

Maija Kalin

Coping with Problems
of Understanding

Repair Sequences in Conversations between
Native and Non-Native Speakers

UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

JYVÄSKYLÄ 1995

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Esitetään Jyväskylän yliopiston humanistisen tiedekunnan suostumuksella
julkisesti tarkastettavaksi yliopiston vanhassa juhlasalissa (S212)
huhtikuun 29. päivänä 1995 kello 12.

Academic dissertation to be publicly discussed, by permission of
the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Jyväskylä,
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UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

JYVÄSKYLÄ 1995

STUDIA PHILOLOGICA JYVÄSKYLÄENSIA 36

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URN:ISBN:978-951-39-8317-8
ISBN 978-951-39-8317-8 (PDF)
ISSN 0585-5462

ISBN 951-34-0508-7
ISSN 0585-5462

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Jyväskylä University Printing House
and Sisäsuomi Oy, Jyväskylä 1995

ABSTRACT

Kalin, Maija

Coping with problems of understanding: Repair sequences in conversations between native and non-native speakers.

Jyväskylä: University of Jyväskylä, 1995, 216 p.

(Studia Philologica Jyväskyläensia,

ISSN 0585-5462; 36)

ISBN 951-34-0508-7

Yhteenveto: Ymmärtämisen ongelma. Korjausjaksoja äidinkielisten ja ei-äidinkielisten puhujien keskusteluissa

Diss.

The present study investigates how the speakers cope with problems of understanding in conversations between native and non-native speakers. It focusses on repair sequences, since the problems surface mostly in them. The data set consists of five conversations between native and non-native speakers of Swedish. The repair sequences in them were investigated through an analysis based on ethnomethodological conversation analysis (Garfinkel 1967; Heritage 1984b) and on the analyses of verbal interaction developed by Goffman (1967 & 1981) and Gumperz (1982ab). The research questions investigated firstly, how speakers from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds cope with problems and contribute to creating a shared world, and, secondly, how conversation analysis that has been developed for analysing conversations between equals can be used when the speakers lack adequate linguistic means to express themselves.

The repair sequences were divided into three categories according to the degree of explicitness in the second speaker's behavior that initiates the repair: lack of response, ambiguous responses and explicit requests for repair. The complexity of the accomplishment of the repair depended on the explicitness of the repair initiation. Microanalysis demonstrated that the speakers often had problems in identifying the trouble source, which led to new problems. Both the native speakers and non-native speakers exhibited non-native features in their communication. The problems of understanding were jointly resolved in most repair sequences.

The analysis suggests that a micro-analysis sheds light on features and actions that cannot be obtained by methods used in second language acquisition studies. The present data challenges conversation analysis, since there is a discrepancy between the speakers' production and intended actions. Furthermore, analyses of second language data are hindered by the restrictions in shared knowledge of participants and analyst. A study of incomplete language raises questions about the necessary prerequisites of conversation and problematizes the assumption regarding shared knowledge in conversations between equals.

Keywords: intercultural communication, asymmetric conversation, learner language, repair, problems of understanding, verbal interaction, conversation analysis

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The person who first turned my attention to the study of intercultural conversations was Matti Leiwo, whom I sincerely thank for many inspiring discussions and for his comments on my licentiate thesis. Several persons have given me useful ideas of various kinds, but I would like to mention four persons in particular who have given me advice and made invaluable comments on my manuscript. Kenneth Hyltenstam has lifted me out of despair at moments when the goal of the study has been hidden behind various obstacles and given me concrete advice about how to proceed with my work. Auli Hakulinen has read my manuscript with a conversationalist's eye. I thank her for her constructive criticism and the encouragement she has given me. Liisa Lautamatti has given me very generous support and many hints on writing. I also thank Johannes Wagner for his comments and suggestions on my manuscript. Besides these persons, I have been in continuous dialogue with Ingrid Almqvist during the years I have been working on the thesis. I thank her for sharing the joys and problems of working on a dissertation.

The present study was made possible by the permission granted by Jens Allwood to use recordings that had been made in Gothenburg for the European Science Foundation project on adult second language acquisition. I have also received financial support from Nordiska Forskarkurser, the Swedish Institute, and from the University of Jyväskylä. I am grateful for the opportunity of working on my thesis in the Department of Linguistics at the University of Gothenburg and in the Centre for Research on Bilingualism at the University of Stockholm. I am grateful to the Publications Committee of the University of Jyväskylä for publishing this thesis in the series *Studia Philologica Jyväskyläensia*.

My thanks also go to friends in the Department of Linguistics in Gothenburg and to the Centre for Research on Bilingualism at the University of Stockholm both for the time I worked there and for the subsequent contacts. An inspiring atmosphere and warm friendship have kept me going. I would also like to thank my colleagues in my home department, the Department of Nordic Languages at the University of Jyväskylä, for the support and understanding they have given me.

Many other persons including relatives and friends have given me support and encouragement during the years I have been working on the thesis. My warmest thanks to them. I thank Michael Freeman for help with the English and my brother Risto Raittila for his invaluable assistance with the layout and proof-reading.

I thank also my husband Pertti and our sons Antti and Juho for their unflinching empathy, enthusiasm and everyday realism that have made these years a shared adventure of survival, which has given us all a lot of new strength.

Multia
Lady Day, 1995

Maija Kalin

ABBREVIATIONS

NS	native speaker
NNS	non-native speaker
BS	bilingual speaker
CA	conversation analysis
SLA	second language acquisition
TRP	transition-relevant point
TCU	turn constructional unit
NTRI	next turn repair initiation
C1	conversation between Leo (NNS), Staffan (NS), and Ville (BS)
C2	conversation between Mari (NNS), Staffan (NS), and Ville (BS)
C3	conversation between Tarja (NNS), Olle (NS), and Anna (BS)
C4	conversation between Rauni (NNS), Clara (NNS), and Ville (BS)
C5	conversation between Rauni (NNS), Olle (NS), and Ville (BS)
[11]	Figures in brackets refer to examples in which other aspects of the same excerpt have been analysed.

CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	11
	1.1 Understanding and communication between native and non-native speakers	11
	1.2 Aim of the study	13
2	DATA	17
	2.1 Conversations	17
	2.2 Informants	20
3	METHODS OF ANALYZING CONVERSATIONAL INTERACTION	24
	3.1 Studies of interaction in second language learning and teaching	24
	3.2 Ethnography	26
	3.3 Conversation analysis	28
	3.3.1 Turn, utterance and turn constructional unit	31
	3.3.2 Accountability, norm and rule	35
	3.3.3 Intersubjectivity	36
	3.3.4 Repair	37
	3.4 Institutional conversations	41
	3.5 Transcription	42
4	SOME STRUCTURAL FEATURES OF THE CONVERSATIONS IN THE DATA	46
	4.1 Turn-taking	46
	4.2 Turn length	52
	4.3 Adjacency pairs and sequences	57
	4.4 Pauses	61
5	NEGOTIATING FOR UNDERSTANDING: LACK OF RESPONSE INTERPRETED AS REPAIR INITIATION	64
	5.1 Lack of response	64
	5.2 Borderline cases	67
	5.3 Reformulation as a reaction to the lack of response	72
	5.3.1 Reformulation through paraphrase	74
	5.3.2 Reformulation through expansion	82
	5.3.3 Reformulation through change of perspective	92

5.4	Remarks as reactions to a lack of response	96
5.5	Lack of response after first speaker's self-initiation of repair	101
5.6	Summary	111
6	NEGOTIATING FOR UNDERSTANDING: AMBIGUOUS AND VAGUE UTTERANCES AS REPAIR INITIATIONS	115
6.1	Minimal response	115
6.2	Minimal response as repair initiation	119
6.3	Non-focused metacommunicative requests	136
6.3.1	<i>va</i> and <i>va sa du</i>	136
6.3.2	Non-focused explicit indications of non-understanding	153
6.4	Summary	159
7	NEGOTIATING FOR UNDERSTANDING: EXPLICIT UTTERANCES OF NON-UNDERSTANDING AS REPAIR INITIATIONS	160
7.1	Repeats as a means of repair initiation	160
7.1.1	Repetition of first speaker utterance up to the trouble source	160
7.1.2	Repetition of the trouble source	163
7.2	Repair initiations using understanding checks	172
7.3	Explicit metalinguistic repair initiations	178
7.4	Summary	182
8.	DISCUSSION	183
8.1	Native or non-native: differences and similarities	183
8.2	Asymmetry and nativeness	186
8.3	The problem of knowledge and intersubjectivity	189
8.4	CA and conversations with non-native speakers	190
	REFERENCES	194
	Appendix 1	211
	Appendix 2	212
	YHTEENVETO	213

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Understanding and communication between native and non-native speakers

Understanding in verbal communication has been investigated from various points of departure and for various purposes, with the consequence that there exists a wide spectrum of definitions of the concept. Many of these stress the processes that take place in the recipient and thus maintain the division between sender and receiver as almost independent agents in language use. The sender delivers a message that the receiver then processes in accordance with his/her cognitive capacity and knowledge of the world (see e.g. Schank & Abelson 1977 and Sperber & Wilson 1986).

In second language acquisition and teaching research, which has relevance for conversations between native and non-native speakers, a static view of understanding has held a relatively strong position. The most extreme expression of this conception has been the term "comprehensible input" (see e.g. Krashen 1982 & 1985) which implies that a certain type of language is comprehensible *per se*. Other second language researchers argue that native speakers accommodate their speech when talking to non-native speakers in order to make it more comprehensible. This view implies a collaborative negotiation, although it has only seldom been made explicit (see e.g. Gass & Varonis 1985, Varonis & Gass 1985). In most studies the participants' contributions to the discourse have been analyzed separately (see e.g. Chaudron 1983, 1985, 1986, 1987; Long 1983ab, Håkansson 1987).

In the present study communication is seen as mutually created interaction and, consequently, understanding is defined as a dynamic interactional process (see e.g. Sacks & Schegloff & Jefferson 1974; Goffman

1981; Gumperz 1982a; Heritage 1984b). The dynamics of the process is constituted by the continuously context-shaping and context-renewing character of the interaction when negotiating for meaning. The participants connect the information and knowledge they have with that provided by both the local structure of the conversation and the global frame of the conversation. The speakers are continuously brought to check their knowledge of the world in relation to their own and their interlocutors' contributions to the conversation. In other words, the participants' actions are inseparably tied to the conversational context. This includes both aspects of the concrete settings and knowledge of the frames and premises for communication (Goodwin & Duranti 1992). Thus understanding is achieved jointly in interaction as the speakers update their assumptions of understanding on a turn-by-turn basis and by their conduct display their interpretations to each other. In conversation analysis (see Chapter 3), understanding is not analyzed in terms of cognitive processes occurring at the level of individuals but as pertaining to interaction in the course of which the speakers display their understandings to each other and to the analyst (e.g. Heritage 1984).

The negotiations needed for understanding mostly progress smoothly in everyday conversations between speakers who know each other well and share the language used. In conversations where there is a considerable difference in the resources available to the speakers, making connections between new and stored information and perceiving contextual qualities and changes is often difficult. This can be seen in conversations between native and non-native speakers where considerable differences exist in language proficiency and knowledge of the world. This asymmetry leads to problems of understanding which surface as disturbances in the progress of the conversation.

John Gumperz (1982ab; 1992abc) has investigated breakdowns of communication in interaction between native and non-native, often very fluent, speakers and in particular the role of context and "contextualization cues" in enabling inferences for achieving understanding. The notion of the "contextualization cue" covers any verbal or nonverbal sign used by speakers to clarify or hint at, and listeners to make, such inferences. In other words, contextualization cues are linguistic details that evoke social contexts. They can be phonological, prosodic, lexical or syntactic choices as well as the use of particular codes or dialects. Gumperz found that these cues are culture-specific and thus a part of the communicative competence of the members of the culture.

In describing contextualization cues Gumperz focusses on breakdowns in communication. Studies of miscommunication enable the nature of normal communication to be explored, since the tools for conveying and interpreting meanings are not equally visible in successful use. Sequences where miscommunication occurs can be used to discover conversational mechanisms that go unnoticed when conversation proceeds

smoothly. This is also the point of departure of my study: the instances of malfunctioning are interesting and worth investigating in order to gain knowledge of deviant communication, but they also give information about the essentials of normal conversational functioning.

In the present study, the following terms are used in relation to problems of understanding. "Non-understanding" is used to refer both to instances where the interactants experience a complete breakdown of communication and to instances when they only reach a partial understanding. Only in cases where the latter circumstance is emphasized are the terms "insufficient understanding" and "incomplete understanding" used. The broad use of "non-understanding" is chosen here because the exact amount of understanding is impossible to assess. Moreover, understanding is always partial and fragmentary (Rommetveit 1990), and there are no simple criteria for interpreting certain behaviors as understanding, non-understanding or misunderstanding. Furthermore, we know that, even in optimal circumstances, there is no single correct interpretation of an utterance, but something always remains to be understood.

The assessment of the degree of understanding achieved is also tied to the perceived goals of the interaction. The goals set for understanding vary across communication situations. For example, in communication with linguistically handicapped speakers or in less goal-oriented language use, for instance in phatic talk, ambitions are lower than in situations such as business negotiations or serious discussions about a problem.

1.2 Aim of the study

(1)¹ [86, 87]²

Staffan, a Swedish speaking researcher, is visiting Leo, an immigrant from Finland. In the beginning of the visit, Staffan comments on a stereo which he has not seen before.

