  white-u (0.4) heh huh huh
99      S:  white?
100 O   M:  your tees [ss::   ] is white [-u
101     S:            [sanks ]           [zank you[zank you
102     M:                                         [perhaps
103 *       (.)
104     K:  I don't like my teess:
105 L   S:  [[HUH HUH HUH
106 L   M:  [[huh huh huh
107         (0.5)
108     M:  why?
109 *       (.)
110     S:  your teess pretty [heh heh heh ((pointing at K's teeth))
111 O   K:                    [no::
112 L   M:                    [heh heh heh heh heh
113     K:  tsu-two (0.2) teess
114         (0.3)
115     M:  ye:s?
116         (0.7)
```

117 K: w- I don't like
118 (2.1) ((M nods head))
119 S: don't mind
120 (0.3)
121 K: heh heh heh $thank you$ huh
122 (1.3)

As was the case with the J's group materials, many of the no-gap transitions in the M's group data involve minimal turns such as repetitions of various sorts (see section on "recycles" below), acknowledgement tokens, one-word questions, or fixed expressions. Nevertheless, of particular interest is the segment running from line 78-86 (and renumbered at 16 below) where S finally manages to tell, in the clear, the news that she attended the "grand prix," a final level competition for good dental hygiene in elementary school.

(16) [Carroll, 1999/M's group]
78 S: [[I-I attend grand prix (.) ch [of-u] (0.4) Kagawa=
79 K: [huheh]
80 S: =pre [fecture
81 K: [huh huh
82 -> M: Oh-oh-oh oh-oh-oh! ((K claps hands))
83 -> K: that's great
84 -> M: that's grea::t ((claps hands))
85 -> S: but-u::: zese days (0.3) my teeth is mm::::
86 -> M: bad-o heh heh

M in monitoring the production of S's turn-so-far (in line 78) has no difficulty projecting that S's turn will come to a point of possible completion at the end of "prefecture." The designation "Kagawa" (one of Japan's 47 prefectures) would have been pragmatically and syntactically complete in this context, however, there is no terminal fall (or corresponding terminal rise; Local, 1986; Wells & Peppé, 1996) in intonation. Instead, pitch is held level thereby projecting more talk to come. M's reduplicative receipt/appreciation token at line 82 (coming immediately after "prefecture") is quite common in Japanese female speech ("un-un-un" in Japanese) and as such represents a projectable unit. Similarly, K's appreciative assessment "That's great" is also a stock phrase and therefore easily projectable. M mirrors, and slightly upgrades, K's appreciation (and also K's clapping action). S then comes in immediately with what can be considered a back down from her boast in lines 78-80. As S searches for an adequate completion for "my teeth is..." she fills a potential silence with "mm" and extends this until, at last, M comes to the rescue, providing the candidate completion "bad" in line 86 which S subsequently accepts in a down-graded fashion ("a little dirty").

What is notable here is that five turns (lines 82-86) have been done in rapid succession with no gap and no overlap. For L2 speakers at this conversational level this is no mean accomplishment and, as was the case with the no-gap speaker

transitions in J's group talk, highlights the subtle control that even novice L2 speakers have over turn-taking. While not all of the talk from M's group exhibited this same degree of rapid turn exchange, the fact that even limited spates of talk can be carried out in this manner demonstrates that novice L2 speakers are *capable* of attending to the necessary level of detail and capable of precisely timing the start-up of at least a limited set of turn types.

No-Gap Transitions in Non-Overlapping Parallel Conversations

One of the most striking displays of precision timing, albeit of a slightly different nature, in the J's group talk occurs when there is a temporary schisming of one conversation into two: between M and A on the one hand and between J and S on the other. M and A are engaged in a somewhat halting conversation beginning with the archetypal EFL question "what did you do today?" J, who has been out of the room preparing food, comes back in and offers S ("Shinmyo," a non-participant friend of Speaker J who is overseeing the operation of the camcorder) something to drink. This is the only time during the taping that S speaks.

(17) [Carroll-99/J's group]

	Conversation between M and A		Conversation between J and S
01	M: what (0.8) did you do (0.6) today		
02	(0.7)		
03	A: un (1.3) I (2.1) I had my /hai../ hair (0.5) cut		
04	(.)		
05	M: hair cut		
06	(0.9)		
07	? ((clears throat))		
08	(1.6)		
09	((clears throat))		
10	? (2.8)		
11	A: i- Okayama		
12	M: [[in Okayama?]	12	J: [[pss] pss, Shinmyo
13		13	J: How 'bout this ((to S))
14	M: Heh huh		
15	A: Heh		
16	M: Why why		
17	(0.7)		
18	A: uh:::[::	18	J: [beer. ((to S))
19	(2.0)		
20	A: my hometown		
21		21	J: eh? wassa ((to S))
22		22	(2.1)
23		23	S: mhm I want beer ((to S))
24		24	(0.5)
25		25	J: beer. ((to S))

26	M: Okayama			
27	A: Okayama			
28		28	J:	not water ((to S))
29		29		(0.8)
30		30		heh heh
31		31	S:	huh huhn- of course
32		32		((to I))
			J:	you're w(h)orking (0.3) heh ((to S))
33		33		(0.4)
34		34	S:	so fuckin' wha ((to I))
35		35	J:	heh heh
36		36		(1.1)
37	M: when when			
38		38	J:	eh (0.8) watch out your mouth (0.5) heh ((to S))
39	M: did you			
40	(0.4)			
41		41	S:	OKAY:: ((to I))
42	(0.9)			
43	M: come (1.7) back (0.6) $ho(h)meto(H)wn$			
44	(1.3)			
45	A: n?			
46	(1.1)			
47	M: yester (0.4) day			
48	(0.5)			
49	A: iie (1.2) today [(( ))			
50	M: [today			
51	(2.6)			

What makes this spate of talk so interesting is not merely that two conversations are going on simultaneously, that is, M talking with A and J talking with S, but rather that the two conversations are perfectly fitted around one another—there are only two instances of overlap between the two conversations (in lines 12 and 18). The first marks the beginning of the parallel conversations and the second is a simple case of transition space onset in which next speaker aims for the transition space, but current speaker lengthens the last word.

Although the two conversations are separate, they have a curiously symbiotic relationship. One has the impression that M and A's talk is the "main" conversation but that it progresses in fits and starts—something like dragging a stick slowly across the slats in a picket fence. J, and to some degree S, fit their turns-at-talk into the gaps in between. Clues that J regards his conversation with S as secondary to and possibly intrusive on the "main" conversation between M and A are seen first in his use of "pss" in line 12 and then in the general brevity of his turns.

His attempts to time his "asides" to S to fit into the gaps in M and A's talk further support this interpretation.