01		(7)	(7)
02	Staffan	<i>oj e de nån ny anläggning</i>	oh is this new equipment
03		<i>de här eller?</i>	this or?
04		(2)	(2)
05	Leo	<i>nya?</i>	new?
06	Staffan	<i>e de en <u>ny anläggning</u> (.)</i>	is it <u>new equipment</u> (.)
07		<i>ny musikanläggning?</i>	new music equipment?
08		(2)	(2)

1 For transcript notations, see Appendix 1.

2 Figures in brackets refer to examples in which other aspects of the same excerpt have been analysed.

09	Leo	<i>nå ja:: (.) ja köpte den (.)</i>	well:: (.) i bought it (.)
10		<i>förra veckan (.) osiva</i>	last week (.) record
11		(2)	(2)
12	Staffan	<i>jasså ↑skivan?</i>	oh the record?
13		(2)	(2)
14	Leo	<i>(...) (2)</i>	(...) (2)
15		<i>de e:: ganska bra</i>	it is:: pretty good
16		(3)	(3)
17	Staffan	<i>ja menar (.) hela (1) [musik]</i>	i mean (.) the whole (1) [thing]
18	Leo	<i>[näj de e]</i>	[no it is]
19	Staffan	<i>musikanläggningen</i>	music equipment
20	Leo	<i>näj [de e]</i>	no [it is]
21	Staffan	<i>[den e] inte ny?</i>	[it is]n't new?
22	Leo	<i>.nä::</i>	.no::
23	Staffan	<i>den ser så ny ut #</i>	it looks so new #
24		(14)	(14)

This short example displays various problems of understanding and various ways of coping with them. The aim of the present study is to shed light on how problems of understanding are coped with in conversations between persons with different language proficiencies and from different cultural backgrounds. The study is inductive, based on empirical data and aims to generate hypotheses about interaction in sequences of conversation in which partial or complete communication breakdown occurs.

Considering the interactive point of departure taken for defining understanding in the present study it is natural to choose a qualitative method, since the objective of the study is the interpretation of an intercultural world as it is created in interaction between speakers having different language resources and cultural backgrounds. My aim is to investigate how native and non-native speakers cope with problems of understanding.

The present study demonstrates how repairs are initiated and accomplished in five conversations. Firstly, I attempt to determine how far certain concepts used in ethnomethodological conversation analysis (henceforth CA), which is a method developed for studies of conversations between members of the same speech community, can be applied in analyzing conversations very different from those the analysis was designed for. Instead of conversations between equals my data consist of talk-in-interaction where the participants' language proficiencies are at very different levels and where the analyst's language proficiency also differs from those of the speakers. Secondly, my goal is to find out if a CA-influenced analysis can contribute with new evidence and fill gaps in interlanguage studies that have been carried out within the domain of applied linguistics. A micro-level analysis of native speaker/non-native speaker interaction can be expected to reveal features that either deviate from or support the *a priori* categorizations used in discourse analytic

studies of communication. Thirdly, the present data represents a special type of discourse that has institutional features, but nonetheless is very close to that of everyday conversation. Informal interaction between researchers and informants is an area that has hardly been studied, whereas interview and other data collection methods have been analyzed for a number of purposes, e.g. validity and reliability studies. In this connection, as a by-product, the present study also aims to shed light on some of the features of researcher-informant interaction.

The overall research questions of the present study are to ask, firstly, how a micro-analysis of interaction can contribute to second language studies and, secondly, which areas of second language interaction challenge the method. We can assume that conversations in a second language do not differ radically from first language conversations. In the same way as understanding is interactively achieved, miscommunication is interactively constructed (see e.g. Schegloff 1987). Every communicative act is a part of an overall sequence which invites reactions by the other party and is thus jointly completed. In the same way as there is orderliness in all communication, miscommunication also constitutes an orderly sequence. Linell (1991: 18) describes the orderliness of miscommunication by pointing to the existence of precursors, which are elements in the discourse that have the potential for occasioning a subsequent misrepresentation or misinterpretation. These precursors are often only identified retrospectively. The trouble source is an utterance that displays a misrepresentation or misinterpretation. The source is followed by a reaction by the recipient, which in its turn is followed by an attempt at repair by the first speaker. Coping with the problem is then concluded by a reaction to the repair.

The research question can be divided into a number of more specific questions as follows: what kind of orderliness can be found in asymmetric interaction when the participants are coping with the problems of understanding? To what extent does the native speaker rely on the orderliness of "normal" conversations? How does the non-native speaker display her/his general interactional competence, which can be assumed to be independent of language proficiency? Do the participants, in spite of differences in language and cultural background, have shared methods of coping with the problems of understanding?

The questions above imply the assumption that conversation is possible even when the linguistic resources of the participants are very limited. The present data raise many questions about the level of communication and the existence of such categories as communication versus semicomcommunication (Haugen 1972). Furthermore, the research questions imply an assumption that it is possible to carry out conversation analysis on second language data, although there is an inherent incompatibility between CA and communication in a second language, since the fundamental assumption of CA is that the speakers are capable

of interpreting each other's actions and creating an intersubjective context. However, we know that a considerable proportion of the conversations that take place in the world involve participants speaking in a second language either with other second language speakers or with first language speakers. Furthermore, these conversations constitute the main part of their everyday conversations for millions of speakers and they are mostly accomplished in a way that satisfies the participants despite the deficiencies in both producing and interpreting talk. What in fact is accomplished, and how, in a conversation where the participants tolerate a highly deviant grammar and breaches against pragmatic rules?

According to CA no a priori categorization is allowed. Thus even the labels native speaker and non-native speaker that are used in the title of the study should not legitimately be used in the analysis. Their use, however, can be defended because knowledge of these roles seems to be a fundamental assumption in the conversations, and labeling the conversations in another way would be unnecessary and confusing. Descriptions of other types of talk-in-interaction also use categorizations of speakers, such as doctors and patients, judges and suspects, teachers and students, etc. The labels should not be taken to mean that any specific assumptions about the speakers' language behaviors are being made.

2 DATA

2.1 Conversations

The database used in the present study consist of five audio-recorded conversations in which the language proficiency of the participants varies. The participants can be divided in three groups according to their proficiency in Swedish: native speakers, non-native speakers with high command and non-native speakers with low command of Swedish. All the non-native speakers except one have Finnish as their mother tongue. The recordings were made in 1983 and 1984. The conversations were recorded in natural situations (see below) in connection with the Swedish part of an extensive research project financed by the European Science Foundation. The goal of the project, known as EALA (Ecology of Adult Language Acquisition) was to investigate adult language acquisition in natural settings in five European countries. The informants were immigrants who had acquired the new language in the new country. The EALA project was a longitudinal study in which the data collection continued for two and a half years with each informant. For a more detailed description of the project, see Allwood et al. (1983) or Perdue (1982 & 1993).

The present study is cross-sectional: the data consist of conversations about a year and a half after the immigrant's arrival in Sweden. There are three speakers in each of the conversations: a non-native speaker (NNS), a native speaker (NS) and a bilingual speaker (BS). The NNS is a newly arrived immigrant with a relatively low command of Swedish. The BS is also an immigrant who has Finnish as her/his native tongue and is fluent but not native-like in Swedish. In the present study, s/he is referred to as the bilingual speaker on account of her/his familiarity with both languages and countries. In one of the conversations

the setting is different: an NNS with a low command of Swedish talks with a BS and an NNS who is rather fluent in Swedish but does not know Finnish. A Finnish speaking BS is also present in this conversation.

Because the conversations were recorded in connection with a longitudinal study that had been going on for more than a year at the time of the recording, the participants came to assume certain roles in accordance with the overall goals of the project. These roles are manifest also in the present data. One of the goals was to elicit spoken interaction between an NNS and an NS. Hence the third speaker, the BS, plays a subordinate role in the conversations analyzed. The conversations consist mostly of dyads between an NNS and an NS. The BS has the role of a mediator, but at times s/he either spontaneously joins the conversation or the other speakers ask him or her to help in communication breakdowns.

Four of the conversations take place in the informant's home during a visit by two researchers in order to record a conversation in familiar surroundings. The fifth conversation was recorded at a university department. The lengths of the conversations range between 15 and 67 minutes. The total duration of the five conversations is 3 h 14 min.

As suggested above, the conversational situations are natural, but they are natural only in the context of a research project. The speakers meet with each other only because they are all participants in that project. On one hand, the situation resembles one of relationships between people working together occasionally or between members of a group on a package holiday. On the other hand, the conversations have features of ethnographic field work encounters where an anthropologist interviews a representative of another culture, although the goal is not to gain information through language but about the language of the informant.

This special nature, having a conversation for its own sake and knowing that the relationship between the interactants is limited both as to time and type of encounter, is noticeable in many sequences of the conversations. However, the less ordinary character of the conversations should not be overemphasized because "forced" conversations of this kind are not infrequent in real life outside research contexts either. Situations exist where people who would not otherwise communicate with each other are under a social obligation to do so, for instance while waiting together for a third person, when driving together to meet friends in common or when sitting round a large dinner table. One of the conversations in the data is natural exactly in this regard: the speakers are sitting together after some work they have done and are waiting for the next scheduled recording activity to start. All the situations of the kind described have one feature in common: the goal is to speak in order to have a conversation for its own sake.

The conversations in the present data also have some of the features of an institutional conversation (see Ch. 3.4). There is an asymmetry in the setting that is similar to that found in many institutional

situations. The researchers, both the native and the non-native speaker of Swedish, have power and status as experts. As they have planned the encounters, they mostly have control over the time limits. Furthermore, they know the Swedish language, which is the focus of the interaction, although this is seldom expressed explicitly. They are also highly educated, and they know Swedish society far better than the newly arrived immigrants. In certain other respects, however, the conversations differ markedly from the institutional type: the speakers are free to choose the topics and the organization of the talk is not restricted as it is in a court of law, etc.

One criterion for choosing this special type of conversation for the study is that asymmetry in access to knowledge is a fact that immigrants meet daily in communication situations. Most - if not all - of the encounters where they interact in the target language take place with Swedes or with other immigrants who may speak Swedish better than they. This happens frequently at work or in institutional situations, where the immigrants have a role similar to the one in the present data. This type of conversation is an essential part of an immigrant's naturally occurring everyday conversations.

Another reason for using the data in this study is that the conversations represent a special type of institutional interaction: they are conversations between researchers and informants. In the investigated encounters the speakers do not orientate to their institutional identities in a transparent way, as it is done in e.g. doctor-patient interaction, but the identities are made relevant from time to time during the conversations.

The topics in the three longer conversations vary, but each one includes at least one topic that is dealt with in detail and in longer sequences than the others. The following table presents the participants and the main topics.

TABLE 1 Participants and main topics of the conversations³

	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5
Participants	Leo Staffan Ville	Mari Staffan Ville	Tarja Olle Anna	Rauni Clara Ville	Rauni Olle Ville
Main topics	sports holidays cars	religion	Christmas language learning	baby childbirth	baby religion

The atmosphere in the conversations is friendly. As indicated above the main topics represent the interests of the NNSs. The female NNSs show

3 See Appendix 2 for a more detailed list of the conversations.

a trusting relationship to the NS while very openly discussing religion, a recent childbirth with all its complications, and problem areas in language learning. The relationship between the three men in their conversation is also friendly and trusting, but their topics are less personal.

The use of audiotape recordings restricts the analysis to verbal behavior only. This is a serious shortcoming when considering the role non-verbal communication plays in interaction, but the use of video-recordings is not without problems either. The cameras and other equipment needed to capture all the visual information in the situation makes it difficult to obtain naturally occurring conversational data, and the methods of analyzing the simultaneous non-verbal behavior remain very selective and restricted.

2.2 Informants

Conversation analysis does not consider ethnographic background information about the speakers and the situation necessary for the analysis, because all the relevant contextual information is provided in the data (see Ch. 3). However, there are conversations that do not exhibit all the orderliness found in the majority of conversations because the speakers represent a specific group. A conversation between an NS and an NNS contains features that have relevance for the participants but cannot be inferred from the conversational data only. In this respect NS-NNS talk-in-interaction has similarities with, for instance, child-adult conversations or conversations with aphasic speakers. The fact is that the age of the child and the medical history of the aphasic speaker are important for interpreting and analyzing the interaction, but they are rarely displayed in the data. This information is normally given as contextual information (see e.g. Klippi 1989; Silvast 1991ab; Linell 1991).

Information about the language proficiency of the speakers and their contacts with the culture is important where it differs from the norm. I have chosen to give the essentials of the language learning history and the contacts with Sweden of the newly arrived immigrants. This is information that cannot be inferred from the data, but the other speakers have access to it and it influences the interpretations of the NNSs' conduct.

The informants are four newly arrived immigrants to Sweden, two Swedes, and three immigrants with high proficiency in Swedish. All the informants have been given pseudonyms in the study. Pseudonyms are also used for places when considered necessary.

The newly arrived immigrants are called Leo, Mari, Rauni and Tarja. The same pseudonyms are also used in the EALA reports (e.g.

Allwood 1988, Bremer et al. 1993 and Voionmaa 1994). The following table (Table 2) gives some information about their status at the time of the recordings used in the present study.

TABLE 2 The newly arrived immigrants at the time of the recordings

	Leo	Mari	Rauni	Tarja
Age	19	22	30	19
Education	9+2 yrs	8+2 yrs	7+2 yrs	9 yrs
Stay in Sweden	18 mo	15 mo	20-22 mo	18 mo
Contact with Swedish	job	job	husband	job

In this study, the Finnish-Swedish bilingual speakers are called Anna and Ville and the Swedish native speakers Staffan and Olle. They were all researchers in the project with at least an MA degree. One conversation with Rauni features a third immigrant researcher who has Spanish as her native language. She is called Clara in this study. The native speakers of Swedish and Clara essentially have no knowledge of Finnish.

Below, the newly arrived immigrants are described in more detail, since their background and linguistic proficiency plays a decisive role in the encounters. A short account of their contacts with Swedish society and their language proficiency in terms of instruction and assessments made by native speakers follows below.