While participants in each conversation give no indications that they are aware of the content of talk from the other conversation, they are clearly closely monitoring what is being said in order to time their turn start-ups. For example, in line 16, M inquires into why A got his hair cut in Okayama—a city located an hour away. In line 20, A completes his explanation of why he cut his hair in Okayama. Precisely at the completion of this phrase, J continues his talk with S where he confirms (in line 25) that S wants beer. Once again, precisely at the termination of I saying "beer," in line 26, M continues, *as if there had been no intervening talk*, checking that Okayama was indeed A's hometown and A immediately confirms this fact. At this point, J checks again that it is beer and *not* water that S wants (J is holding up a bottle of water in line 13 and is perhaps concerned about his cameraman "drinking on the job"). This segment alone demonstrates how carefully participants attend to both their own talk as well as talk around them.

Instances of Normal Overlap in Novice-Level L2 Conversation

In addition to no-gap next turn start-ups, some overlaps also provide evidence of speakers' ability to precisely time their participation in interaction. While one robust finding of conversation analytic research is that overwhelmingly only one party speaks at a time (Sacks et al., 1974), overlapping talk, nevertheless, occurs and occurs frequently—and there is no inconsistency in this. A great many instances of overlap are a natural consequence of the turn-taking system in that upon completion of a TCU, next speakers may self-select, but current speaker may also elect to continue his or her speaking turn by adding to the ongoing turn resulting in what is called "normal" overlap. Consider the following two examples from proficient user talk:

(18) [MDE:60:1:6:1]
01 S: hello:?
02 H: hello is Lila home?
03 S: n-no she's no:t. she:'s et school.
04 H: yeh d'you know what time she'd be back in t'day?
05 (0.2)
06 S: zis Harriet?
07 H: yeah.
08 -> S: hi Harriet.//[uh about fi:ve.
09 -> H: [hi:.

(19) [NB:II:2:29]
01 -> E: god it's it's it's su:n's comin' out//[real ni:ce.]
02 -> N: [yeh I noti]ced that
03 (.)
04 N: I notice' that. That's great.

In both Excerpts 18 and 19, current speaker (at the first arrow) has come to

a point (marked with a double slash) where what is being said is hearably complete. In Excerpt 18, S greets H saying "Hi, Harriet" at which point H returns the greeting (at second arrow). However, S does not stop speaking but rather continues with "uh about fi:ve" which addresses H's query in line 4. The result is overlapping talk. Similarly, in Excerpt 19 (line 1), E states "Sun's coming out." At this point, H responds with "Yeh, I noticed that." However, E expands on "sun's coming out..." by adding the adverbial "real nice."

Instances of normal overlap, thus, further demonstrate participant ability to precisely time turn start-ups. In proficient user talk the onset of overlap regularly coincides with TRPs, but can we also find instances of normal overlap in novice L2 talk? As it turns out, there are several instances of normal overlap in both J's group talk and M's group talk. In Excerpt 20 (line 2), J replies to M's first pair part summons ("Zak" is J's nickname) but M tags on the question "how long" in reference to prior talk about working hours. The result is a brief period of overlapping talk.

```
(20) [Carroll-99/J's group]
01        M: Zak [how      ]long=
02 ->     J:        [mhmm?] ((J is gazing elsewhere))
03        M: =eh .hss (0.8) did-you (1.6) did-you:: work °°work work°°
```

In Excerpt 21, after a bit of confusion in lines 8-12, M provides a minimal one-word expansion (line 14) on the nature of his job (he does tile roofing for Japanese-style houses). J's exclamatory "ah" shows he recognizes "Japanese" before M has fully completed his production of the word. Jefferson (1973) refers to this as "recognitional onset."

```
(21) [Carroll-99/J's group]
01        J:  what's (.) what's your (0.2) job (0.7) your (0.4)
02            part-time job
03            (2.0)
04        M: ((        ))
05            (1.3)
06        J:  what's ah
07            (0.3)
08        M: mmmm
09            (1.8)
10            ahh (0.4) on loof (0.3) heh heh heh
11            (0.3)
12        J:  ohh ahhh! (0.5) a roof (.) roof (.) made the roof
13            (0.4)
14        M: mm japane[se
15 ->     J:          [ah ma- making japanese roof
16            (0.2)
17        J:  ((clears throat))
```

```
18          (0.2)
19          whoa[::
20      M:      [ehem
21          (0.8)
```

Excerpt 22 follows on from Excerpt 21. Speaker J and M are discussing the hours that they work and how much they earn. In the first instance of overlap in Excerpt 22 (lines 26 and 27), J's confirmation "from 5 p.m." is also hearably complete after "five" and M provides a minimal news-receipt token ("mm" can be considered a reduction of the fuller Japanese "un") at this time resulting in overlap. Again in lines 40 and 41, in the context of his question in line 37, J's rephrasing of "how bout the money" as "how much" can certainly be heard as complete and M does, in fact, begin his turn with a turn-claiming token at this point.

```
(22) [Carroll-99/J's group]
22      J:  ts- n sounds (1.3) like (.) em (0.3) hard job
23          (0.8)
24      M:  yes it's eight (1.4) to eight from (1.1) five p.m.
25          (1.0)
26 ->   J:  ((clears throat)) from five [p.m.]
27 ->   M:                              [mm ] and  [(          )
28      J:                                         [but not everyday
29          (1.5)
30      J:  not everyday
31      M:  not everyday
32          (0.8)
33          only Saturday
34          (.)
35      J:  Saturday ha' ha' ha'  ((Japanese comprehension marker))
36          (0.4)
37          and how bout the the money
38          (1.3)
39      M:  hmm
40 ->   J:  how much::  [do you gain ]
41 ->   M:              [hmm::::::::::]
42          (2.5)
43          mmm (1.2) seven thousand (0.7) yen
```

The next few instances of normal overlap come from M's group and reveal a clear orientation on the part of these participants to TRPs as locations for speaker transfers. In Excerpt 23 below, M offers a candidate completion (in line 3) for S's word search (in line 1). By beginning with "your," M is taking up the structural pattern of S's reformulation begun with "my." Speaker S accepts the candidate item; first with an affirmative "un" ("yeah") and then by repeating the candidate item. In this sequential context, the word "elementary" by itself is hearably complete and this is the precise point at which M begins speaking.

(23) [Carroll-99/M's group]
01 S: um:: when I was (0.8) my
02 (2.8)
03 M: eh? your elementary school?
04 (0.3)
05 S: un elementary [school
06 -> M: [me too! me too!

In Excerpt 24, K's turn is complete both syntactically and pragmatically after "very far."[18] Coparticipants' orientation to this as a TRP is demonstrated in a particularly robust manner in that both S and M begin laughing[19] at precisely the same moment.