By the time of the recordings the newly arrived immigrants had learnt enough Swedish so that they could manage in most communication situations, although they still had problems in expressing themselves and in understanding. Two of them, Leo and Tarja, had learnt some Swedish at school in Finland (3 years: 340 hours of instruction). However, they come from a socio-cultural and geographical area where people have a very low motivation in learning Swedish. The Swedish-speaking and bilingual areas are located in southern and western Finland. Leo and Tarja also reported that they had the lowest or next to lowest grades in Swedish during all their school years.

In Sweden, all immigrants with insufficient proficiency in Swedish are entitled to a certain amount of instruction in it. Even the two informants who had had Swedish at school in Finland started at the elementary level in Sweden. The courses in Swedish taken by the four immigrants are shown in Table 3.

The table sheds light on the considerable variation in the amount of instruction the newly arrived immigrants had had before the recording of the conversations analyzed in the present study. Mari, who had stayed the shortest time in Sweden at the time of the recording, had had most instruction, whereas Rauni, whose conversations were recorded five and seven months later than Mari's, had received only a third of the amount

TABLE 3 Amount of instruction in Swedish (number of lessons) by the time of the recordings

	Leo	Mari	Rauni	Tarja
	340 (Fin)			340 (Fin)
	400	230	50	
	70	680	300	350
Total number of lessons	810	920	350	690

of instruction that Mari had. The figures marked (Fin) stand for the instruction Tarja and Leo had received at comprehensive school in Finland before coming to Sweden.

The table gives information about the learning conditions of the immigrants. However, the extent of the instruction the four immigrants have received does not coincide with their proficiency in Swedish. It must be remembered that a second language learning situation contains many intervening variables. The learners have the whole of Swedish-speaking society around them, and individual variation in taking advantage of this is considerable. Mari and Tarja have no Swedish contacts except at work, but even there Mari can use Finnish because most of her fellow workers are Finnish. Leo has some contacts with Swedes, although he lives with Finns and most of his contacts are with Finns. However, he actively looks for chances to use Swedish and to come into contact with Swedes. Rauni lives with a Swede, but meets only with Finnish friends. She and her husband have developed a special way of communicating, a kind of "Tarzan language", which obviously contributes to the fossilization of Rauni's Swedish. Having a baby, however, gives Rauni new opportunities for communicating in Swedish, e.g. when she takes the baby for post-natal check-ups by a nurse.

At the beginning of the EALA project the informants' language proficiency was assessed. No standardized language tests were used (see Perdue 1982: 284). Instead, the assessment of production and comprehension skills was based on interviews and various communicative tasks consisting of role-plays and picture tasks. Although all the Finnish immigrants had earlier received some instruction in Swedish, they nonetheless got very low scores in the tasks. Before the test, Leo had studied Swedish at school in Finland and had also had about 100 hours of language instruction in Sweden. His speaking, listening and writing abilities were considered as "limited"; in reading he was evaluated as "poor, gets along", which may be due to his school instruction in Finland. Tarja, who had a similar background, got the same evaluation. Mari had received 580 hours of instruction in Swedish when she was tested. Her speaking, reading and writing skills were considered "limited" and listening "very limited". When Rauni was tested, she had taken a short

elementary course for Finnish immigrants, but with tuition in Finnish. Her speaking, writing and reading skills were considered "practically nil" and her listening skill "very limited". By the time of the recording of the conversations under study all four immigrants had shown considerable progress. To rank them according to the proficiency exhibited in the conversations is not an easy task. Leo has the best linguistic and interactional ability. Mari and Tarja are difficult to compare. Mari has a strategic competence (see e.g. Faerch & Kasper 1983b) far better than Tarja's, but accompanied by considerable grammatical problems. Her morphology and syntax deviate markedly from the language of a native speaker, but she is active and shows a clear interest in communicating. Tarja is often passive and avoids risks, which makes it difficult to assess her ability. Rauni has made the most notable progress of the four. Her proficiency in Swedish is the lowest but she is an active communicator. Her interactive style differs strikingly from all the others. For instance, she vocalizes and produces a lot of back-channelling items instead of remaining quiet when she lacks other means in Swedish. The communication strategies she uses also employ code-switching even in conversations with an interlocutor who does not understand Finnish.

The conversations in the present study are bilingual and asymmetric in a way which ties it to studies of spoken interaction both in Finnish and Swedish. In Finland there are research groups working within CA on both Finnish and Swedish everyday conversations between equals (for Finnish, see e.g. Hakulinen 1990 & 1993; Hakulinen & Seppänen 1992; Hakulinen & Sorjonen 1986; Raevaara 1993; Seppänen 1989; and for Swedish, see e.g. Londen 1990 & 1992; Lehti-Eklund 1992; Green-Vänttinen 1993). The studies by Saari of spoken Swedish (1975, 1991, 1992, 1994) and by Nuolijärvi (1990) of Finnish in institutional settings have much in common with those mentioned above. In Sweden, conversations have been studied by, for instance, Nordenstam (1987 & 1989) and Börestam Uhlmann (1994), negotiations by Fant (1992) and school discourse by Anward (1983). Asymmetric interaction has been investigated both in Finland and in Sweden from various points of departure. In the Swedish studies the asymmetry of the interaction is constituted by the institutional setting (see e.g. Adelswärd 1992; Jönsson 1988; Linell 1990, 1991, 1993) and differences in language proficiency (Gustavsson 1988; Juvonen 1989), whereas the Finnish studies focus on interaction with aphasics (see e.g. Klippi 1989 & 1992; Leiwo 1985, 1990 & 1991; Silvast 1991ab) and second language speakers (Nikko 1990).

3 METHODS OF ANALYZING CONVERSATIONAL INTERACTION

Chapter 3 provides the theoretical framework which has been influential for the empirical section of the present study. In the first section an overview of the interactional approach within second language acquisition research is given. Section 3.2 addresses the ethnographic research tradition which stresses the ties between language and culture. Section 3.3 focuses on features within the ethnomethodological conversational analysis that are relevant for native/non-native interaction. Because of the semi-institutional character of the data, research on institutional talk is dealt with in section 3.4. The last section addresses the theory of transcription.

3.1 Studies of interaction in second language learning and teaching

Investigations of second language learning and teaching have mainly been concerned with interaction between learners and teachers, although interaction between learners has also received a certain amount of attention. The object of most investigations, however, has until recently been either learner language or teacher talk rather than interaction. The studies have had various theoretical backgrounds and thereby contributed to a broadly-based knowledge about the language used by and to learners. I shall deal with two research approaches that have been influential in the field: the contrastive/normative and the problem-oriented approach. The interactionally-oriented approaches are dealt with

in section 3.2.

The normative approach is closely related to contrastive analysis. The goal of contrastive analysis is to describe differences between languages and cultures and through this knowledge anticipate and explain potential learner errors. In the normative approach the target language has been the main norm against which the theoretical constructs of learner language have been assessed. Accordingly, the language behavior of a learner has been compared with that of an ideal target language speaker, a position which has been problematized by recent studies (Larsen-Freeman & Long 1991; Ellis 1994).

Within the normative approach speech act studies have contributed to the knowledge of intercultural communication through studies of e.g. requests, apologies, invitations and complaints. The goal has been to investigate the linguistic forms of the speech acts and learners' ways of acquiring them. The most comprehensive speech act investigation is the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP) that was set up to investigate the intercultural and sociolinguistic variation in requests and apologies together with learners' competences in using these speech acts in the target language (Blum-Kulka et al. 1989; Kasper 1989; Kasper & Blum-Kulka 1993). The project has shed light on the complexity of the differences found in language use in different cultures as well as the difficulties in explaining the differences found in the intercultural use of language. However, the results are not free from problems because the data used in the project did not derive from naturally occurring interaction but responses in a discourse completion test. This leads to results that differ remarkably from those obtained in investigations with naturally occurring or role play data. For instance, one of the central results was that the learners accomplished their speech acts by using a large number of words (cf. e.g. Edmonson & House 1991; Kalin 1989, 1992; Kalin & Leiwo 1990).

Learner language has also been investigated within contrastive discourse analysis, and special attention has been paid to learners' problems in discourse strategies such as initiating a conversation, giving feedback, and use of hedges (see e.g. Edmonson et al. 1984; Blum-Kulka 1991; Thomas 1983). Research into the discourse behavior of the learner has widened the scope of studies of language learning, showing that language proficiency must be seen in relation to the interaction situation, the relationships between the speakers, and their goals.

Studies of speech acts and learner discourse often imply rules in language behavior. The learners are expected to aim at an interaction that follows the rules of the target language and culture. Recent developments within linguistics have been in a direction away from a rule-oriented thinking and towards a cognitive and social approach (Taylor 1989; Davis & Taylor 1990). The theory of language learning as the acquisition of rule systems has also been criticized (Larsen-Freeman & Long 1991; Ellis 1994;

Gass & Selinker 1994).

In problem-oriented approaches attention has been paid to the interaction between speakers, although both the native speakers' or teachers' language behavior and the learners' conduct have been investigated separately (e.g. Long & Sato 1984). Modifications of native speaker talk have been investigated both as the grammar of "foreigner talk" (e.g. Ferguson 1971; Håkansson 1986; Chaudron 1987; Ellis 1994) and as negotiations of meaning between the native speaker and the learner (e.g. Long 1983ab, 1985; Varonis & Gass 1985, Larsen-Freeman & Long 1991, Ellis 1994; Gass & Selinker 1994). It has, however, also been argued that features of the negotiations of meaning are not triggered by the fact that one of the participants is a learner, and they cannot be explained by potential or real problems of understanding (see e.g. Aston 1986; Ehrlich et al. 1989).

The learner's efforts to avoid problems in interaction have been investigated in terms of communication strategies which are used to compensate for deficits in language proficiency (see e.g. Canale & Swain 1980; Tarone 1980; Faerch & Kasper 1983; Bialystok 1990). Communication strategies may take the form of alternative expressions or the avoidance of problematic elements and topics. The interactive point of view has become more accentuated in more recent studies of these strategies (Yule & Tarone 1990).

3.2 Ethnography

Ethnography has held a central position in anthropology, but during the past 30 years, together with other qualitative methods, it has also gained ground in sociology, social psychology, education, and medicine. Ethnography represents a critique of quantitative research, especially survey and experimental research, and challenges it in areas that have been difficult or impossible to investigate with quantitative methods. The main assumptions of a qualitative method are that the nature of the social world can only be investigated by first-hand observation in natural settings, and that accounts of the findings must capture the processes involved and the social meanings that generate them. On the basis of these assumptions ethnography produces theoretical descriptions that both remain close to the reality of particular events and at the same time reveal general features of human social life (Hammersley 1990: 597).

What is referred to as the ethnographic method in studies of language behavior is the method used by sociolinguists and anthropological linguists like Hymes (e.g. 1972), Gumperz (1982ab, 1992abc), Ochs (1979, 1988, 1993), Schieffelin & Ochs (1986) and Scollon &

Scollon (1981, 1983). They all stress the importance of direct observation and the relevance of contextual and background information. Ethnography is the study of people's behavior in naturally occurring, ongoing settings with a focus on the cultural interpretation of behavior. It differs from other forms of qualitative research through its focus on holism and in the way it treats culture as integral to the linguistic analysis and not just as one of many factors to be taken into consideration (Watson-Gegeo 1988).

Most ethnographic studies are concerned with groups, because cultural behavior is by definition shared behavior, but the method implies that ethnographers are also interested in individuals: it is with them that the researchers develop personal relationships through observing and interviewing their behavior, but they are nonetheless mostly treated as members or representatives of groups.

The ethnographic method has been adopted also in second language acquisition research, because it makes it possible to investigate such areas as on the one hand sociocultural processes in language learning, i.e. how institutional and societal pressures are played out in classroom interaction, and on the other hand how to gain a more holistic perspective on interaction between native and non-native speakers (see e.g. Breen 1985; Chaudron 1987; Heath 1983; Richards 1987; Trueba et al. 1981). The ethnographic perspective on language learning is one of language socialization rather than one of language acquisition (Schieffelin & Ochs 1986ab; Kulick 1990 & 1992). The substitution of socialization for acquisition places language learning within the more comprehensive domain of socialization. It is a lifelong process through which individuals are initiated into cultural meanings and learn to perform the skills, roles and identities expected by the society they live in.

The language socialization perspective implies that language is learned through social interaction. On the other hand, it also implies that language is a vehicle of socialization: when a person learns a second language, s/he is learning more than a structure for communicating. S/he is also learning social and cultural norms, procedures for interpretation, and forms of reasoning. The ethnographic study of language socialization therefore focuses not only on the teaching and learning or acquiring of language skills, but also on the context of that learning and on what else, for instance attitudes and frames for interpretation, is learned and taught at the same time as language structure. This applies to language learning and teaching that takes place in the classroom only; it is even more obviously the case in situations where the language learner is an immigrant in a new country, and where the language is used as the majority and the official language. In the latter circumstances the new members of the society on one hand acquire knowledge of that society and its values through exposure to and participation in language-mediated interactions, and on the other hand they acquire language

through exposure to and participation in everyday activities in the society.

The role of context is central in the ethnography of speaking and pragmatics. Bronislaw Malinowski (1923) developed his theory by arguing that language is embedded within a "context of situation". This means that utterances become comprehensible only when the large sociocultural frameworks are taken into account. According to Malinowski, linguistic analysis must always be supplemented by ethnographic analysis of the situation. Another influential concept introduced by Malinowski is the idea of language as a mode of practical action and not only a reflection of abstract thought.

The importance of the situational context and the notion of word or language as a mode of action has been taken up and developed by many linguists (e.g. Firth 1957 and Halliday 1973) and sociologists. Emanuel Schegloff (1992a), for instance, argues that human social organization is a central context for talk which is a form of social action. Thereby he expands the view of language and ties it to systematic social organization. Erving Goffman (1967 & 1971) has developed a method of studying interactants' ways of treating and displaying their relationships to the context under the name of frame analysis. In his work he was inspired by the theories by Gregory Bateson (1955) who investigated and developed methods of therapy in which interaction was central in both interpreting behavior and giving therapy.