(24) [Carroll-99/M's group]
01 K: my home town Kochi is very far [from here,
02 -> S: [huh huh
03 -> M: [heh heh huh

Excerpt 25 illustrates that TRP projection is not something current speakers necessarily do for the benefit of next speakers but rather a case of next speakers continually updating their "best guess" as to when the turn-in-progress is *possibly* complete for them. In line 11, K comments that it is alright to eat a lot since "today is special day." S, however, begins speaking after "special" showing that she hears the turn under construction as syntactically and pragmatically complete at the end of "today is special," despite the lack of clear terminal pitch movement over "special." Note that had K formulated her turn in a grammatically correct manner as "Today is *a* special day," the turn-so-far would not have been complete after "special."[20]

(25) [Carroll-99/M's group]
01 M: hhh .hh we may eat a lot
02 (0.3)
03 S: it's yummy=
04 M: =sure
05 (1.1)
06 M: mm: but we must be grow fat?
07 (1.4)
08 K: no problem heh heh
09 M: [[heh heh heh
10 S: [[no problem
11 K: today is specia[l day
12 -> S: [don't mind
13 K: today is ok
14 M: Oh. I see

These instances of normal overlap in both J's group talk and M's group talk

represent one of the strongest forms of evidence that the novice L2 speakers in this data *do* orient to TRPs as locations for speaker transfer and *do* attempt to precisely time their turn-entries to coincide with these moments. Moreover, they are regularly successful at doing so.

Instances of Recycled Turn Beginnings

One further class of conversational phenomena which supports the position that novice-level L2 speakers do attend to the precise timing of both their own talk as well as that of their coparticipants is that of recycled turn beginnings. Throughout the 60s and 70s mainstream linguistics dealt with restarts primarily as "performance errors," a sort of syntactic stuttering. However, Schegloff (1987) demonstrates that many instances of repetition are not "errors" but are, in fact, carefully timed strategic restarts designed to safeguard potentially important turn-beginnings from overlap (see also French & Local, 1983). The data from my novice L2 users reveal several instances of such recycled turn beginnings (Excerpts 26-31).

Turn recycles demonstrate a different sort of attention to timing. In this case, participants are not exactly projecting upcoming TRPs but rather are attending to the fine details of overlapping talk in order to determine who will "survive" the overlap as the current speaker and exactly when the survivor may begin speaking in the clear.

```
(26) [Carroll-99/M's group]
01        K: huh  [huh huhm ]
02 ->     S:      [Keiko::   ] Keiko:: drink juices too much

(27) [Carroll-99/M's group]
01        S: here you are
02           (0.5)
03        K: Thank you
04           (2.3)
05        S: [[You  drink   too]
06 ->     M: [[I-I-I want to drink] want to drink-u

(28) [Carroll-99/M's group]
01        S: me? Me?
02        K: Why don't yo [u eat  ] ((talking while eating))
03 ->     M:              [de-    ] decrease decrease

(29) [Carroll-99/M's group]
01        K: I shink I shink (0.8) castela[21] (0.3) this castela=
02           =is little yucky
03        M: why:::?
04        S: [[why::? ]
06 ->     K: [[this cas]tela castela is u- (0.2) delicious but=
07           =this castela is yucky
```

(30) [Carroll-99/M's group]
01 K: I-I::: (0.9)I don't eat this
02 (1.0)
03 S: [[Madoka?]
04 -> M: [[you don't] don't have to ( )

(31) [Carroll-99/M's group]
01 S: so:: [a::::n::::d]-u
02 -> M: [besi-beside]
03 S: no huh huh hu [h huh] no(h) [huh huh]
04 M: [sorry] [besides I:]::
05 (0.4)
06 -> M: I:: (0.2) can't-share- you::r (0.5) gran-ofather huhh

It is worth discussing this last example (Excerpt 31) in some detail as it reveals just how closely the two participants are monitoring each others' overlapping talk. Just prior to this talk M and K have been speaking about a visit to K's hometown, and this talk appeared to have reached a conclusion. At this point (line 1), following a gap of 0.7 second, S produces "so::" which in this context might be seen by coparticipants as a topic-concluding move. That M does, indeed, interpret this as an attempt at topic closure is demonstrated by her use of "besides" indicating that she has more to say on the prior topic. S, however, tags "and" on to her turn-so-far and thus S and M find themselves in overlap.

S and M first become aware that they are speaking in overlap during the first beat[22] of the overlapping talk, in what Schegloff (2000) terms the *post-onset phase* (also see Jefferson & Schegloff, 1975). Their first opportunity to display to each other their awareness of this fact comes in the second beat. And indeed, looking at the transcript, both S and M seem to orient to the overlap, S by stretching out the performance of her first beat beyond the syllable boundary of M's first beat (see below) while M cuts off the production of her first attempt at "besides" before beginning a recycle.

Beat1	**Beat2**	**Beat3**	**Beat4**
[a::::	::	n::::	d]-u
[be	si	be	side]

If S had produced the word "and" in a typical fashion, it would have been projectably complete at about the same time that M begins her recycle (beat 3). However, S does not reach completion at this point. By stretching out her production of "and," she confounds M's attempt to project its completion so that S and M find themselves once again in overlap in beat 3. In beat 4, M displays her awareness of this overlap by withholding the production of the final "s" of "besides." In the end, S emerges as the "surviving" rightful speaker—notice that the tail end of her "a:::n:::du" is produced in the clear. Had S not chosen to add the vocalic release to the end of "and," both S and M would have finished at exactly the same

time and next speakership would still be up for grabs.

While turn recycles do not directly address the issue of whether novice L2 speakers are capable of precisely timing their turn entries, recycles do illustrate just how closely even novice L2 speakers monitor, and react to, the unfolding interaction. As such they represent an important class of supporting evidence for the main argument.

EXTENSIVE PAUSES AND GAPS IN NOVICE L2 TALK

Up to this point this paper has argued that the novice L2 users in this study are capable of precisely timing their entry into talk and has presented several types of evidence for this, including no-gap start-ups, instances of normal overlap, and turn recycles. However, as mentioned in the introduction, the novice L2 talk examined in this paper is often heavily punctuated with inter-turn gaps, and the turns themselves often contain intra-turn pauses. Looking again at Excerpt 1 from J's group (renumbered below as 32), most casual observers, on an impressionistic level, would find this talk rather disfluent or disjointed.

(32) [Carroll-99/J's group]

01	A:	D'you eat a dinna:
02 ->		(1.9)
03	M:	Uh .hss::::: mhmm:: no
04 ->		(0.8)
05	A:	°°no°°
06 ->		(3.6)
07	M:	hah
08		(0.5)
09		how abou $t'you$
10	A:	Heh heh
11	M:	didya?
12 ->		(0.8)
13	A:	uh yes
14 ->		(1.6)
15	M:	what (1.2) what (0.7) kind of food did you eat
16 ->		(2.1)
17	A:	er (.) Japanese (0.8) Nabe
18 ->		(0.5)
19	M:	nabe (0.5) oh.
20 ->		(1.0)
21	H:	nabe? huh
22	A:	nabe
23 ->		(.)