3.3 Conversation analysis

In this section I shall give an account of the principles of conversation analysis that are most relevant to my study. For a more detailed description see Heritage (1984b), Goodwin & Heritage (1990), Levinson (1983), McLaughlin (1984), and Taylor & Cameron (1987).

Conversation analysis, a method for investigating spoken interaction, was developed by Harvey Sacks (see e.g. 1992) within the theory of ethnomethodology. Ethnomethodology was developed by Harold Garfinkel (1967) in the 1950s, and it has its roots in sociology in the theory of action (Parsons 1937 and Weber 1949). While ethnography deals with a variety of phenomena in social life and collects all kinds of information about the subjects under investigation, ethnomethodology focuses on thinking as displayed in the processes and methods people use when they produce and interpret speech and actions in social interaction in carrying out their everyday routines. Ethnomethodology also stresses the interactants' own knowledge, their commonsense, in the interpretations, as the name of the method implies. As Garfinkel (1974:

18) puts it, ethnomethodology is an organizational study of a participant's own knowledge of his ordinary affairs, knowledge which is treated as part of the same setting that it also makes orderable. This knowledge is displayed in the conduct of the interactants and is thus made accessible to the analyst. The dynamic aspect of social actions is central for the ethnomethodologist who takes "every social world to be the ongoing, systematic, and conjoint accomplishment of those who live in it" (Moerman 1993: 86).

The general goal of conversation analysis is to analyze the competences which underlie ordinary social activities and describe the processes and methods that speakers use when they produce and interpret actions in a conversation. The method is based on three fundamental assumptions that are: "(1) interaction is structurally organized; (2) contributions to interaction are contextually oriented; (3) and these two properties inhere in the details of interaction so that no order of detail can be dismissed, a priori, as disorderly, accidental or irrelevant" (Heritage 1984b: 241).

The assumption about the structural organization of interaction means that interaction consists of patterns of stable, recurrent structural features and that this organization is independent of the psychological or other characteristics of particular speakers. The speakers have mostly unconscious but also conscious knowledge of this organization, which influences both their own behavior and their interpretation of the behavior of others.

The role of context is central in interpreting conversational behavior. All contributions to interaction are contextually oriented. A speaker's communicative action is doubly contextual in being both context-shaped and context-renewing. No action can be adequately understood without a reference to the immediate context, especially to the immediately preceding action(s), but also to the more global context that provides the frame for the action(s). The hearers always rely on this contextualization of utterances and interpret actions by the interlocutor on this basis. The context-renewing nature of actions in conversation is directly related to the fact that they are context-shaped, since each action adds elements or changes the context given in the previous turn and in this way also contributes to the way the next action will be interpreted.

The assumption that no order or detail in interaction can be dismissed a priori as insignificant has led to a strongly empirical approach and a retreat from a premature construction of theory. Another consequence of this assumption is that conversation analysts have taken a very stringent view in analyzing the competences underlying the production and interpretation of actions. According to this view, the data will exhibit systematic and orderly properties which are meaningful for the participants in a conversation and thus influence their conduct.

One of the basic ideas in ethnomethodology is that people create

social situations while acting in them both as producers and as interpreters. Thus the participants are seen as active subjects that react to the cues and actions in a context and, through mutual efforts, construct a situation. Consequently, the speaker's behavior in a conversation cannot be described as the achievement of an individual. In interactional situations the interlocutors do, however, have certain roles that assign them both rights and obligations to act in order to contribute to the creating of a social situation.

Some scholars outside the field of CA have developed similar theories about interaction and communication. Discussions about these theories have played a role in developing CA. According to Erving Goffman (1971), a social action is more fundamental than an action that is realized through speech. Thus speech is seen as a part of social action. There are slots in social actions that can be filled with speech, gestures or combinations of these. In this way speech and action are bound together, and must also be interpreted in relation to each other. This means that a conversation cannot be seen as a series of utterances and speech acts but as utterances and actions woven together by understanding and reactions, as in e.g. Labov's and Fanshel's analysis (1977: 30). Mikhail Bakhtin (e.g. 1987), who represents a totally different research tradition, has a similar view of communication. He claims that the recipient, even when he is not present, influences the speaker's/writer's way of expressing himself in addition to the influence that earlier utterances have. According to Bakhtin, "no utterance in general can be attributed to the speaker exclusively; it is the product of the interaction of the interlocutors, and, broadly speaking, the product of the whole complex social situation in which it has occurred" (Bakhtin in Todorov 1984: 30).

Although the speakers are seen as active subjects who through interaction with each other create a situation, their conduct is regulated and facilitated by norms, maxims of behavior, and mutual knowledge of social situations. These represent the orderliness of interaction which contributes to the foundation for a smooth understanding. I shall now describe some of the basic features of this orderliness that are of importance to this study. *Intersubjectivity* is the foundation of all the negotiations of meaning that the interlocutors are constantly involved in while producing and interpreting talk. *Repairs* are done in order to check understanding and mend either production or interpretation. *Accountability* and the *norms* that underlie every talk-in-interaction have a special importance in the present data where the interlocutors either do not share or do not know whether and to what extent they share norms. The roles of intersubjectivity, repair and accountability are more visible in asymmetric communication because of both factual and expected breaches. The basic structural elements, viz. *turn*, *utterance*, and *turn constructional unit*, are the means through which the interlocutors display their reactions and interpretations of each others actions. In other words,

they reveal the degree of intersubjectivity and are also used in accomplishing repairs. In the present study, the transparency of the importance of these concepts varied according to the particular task at hand: turn, utterance, and turn constructional unit were central in transcribing the conversations, whereas the products of using them, intersubjectivity and repair, became central in analyzing the breaches of communication.

3.3.1 Turn, utterance and turn constructional unit

According to Sacks et al. (1974: 696), turns are the building blocks that make conversation an efficient economic system. They are the means interlocutors use for talk-in-interaction, although the situations and goals vary. The turn system means both rights and obligations for the interactants.

Most scholars give technical definitions for the notion of turn based on sound and silence patterns and focusing on the boundaries. A turn is what a speaker says after and before another speaker. All technical definitions have in common that any utterance by another speaker, including back-channelling and encouragers, terminates the turn of the prior speaker and itself constitutes a new turn (McLaughlin 1984: 92). A turn can also be defined using functional criteria, as, for example, when the approach is based on speech act theory as developed by Austin (1962) and Searle (1969) and later refined for spoken discourse by Edmonson (1981) and for discourse analysis by Sinclair & Coulthard (1975).

If the technical definition is used, gaps and overlaps cause problems for defining the exact location of the boundaries and the number of turns. On the other hand, functional definitions disregard the fact that function can be interpreted in different ways by the current speaker and the next speaker. It is also difficult to disentangle propositional and functional units.