24	H:	hhh hhh hhh who did you have a dinner (0.2) wiss
25 ->		(1.5)
26	A:	n:::: (0.7) friends
27 ->		(2.1)

28 H: how many are zer
29 -> (2.5)
30 A: four
31 -> (0.5)
32 H: four?
33 A: I think (.) four

Out of the 17 speaker transitions in this excerpt, 13 involve (often lengthy) inter-turn gaps. This situation raises several important analytic questions. According to Sacks et al. (1974), inter-turn gaps are treated by participants as interactionally significant. But is this really the case with novice L2 data? And if not, what status would these gaps and pauses have in the unfolding of talk? Conversely, if these gaps *are* treated by participants as meaningful, do they carry the same interactional loadings as gaps in proficient user talk?

One way out would be to side-step the whole issue by saying: "Well, they are, after all, speaking a foreign language." Another approach would be to resort to factors external to the talk, such as nervousness about being videotaped, social distance factors, and differing cultural orientations regarding silence and the need to talk.[23] Given, however, that the participants in this data have shown that they are, at least on occasion, able to precisely time their turn entry, it is worth exploring the possibility that the *apparent* disfluency is, at least partially, interactionally occasioned. In other words, it may be demonstrably the case that some limited set of the inter-turn gaps in this data are responsive to deficiencies in the prior turn's production or design or both.

Sequential Implication of Excessive Intra-Turn Pausing

Virtually all the extended turns, that is to say, turns consisting of more than two or three words and typically constructed as "sentences," from J's group, and to a somewhat lesser extent from M's group, exhibit disfluency in the form of multiple, and often lengthy, intra-turn pauses. The pacing[24] of this talk is highly erratic and normal speakers might find listening to such talk laborious.

In all four of the excerpts below the turn prior to the (arrowed) gap is hearably complete; that is, in all cases the prior turn reaches a point of syntactic, pragmatic and prosodic completion (all four end in marked falling pitch). Yet, in each of these four excerpts, next speakers allow a gap. In fact, nowhere in my data is such a *haltingly produced turn* ever subject to overlap, nor is there a single instance of no-gap transition following such a turn. Excerpts 33 to 36 below are respresentative examples.

(33) [Carroll-99/J's group]
01 M: ah (2.0) um (1.7) today I (0.8) work (1.7) at (1.0)
02 eight am.
03 -> (0.5)
04 J: eight a.m. mm

(34) [Carroll-99/J's group]
01 J: ts- n sounds (1.3) like (.) em (0.3) hard job.
02 -> (0.8)
03 M: yes it's eight (1.4) to eight from (1.1) five pm
04 J: ((clears throat)) from 5 p.m.

(35) [Carroll-99/J's group]
01 J: and um (0.7) from::: Monday to:: (0.5) Saturday.
02 -> (0.3)
03 M: mmm

(36) [Carroll-99/M's group]
01 S: you don't to: (1.2) to eat sweet food (0.8) or
02 (0.3) you:: (0.4) get-o (0.3) you'll get bad teeth.
03 -> (1.3)
04 K: don't you don't e'at (0.4) don't eat too much chocolates

Consider Excerpt 33. Earlier, we saw that the novice L2 participants in this data are certainly capable of doing simple, no-gap repetitions. Yet, in Excerpt 33, speaker J, who has the highest level of English of any of the participants, allows a half-second gap before his repetition. Why is this the case? That answer may lie in the observation that in the prior turn M pauses between almost every word, not just "micro-pauses" but significant pauses ranging from 0.8 second to 2.0 seconds (Jefferson, 1987). Although M's turn is syntactically as well as pragmatically complete (in the context of J's prior talk telling about his part-time job) after "work," there is a slight non-final pitch rise on "work" marking that there is more to come. M then continues with "at" which allows a lexico-syntactic slot for either a time or a place. Once M begins production of "eight" it must, at this point, be apparent to J which has been selected, and it should be unproblematic to project a point of possible next completion. Nevertheless, J fails to time his repetition to coincide with the completion of M's turn.

This suggests the possibility that M's halting production of his turn has "desensitized" J's orientation to what Sacks et al. (1974, p. 719) describe as "the pressure for early starts on self-selectors, resulting from the 'first starter goes' provision..." In other words, it is interactionally safer given the halting nature of M's turn production[25] to just wait for M to stop speaking—as alluded to in the quote from Agar at the beginning of this paper. Remember as well that accomplishing precision timing is always a delicate balance between not starting too late and not starting too early. That is to say, next speakers orient to both no-gap *and* no-overlap transitions. Therefore, when confronted with such disfluent turns and the dilemma they present, next speakers may prefer to delay speaking in an effort to conform to the no-overlap rule.

Because this is an important point it bears restating. Where current speaker's turn is produced in an erratic fashion with numerous false starts and/or lengthy intra-turn pauses, there may be a "relaxation" of the first starter rule such that,

being unable to project a precise moment of possible completion, next speakers choose to wait for a slight gap. Participants may see this as an interactionally safer alternative to possibly starting too early—an action that can be negatively interpreted as interruption. That is to say, if next speakers are forced *by an exceptional lack of projectability in a novice speaker's turn-so-far* to choose between the possibility of starting too early with its associated negative consequences and alternatively waiting until current speaker has definitely finished, there may be a preference for the latter.

Possible Consequences of Marginally Sufficient Responses

The impression one gets while viewing the segment of the tape represented in Excerpt 37 is that this group of participants is having a hard time getting the conversation going (this occurs towards the beginning of the recording). The talk seems almost painfully slow. Furthermore, what emerges is a view of conversation as little more than a series of Question (Q) and Answer (A) sequences.[26]

(37) [Carroll-99/J's group]
((for emphasis, questions are bolded, and answers are bolded and italicised))

Q ->	**09**	**how abou $t'you$**	
	10	A:	Heh heh
Q ->	**11**	**M:**	**didya?**
	12		(0.8)
A ->	***13***	***A:***	***uh yes***
	14		(1.6)
Q ->	**15**	**M:**	**what (1.2) what (0.7) kind of food did you eat**
	16		(2.1)
A ->	***17***	***A:***	***er (.) Japanese (0.8) Nabe***
	18		(0.5)
	19	M:	nabe (0.5) oh.
	20		(1.0)
Q ->	**21**	**H:**	**nabe? huh**
A ->	***22***	***A:***	***nabe***
	23		(.)
Q ->	**24**	**H:**	**hhh hhh hhh who did you have a dinner (0.2) wiss**
	25		(1.5)
A ->	***26***	***A:***	***n:::: (0.7) friends***
	27		(2.1)
Q ->	**28**	**H:**	**how many are zer**
	29		(2.5)
A ->	***30***	***A:***	***four***
	31		(0.5)
Q ->	**32**	**H:**	**four?**
	33	A:	I think (.) four

In lines 13, 17, 22, 26, and 30 of Excerpt 37, speaker A provides only marginally sufficient answers to questions—in most cases a single word, the sole ex-

ception being "Japanese nabe" (line 17). Note that the determination of marginally sufficient is not a question only for the analyst: Speaker A's laugh tokens, in line 10, are not accepted by recipient M as marginally sufficient, prompting M to immediately rephrase the question in line 11. Speaker M treats a response by speaker A as *officially absent*.

What is interesting from an interactional perspective is that each of A's marginally sufficient responses is followed by a gap. In principle, there is no reason why a one-word turn can't form a perfectly adequate and satisfying reply to a question. However, the questions in this excerpt are more than mere requests for information: In the sequential environment in which they occur (toward the beginning of the talk) they are clearly intended as attempts to get the conversation rolling. The fact that neither M nor H chooses to immediately self-select at the conclusion of A's minimal responses indicates that they may have expected more and that their silence is meant to pursue an elaboration by A. In other words, speaker A's marginal responses to his coparticipants' topic openers fail to promote further talk on the topic proposed by M and H's questions.

Beach (1996), Schlegel (1998), and Ford (forthcoming) all mention the use of silence following minimal turns as an elicitation device in proficient user talk. Ford's paper deals specifically with turns initiated with disaffiliative, negatively framed TCUs.[27] Stated simply, her paper shows that, in certain contexts, coparticipants regularly treat unexpanded, negatively framed turns as problematic. In the case of the data excerpt examined in this section, speaker A provides unelaborated, minimal responses to both yes/no and wh-questions. M and H treat A's responses as unsatisfactory/problematic as indicated by the immediately subsequent gaps in lines 14, 18, 23, 27, and 31. In other words, both M and H noticeably (for both A and overhearing analysts alike) display a lack of immediate uptake following A's unelaborated responses, which is similar to what Beach and Ford find in proficient speaker data.

In proficient user talk, unexpanded responses such as B's turns in the following invented example might be interpreted as unwillingness to talk (at least on this topic or with this individual).

(38) [Invented example]
A: Weather's supposed to be great tomorrow.
B: I guess.
A: Is Alice coming by?
B: no.
A: You gonna go to the beach?
B: Yes.

In reply to A's last question, a more sociable speaker B might have provided an elaborated response[28] along the lines of "(Yeah) if the weather's OK" or "Uhh I have to work so probably not." Minimal responses such as A's in Excerpt 37 may well strike proficient users as evasive, brusque, curt, secretive, apprehensive, and

so forth. Wolfson (1989) notes a similar phenomenon in her study of ESL learner responses to compliments by native speakers, pointing out that by limiting their responses to the use of stock phrases and not providing elaborations, the ESL learners thwarted attempts at conversation on the part of native speakers.

One kind of participant demonstration that the gaps are intended to prompt further talk by speaker A is found in the sequence running from lines 17 to 21. In line 17, A replies to M's question saying that he had "Japanese (0.8) nabe" for dinner. (The pause in A's reply, incidentally, most probably indicates a word search in progress—a doomed attempt to find an English equivalent for "nabe" which, like many ethnic food terms, has no direct translation.) At any rate, following a half-second gap M repeats (with falling pitch) "nabe," pauses for a further half-second, and then adds the news-receipt token "oh." It is worth noting that M does *not* say "Oh. Nabe." but rather "nabe (0.5) oh." Doing the receipt first might be interpreted as full acceptance of A's reply and provides for a slot where M might be expected to follow up this receipt with an evaluative comment (Heritage, 1984a). It is noteworthy that in this entire excerpt this is the only oh-receipt given. In contrast, by merely repeating "nabe" (more like a continuer than a news-receipt) and then pausing, M offers speaker A a further opportunity to expand on his "Japanese nabe" reply. Only when there is no expansion forthcoming does M offer the news-receipt token.

A gap of one full second then ensues after which speaker H comes into the talk (in line 21) with a one-word confirmation request ("nabe?"). Once again this can be seen as returning the floor to A for an expansion. The single laugh token may also be significant marking as it does "nabe" as a "laughable" and perhaps, therefore, worthy of further comment or discussion. Speaker A, however, simply confirms by repetition.

Moreover, speaker A's marginal responses appear to be responsible for the overall structuring of this talk as an "interrogation" in which one party is the target of all questioning. Beginning with his first marginal response in line 13, each subsequent question attempts to topicalize the prior question: *How about you? (Did you have dinner yet?) What kind of food did you eat? Nabe?Who did you have dinner with? How many are there? Four?* Both the overall structure and specific details of this stretch of talk appear to result directly from the marginal quality of A's replies to questions intended as conversational openers rather than from linguistic incompetence on the part of coparticipants.

This section has provided at least provisional support for the possibility that not all gaps in novice L2 talk are attributable to cognitive processing issues or language difficulties. On the contrary, the data presented here lend support to the hypothesis that at least some of the inter-turn gaps common to novice L2 talk are responsive to design features of prior speaker's turns. In the data examined here, inter-turn gaps were found to occur in the following sequential locations: (1) immediately subsequent to what have been termed haltingly produced turns (those containing numerous perturbations such as re-starts, pauses, irregular pacing); and

(2) immediately subsequent to unelaborated single word replies, marginally sufficient replies to questions intended as conversational openers. Given, however, the restricted data set under examination here, these findings must, for the time being—despite their intuitive appeal—be considered speculative. Future research employing a larger database of novice L2 talk would be required to substantiate (and expand on) these findings. Nevertheless, this discussion should highlight the danger of any research approach which would attempt to explicate gap behavior without detailed analysis of the interaction within which gaps emerge.

CONCLUSION

This paper began by asking whether novice L2 users are, in fact, capable of precisely timing their entry into talk, that is, whether they are able to project upcoming TRPs and thereby accomplish no-gap transitions. The answer appears to be a qualified "yes." The novice L2 speakers in this data regularly achieve no-gap transitions. In some cases these are *no-gap, no-overlap* transitions while at other times, for reasons unforeseeable to next speakers, they end up with overlapping start-ups at TRPs. We saw how this worked both within a single conversation and in the peculiar case of non-overlapping, parallel conversations. This paper also examined instances of recycled turn beginnings which demonstrate next speaker sensitivity to the importance of timing. In short, there is ample evidence that novice-level L2 speakers are, at least on occasion, capable of precisely timing their contributions to the flow of talk.

The reason for qualifying this result, however, is that the turns in my data are minimal, reflecting little syntactic complexity—along the lines of what a 2-3 year old "native speaker" child might produce. The range of skills required to project possible completion of such brief turns may be of a lower order than those needed to project endings of more complex turns. It remains to be empirically demonstrated whether novices are also capable of projecting the completion of complex, and potentially multi-unit, turns (Ford, forthcoming; Selting, 1998) of the sorts regularly seen in proficient user talk where next speakers must attend to a delicate matrix of syntactic, prosodic, pragmatic, gestural, *and rhetorical* resources. To this end, it might be informative to carry out careful conversation analytic descriptions of non-pedagogic talk between novices and, say, two proficient users in which the novice would find him/herself in competition for turns with the more advanced users.

It is often assumed that novice L2 speakers, and specifically those characterizable as "language students," are only grossly attuned to the language being addressed to them. Yet, this study suggests that this is not the case. In terms of their interaction, the novice L2 speakers in my data appear to orient to the same level of conversational detail as so-called "native speakers." Indeed, in some respects, the novice L2 interaction examined here sounds and looks very much like interaction among proficient users.

Nevertheless, there is no denying that some (though not all) of this talk is considerably "gappier" than proficient user talk and we, as analysts, need to account for this. Within mainstream linguistics, many, if not all, of these gaps have been written off as inevitable artifacts of faulty or limited linguistic competence. This paper has, to the contrary, sought to explore the possibility that at least some specific set of the inter-turn gaps in the data are not production disfluencies but rather represent selectively mobilized interactional resources employed by next speakers in response to turn-design features of prior speaker's turns.

One possibility that has been explored here is that gaps can be a way of dealing with the disfluent turn-production frequently found in novice L2 data. Specifically, if current speaker's turn is so broken and disfluent, for example, through the inclusion of numerous intra-turn pauses, that TRP projection becomes undependable, then next speakers may prefer to take a "wait and see" attitude instead of risking a start-up (in overlap) at an inappropriate place in the ongoing turn. Another avenue that has been briefly explored is that certain gaps may be occasioned by a prior speaker's *marginally sufficient* turn, for example an unelaborated "yes" or "no" to a question intended as a conversational opener. In these cases, it is not that next speaker is incapable of immediate start-up but rather that the speaker may be purposefully delaying participation in hopes of prompting the prior speaker to expand on what was said. While certainly not unique to novice talk, this pattern may be particularly prevalent in novice L2 talk (and possibly also novice-to-expert talk) due to the novice's more limited range of linguistic resources and, therefore, the predilection for minimal turns.

Whether as conversation analysts, language teachers, or others interested in second language use, we still have much to learn about the ways novices interact in an L2. One possible benefit of further investigation into novice L2 interactions (both novice-to-novice as well as novice-to-expert) might be a dramatic shift in how we view L2 learners. In a recent introduction to the foundations and practices of conversation analysis, Hutchby and Wooffitt (1998) state:

> Conversation analysts have described the social organization of a wide range of *everyday* conversational phenomena. Consequently, there has been a tendency to focus on interactions between people with normal speech capacities. In the past few years, however, there has been a growing interest in the use of conversation analysis to investigate the interactional capabilities of people who, for physiological or psychological reasons, have speech difficulties. (p. 252)

Hutchby and Wooffitt go on to say that:

> Conversation analytic research emphasizes the subtle and sophisticated range of skills which people with speech problems nevertheless employ in their interaction with others: a range of competencies which might be lost to an analysis

> motivated by, and embodying the assumptions of, a model of the speaker as intrinsically deficient. (p. 252)

Although Hutchby and Wooffitt (1998) are referring to interactants who have physiological or psychological speech difficulties, what they have to say applies equally to second language learners. Overwhelmingly, language learners are modeled in the research as "deficient" speakers—in terms of both their linguistic skills and interactional abilities. Interestingly, children learning to interact in their first language are, in contrast, rarely portrayed as deficient or faulty speakers. The fact remains that, despite limited linguistic resources, even the humble novice L2 speakers in my data are, by-and-large, successful in their attempts to interact socially with coparticipants, and together they display a range of highly sophisticated interactional skills. The more thoroughly we understand the communicative skills these novices *do* have, as well as the dependencies and relationships these skills have with linguistic patterns of action, the more capable we will be of building on those skills.

APPENDIX A – TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

The transcripts presented in this paper conform to the transcription standards attributed to Gail Jefferson as outlined in Atkinson and Heritage (1984). All timings were measured to the closest .001 of a second using sound editing software and then rounded off to the closest tenth of a second (see Endnote 16). Micro-pauses of less than 0.2 second are transcribed as (.).

In transcribing the novice L2 talk presented in this paper, I attempted as close a transcription as possible. For example, if the pronunciation of a word was aberrant, I tried to reflect this in the transcript, for example, "sink" for "think" and "white-o" for "white." Japanese students of English often speak in what one might call "kana-speech," in other words, English spoken as if written in the Japanese hiragana/katakana syllabary. Such speech is characterized by the addition of vowels to final consonants, for example "white-o," "drink-u," "and-o," etc. While traditionally thought of as a pronunciation problem, there are several instances in my data which suggest the possibility that kana-speech is, at least on occasion and by particular participants, strategically employed. For this reason, rather than to stigmatize or stereotype pronunciation patterns, I have attempted to include these word-final vowel additions whenever I could discern them.

Specific Features of Japanese Talk (often inserted into English talk):

.hss	a hissing inbreath similar in use to "we::ll::"
un (n)	akin to "yeah," this conversational object has several meanings depending on sequential location, for example, news receipt, "yes" response to question, and continuer.
ha' ha' ha'	similar to "oh oh oh"—an emphatic marker of comprehension
ohn	a nasalized /o/ sound often used as a news receipt
so	Japanese speakers frequently begin turns with "so" which is not the causal or concluding "so" of English. The Japanese "so" can function as a news receipt similar to "yeah."

APPENDIX B – TOEIC TEST SCORES

At the beginning of the semester during which these recordings were made, all second year students were required to take the TOEIC exam. While this exam, like the more difficult TOEFL, is not designed to test communicative ability, these scores do offer some insight into the objective levels of the participants' English.

Student	Listening	Reading	Total
M's group			
(S)	130	100	230
(K)	215	145	360
(M)	170	140	310
J's group			
(J)	390	315	705
(M)	215	150	365
(A)	205	165	370
(H)	240	120	360

NOTES

[1] This paper follows the conversation analytic practice established in Sacks et al. (1974) of using the terms "current speaker" and "next speaker" without determiners. This is intended to remind readers that these terms reflect structurally differentiated roles within the model of conversational turn-taking described by Sacks et al. (1974) rather than mere common-sense, temporal descriptions of who happens to be talking at some given moment. This usage, furthermore, highlights the conversational reality that both current speaker as well as (all possible) next speakers are involved in the interactive process of creating the turn-in-progress (Goodwin, 1979, 1981).

[2] Throughout this paper the terms "gap" and "pause" will be used in the technical senses suggested by Sacks et al. (1974) in their footnote on page 715. According to Sacks et al. (1974), pauses are turn-internal silences, in other words, intra-turn pauses. Gaps are silences that occur between speaking turns, in other words, inter-turn gaps. Sacks et al. (1974) also refer to "lapses" which may represent a longer, temporary suspension of talk.

[3] For full discussions of the "myth of the native speaker" see Coulmas (1981), Paikeday (1985), and Davies (1991). Paikeday prefers the term "proficient user" to "native speaker." The term NS itself occurs relatively infrequently in CA literature where it has been subsumed under talk of "membership in a speech community" or "communicative competence."

[4] We might also consider whether the NS/NNS device is deployed, in many settings, as what Sacks called a *cover* (Sacks, 1992, p. 317 [Spring, 1966, lecture 6]) for a deeper-level omni-relevant device such as "native/foreigner." Where the participants are from visually similar ethnic groupings, the salience of NNS-ship may be much less pronounced than in situations in which participants are often on the basis of their "race" alone, even prior to spoken interaction, assigned the role of NNS regardless of their linguistic competencies. In these situations it seems clear that it is the omni-relevance of racial/ethnic devices that are most important and that the NS/NNS categorization might be merely, in Sacks' words, a "polite" cover.

[5] Used with permission of the author. LANG-USE is an e-mail discussion group focusing on aspects of language as it is used in society. Another e-mail list with an even tighter focus on conversation analysis (and ethnomethodology) is ETHNO. Subscription information on both is available at Paul ten Have's excellent site ETHNO-CA NEWS at http:www.pscw.uva.nl/emca/index.htm

[6] I am excluding here the large body of conversation analysis research looking at NS/NNS interaction in what might be called "pedagogic talk" (Koshik, 1999; McHoul, 1990; Seedhouse, 1996).

[7] In the case of J's group, four were allowed to avoid placing one male in an female group. The

rationale behind using triads instead of dyads or groupings of four or more is that triads allow for a more interesting display of turn-taking strategies than in dyads while at the same time excluding the possibility of one conversation schisming into multiple conversations (Egbert, 1997).

[8] The Hi8 camcorder was mounted on a tripod and placed about 2m away from the low table around which the participants were seated. A wide-angle lens attachment was used to allow the participants greater freedom of movement while still remaining in the frame.

[9] Senko Maynard (1989) maintains that supportive overlap is more common in Japanese conversational interaction than in English conversation. She states: "...in Japanese casual conversation, overlap may function to show the listener's enthusiasm, understanding and involvement" (p. 157). Laughter has also been shown to function as an affiliating device in English conversation (Jefferson, Sacks & Schegloff, 1987). Japanese males, on the whole, are more stoic in public than are Japanese females. It has been my experience that talk by Japanese females contains much more laughter (and overlap and clapping) than male talk (in Japanese as well as English).

[10] Many newcomers to CA as well as scholars outside of CA have misunderstood the essential nature of TRPs, imagining them to be "pauses" between turns. This fundamental miscomprehension has even been expressed by such eminent scholars as Searle (1991, p. 18) who in criticizing the Sacks et al. (1974) speaker selection rules says "Next speaker self-selects. That just means that there is a break and somebody else starts talking." Although, to be fair, in a later reply to Schegloff's response (also in Searle) Searle adds "...by 'break' or 'pause' I did not mean a simple temporal gap, but rather the boundaries of an intentionally defined chunk" (Searle, p. 146).

[11] In their footnote on page 703, Sacks et al. (1974) state that "How projection of unit types is accomplished, so as to allow such 'no gap' starts by next speakers, is an important question on which linguists can make major contributions. Our characterization in the rules, and in the subsequent discussion, leaves open the matter of how projection is done.

[12] It is important to keep in mind that conversational silences *emerge* interactively—they are not *inserted* into talk. The terms "gap" and "pause" are after-the-fact analytic descriptions of what has already happened in a bit of transcript. According to orthodox usage of the terms "gap" and "pause," if when current speaker reaches a TRP there is no uptake and the same speaker starts another TCU, the silence between the TCUs is transformed into an "intra-turn pause." However, this blurs the important distinction between non-final pauses where speaker transfers are unlikely and "silences following a possible TRP."

[13] It might be argued that these "gaps" might not be gaps at all, but might, in reality, have been filled with some non-verbal action/response. Certainly this would have to be considered in the analysis of face-to-face interaction. However, much of the earliest work on preference organization by Sacks and others is based on telephone conversations and, therefore, this is not an issue. Excerpts 6 and 7 come from Sacks' corpus of telephone conversations.

[14] For useful introductions to *adjacency pair organization* see Levinson (1983); Heritage (1984b, chapter 8).

[15] Tanaka (forthcoming) suggests that, in her Japanese data, participants seem to orient to the existence of "acknowledgement relevance places" as well as TRPs and that one discourse function of the Japanese particle "ne" (in turn-internal position) is to signal upcoming acknowledgement relevance places. Ford and Thompson (1996, p. 151) discuss what they call "local" (vs. "global") pragmatic completion (also see Schegloff, 1982) and Houtkoop and Mazeland (1985) cover similar ground under the rubric of "open" versus "closed" discourse units. Selting suggests that we may need to distinguish "between TCUs that do not and that do end in TRPs" (1998, p. 3).

[16] Salla Kurhila of the University of Finland, working with non-pedagogic NS-NNS interactions (in Finnish) demonstrates that NSs often use repetition in next position to repair grammatical errors in nonintrusive ways, in other words, in ways that do not make the NNS identity conversationally salient (Kurhila, forthcoming).

[17] All timings of conversational silences in my transcripts were done using sound editing software (see Carroll, 1999). In the original transcripts I recorded timings to the closest .01 by carefully examining the waveform. However, in an effort to conform to conversation analysis transcription standard, I have, in this paper, rounded times to the closest tenth. In my paper on software-based timing, I argue that neither beat-based nor stopwatch-based timings are truly accurate to the "closest one-tenth" which has

become the *de facto* standard in conversation analysis work. Silences of less than 0.2 seconds, so-called "micro-pauses," are transcribed as (.).

Many prominent conversation analysts, among them Schegloff and Psathas, reject the idea of "mechanical" timing (which one would assume includes both the use of software as well as stopwatch) in favor of relativistic beat-based, "pace-sensitive" timing. They argue that mechanical timings do not reflect a participant's hearing of a conversational silence, in other words, in slowly paced talk a silence of 0.4 seconds might have a very different sort of impact than the same silence in fast talk. In principle, I agree entirely. Nevertheless, particularly with novice L2 data where the pace of the talk can be extremely erratic and varies greatly from participant to participant, I feel it is simply impractical to do pace-sensitive timings.

[18] The novice L2 speakers in my data vary dramatically in the prosodic features of the turns they produce. At times these features differ dramatically from so-called native speaker talk. As such it is occasionally difficult to draw firm analytic conclusions regarding intonational completeness. For instance, while speakers often use sharply rising or falling pitch to signal completion, there are many other cases, as in excerpt 24, where the pitch variance over the entire turn is minimal, in other words, that talk has a monotone quality. In these cases, syntax may become the dominant clue for TRP projection.

[19] Within conversation analytic work, laughter is treated as a highly organized and carefully timed activity. See Jefferson, Sacks and Schegloff (1987).

[20] This highlights one of the problems of analyzing novice L2 talk (both for participants and professional analysts). While participants in proficient user talk can assume more or less full linguistic competency on the part of their coparticipants, novice L2 next speakers must frequently evaluate the completeness of turns containing syntactic and/or prosodic errors. Next speakers are thus faced with the additional task of mapping what the current speaker is saying onto some possibly "correct" utterance. This is certainly one aspect of novice L2 talk that requires further empirical study.

[21] A type of sponge cake popular in Japan.

[22] Schegloff (2000) states "What exactly constitutes a 'beat' is not yet well understood. For present purposes I will treat it as substantially equivalent to a 'syllable,' but this is essentially a convenient stipulation, to be replaced when careful empirical analysis specifies more robust units to which simultaneous speakers can be shown to be oriented" (p. 19). Schegloff's caution against equating what he calls a "beat" with the traditional linguistic unit "syllable" seems merited in this case. M's talk-in-overlap is easily divisible into 4 clear syllables. On the other hand, S's talk-in-overlap ("and") would, in any traditional sense, be understood as having only one syllable; so any "syllable-by-syllable" approach to the analysis becomes problematic. It might, however, be possible to side-step this problem by introducing the Japanese linguistic concept of the "mora" which is claimed to be a time-based (rather than stress-based) phonetic unit (see Vance, 1987 for a discussion of "mora"). A word like "kekkon" ("wedding") is said to consist of 4 mora each occupying roughly the same amount of time/space which can be represented as ke/k/ko/n. While some linguists question whether there is an phonetic reality underlying "mora," there seems to be no doubt that the unit is at least "psychologically real" for Japanese speakers in that when asked they will regularly segment words into mora rather than syllables.

[23] Several cross-cultural researchers (Maynard, 1997; Philips, 1976; Scollon, 1985) have argued that the "pressure to take a turn" resulting from the so-called "pressure rule 1b" (Sacks et al., 1974, p. 719) is a "Western" cultural trait. They claim that in other cultures, for example, Native American cultures and in Japan, people do not compete for turns with the same vigor, and that pausing, in other words, silence, is not universally seen negatively. Scollon (1985, p. 26), referring to the metaphor that "American speech is a machine," sums up what he and others claim as Western bias saying: "If one assumes the engine should be running, then silence will indicate failures. Smooth talk is taken as the natural state of the smoothly running cognitive and interactional machine."

Agar (1994) reviewing research by Scollon and Scollon (1981), states "Athabaskans allow a slightly longer pause than Anglos do, maybe a half a second or so, but enough to make a difference. The results—an Athabaskan will wait patiently for the speaker to continue when an Anglo has already decided that the speaker is finished" (p. 165).

While it has been my personal, subjective experience as an American living in Japan, Mexico and the Middle East that many cultures do, indeed, seem to have a greater cultural tolerance for "non-talk in the

presence of others," I, nevertheless, take the universalist position that the Sacks et al. (1974) turn-taking system is a suitable model for casual conversation in all cultures. Which is only to say that my experience leads me to believe that the basics of human social interaction are largely the same from culture to culture. But beyond my own personal beliefs on this matter, there is a growing body of conversation analysis research on non-Indoeuropean languages such as Thai (Moerman, 1988) and Japanese (Ford & Mori, 1994; Fox, Hayashi, & Jasperson, 1996; Furo, 1998; Hayashi, 1994; Hayashi & Mori, 1998; Tanaka, 1999) which generally confirms that participants from other cultures engaged in casual conversation orient to the same basic rules of turn-taking as do, say, Americans, British English speakers or Australians.

[24] Schegloff (1982) notes that current speakers frequently take strategic advantage of changes in pacing to maintain the speaking turn. Specifically, by speeding up the production of the final part of the TCU in progress (called a "speed-up" or "rush-through") current speakers are able to begin a new TCU, thereby reacquiring speaking rights, before other next speakers are prepared to come in.

[25] Speaker J tells me that M also speaks in this same hesitant, broken manner in Japanese. There is still much room and much need within conversation analysis for discussion of personal conversational style which might include consideration of, for example, historically conditioned or routinized usage (Philips, 1992).

[26] The stereotype of conversation as questions and answers is ubiquitously present in the written dialogues found in most published EFL materials, for example in the following dialogue taken from *Interchange* (Richards, 1990, p. 23).

Q	Liz:	Do you like jazz, Tom?
A - Q	Tom:	No, I don't like it very much. Do you?
A - Q	Liz:	It's OK. What kind of music do you like?
A	Tom:	Well, I like rock a lot.
Q	Liz:	What's your favorite group?
A - Q_1/Q_2	Tom:	U2. How about you? Do you like them?
A	Liz:	No, I don't. I can't stand them.

The primary agenda of such dialogues is, of course, not to model natural talk but rather to present the grammatical structures, for example, question formation, short answers, etc., to be dealt with in the unit. Notice also that negative responses to yes/no questions are formulated with the negating element occurring turn-initially—in stark contrast with the dispreferred turn shape described by both Sacks (1987) and Pomerantz (1984). Sacks observes that:

...there is an apparent interaction between the preference for contiguity and the preference for agreement, such that, if an agreeing answer occurs, it pretty damn well occurs continuously, whereas if a disagreeing answer occurs, it may well be pushed rather deep in to the turn that it occupies. (p. 58)

Sacks (1987, p. 58) provides the following example from his data:

A: Yuh coming down early?
B: Well, I got a lot of things to do before gettin' cleared=
=up tomorrow. I don't know. I w- probably won't be too early.

Speaker B in this example delays the actual doing of the dispreferred action (saying "no") until very late in the turn thus opening up the possibility that A will "get the point" earlier and, therefore, render the overt doing of the dispreferred action unnecessary.

[27] In her paper on the operation of short(er) multi-unit turns (i.e., turns composed of more than one TCU), Ford (forthcoming) outlines a conversational practice whereby "...turns initiated with negation—specifically, negation that expresses disaffiliation or disagreement with prior talk—regularly include a continuation beyond the turn-constructional unit containing the negation; that is, negation is followed by elaboration of some sort." Examples of this sort of turn are:

(1) Hey. (.) You don't have to worry about me, I had Listerine this morning.
(2) Not me:, hhuh uh-hhuh .hhh I go in late everyday.

What is interesting about these multi-unit "rhetorical combinations" is that they are hearably complete in terms of syntax, prosody and pragmatic content after the first TCU but they nevertheless manage to adumbrate further talk. Recipients regularly display a lack of uptake at the completion of the first element of such rhetorical combinations. Furthermore, according to Ford, recipients of unelaborated negatives regularly treat such talk as problematic or, at the very least, as requiring some alteration in the talk's trajectory.

[28] See Richards (1977) for a study comparing answers in naturally occurring data to yes/no questions with the sorts of answers found in EFL materials.

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