In applying sound and silence criteria to the present study, overlaps are a minor problem, because they are few, whereas gaps are numerous. The rate of speech in the conversations is so slow that it is often problematic both for the interactants and the analyst to decide where a turn starts and ends. To identify turns by functional or referential criteria would, however, be very speculative in a data set that consists of conversations with highly deviant linguistic structures. In the present study, the technical definition of turn has been chosen in the transcripts for two reasons. Firstly, the notion of turn is mainly needed to describe speaker change. This definition has no impact on the main problems in the study, and it facilitates the mechanical counting of exchanges, which has also been done in order to give an overall description of the structures of the conversations. Secondly, counting both back-channelling

and attempts to start as turns gives information about all the interactants' degree of activity in the conversation. Since choosing the technical definition means that a change of speaker is considered as a change of turn, all minimal feedback items surrounded by another speaker's speech are considered as turns irrespective of their function. The only exceptions are those few cases when the first speaker's utterance constitutes a whole and the responses overlap a part of it without having any impact on the prosodic structure of the turn. On the other hand, even long pauses that are followed by an utterance by the same speaker as before are counted as pauses within a turn, although these instances could be counted as two or more turns by the same speaker. The following short example illustrates the occurrences of pauses in utterances.

(2) [36]

01	Mari	<i>eh:m (.) de e (.) döpps (.)</i>	<i>eh:m (.) it is (.) baptized (.)</i>
02		<i>som pippeln (1)</i>	<i>as the bible (1)</i>
03		<i>lärar sej</i>	<i>teaches</i>
04		<i>(3)</i>	<i>(3)</i>
05	Mari	<i>vi:: (.) många olika: fri::</i>	<i>we:: (.) many different free::</i>
06		<i>(3)</i>	<i>(3)</i>
07		<i>försäljning (1) döps som</i>	<i>sale (1) baptized as</i>
08		<i>(5)</i>	<i>(5)</i>
09		<i>de e nya te (1) till dej</i>	<i>is this new to (1) to you</i>
10	Staffan	<i>e näj int/ inte helt e (1)</i>	<i>eh no not/ not quite eh (1)</i>
11		<i>hur gammal ska man va för att</i>	<i>how old do you have to be</i>
12		<i>döpas</i>	<i>to be baptized</i>

Mari's utterances on lines 01-03 constitute a whole, although there is a long pause between them. The recipient does not take the turn during the pause of three seconds that follows the utterance, and the first speaker has to go on. Lines 05 through 07 constitute an expansion and a clarification of the first utterance. This is followed by a pause that is longer than the earlier pauses. The metacommunicative comment on line 09 refers to the utterances preceding it, but could also be analyzed as a new turn by the NNS. The example illustrates that the turn boundaries are mutable and that they cannot be mechanically decided on in the qualitative analysis.

The basic unit of a turn is an utterance. In CA this basic unit is called the "turn constructional unit" (TCU) (Sacks et al. 1974: 702). An utterance is primarily defined as a prosodic unity that consists of a syntactic and semantic whole. In earlier linguistic literature some authors have chosen either prosodic or syntactic-semantic criteria as the point of departure for their definitions (e.g. Crookes 1990). According to the intonational definition, an utterance is an intonation unit which, with a falling or rising pitch, in conjunction with pauses, demarcates the synthetic structure of the utterance. Some definitions have a closer

relation to written language definitions and stress the syntactic and semantic criteria.

The term "turn-constructural component" as used by Sacks et al. (1974: 702) could be interpreted as a syntactic unit, although they also mention the prosodic cues in the end of a turn-constructural component. McLaughlin (1984: 95) defines the utterance as each stretch of talk that constitutes an independent clause, non-restrictive dependent clause, term of address, acknowledgement or an element of a compound predicate. She also includes elliptical sentences, one-word affirmations and negations, and tags, whereas she does not count false starts without predicates as utterances. Linell and Gustavsson (1987: 13) make a distinction between utterance (*yttrande*) and locution (*meningsenhet*) and thus attribute the prosodic and syntactic-semantic criteria to different units. They define an utterance as a segment of continuous talk by a speaker irrespective of whether s/he has got the floor or not. The locution is a syntactic and semantic whole with some similarities to the sentence in the written language, but it does not need to be a complete sentence.

The terms "utterance" and "turn-constructural unit" are mostly used as synonyms in conversation analysis, but the latter, of course, stresses the structural function. An utterance or a turn-constructural unit can coincide with a turn. A turn can also consist of several utterances, whereas an utterance can be produced jointly by two or more speakers. In this case, one utterance is manifested in two or more turns. Many conversation analysts consider the utterance as an appropriate choice for the basic unit for a turn for several reasons. An utterance corresponds to a discrete segment of thought, utterances are mapped onto units with specific sequential implicativeness, special intonation contours occur at utterance boundaries, and conversational coherence is tied to relations of adjacent propositions and the acts that are superimposed on them.

However, there are problems in defining the turn-constructural unit as an utterance, i.e. a syntactic and propositional unit, and, at the same time, giving the turn a technical definition. There are instances that do not fit either of the categories. False starts or short attempts to take the turn cannot be considered as utterances in the accepted sense, but they have to be defined as turns according to the technical criteria. In an NS-NNS conversation, ungrammatical or strongly elliptic expressions in an NNS's talk are difficult to interpret as utterances and also bias the interlocutor's behavior. This can change all the assumptions of the turn structure in a conversation. In the present data, the technical definition works better in some of the conversations. It is especially suitable in the conversations with Leo (C1) and Mari (C2), whereas the speaking rhythm is more varied in the other three conversations, which contain both short overlaps and out-of-turn back-channelling that do not change the prosodic structure of the turn they overlap. These are therefore considered as out-of-turn elements.

The theory of the ways the turns are linked together has been central in the development of CA. Schegloff and Sacks (1973) introduced the term adjacency pair as one way to discuss paired actions. An adjacency pair is a sequence of two communicative actions that often occur adjacent to each other and are produced by different speakers. They are sequentially ordered so that one action is a "first pair part" and the other a "second pair part". They are further categorized so that any given first pair part must be followed by a certain type of second pair part; for example, a greeting is followed by a greeting and an offer by an acceptance or a rejection.

The central position of the adjacency pair is also stressed by Heritage (1984b: 253) when he claims that the methodology of ethnomethodological conversation analysis is best revealed in the study of adjacency pairs: the form of analysis here is repeated in the analysis of more complex and nuanced conversational activities. Each action is analyzed as projecting the production of a relevant next action by another speaker. The adjacency pair structure is a normative but not determinative framework for actions, and is accountably implemented. This means that it is a structural organization to which the speakers orient themselves and which shapes their expectation that a relevant action will follow the first pair part (see also 3.2.3).

Utterances or other actions that follow first pair parts are either preferred or dispreferred. "Preferred" and "dispreferred" do not have to do with the ordinary meaning of individual motivations and desires but with structural primacy and being typical or expected.

The preference system utilizes various degrees of structural complexity to favor preferred responses and inhibit dispreferred responses. Preferred second pair parts have a simple structure and are produced quicker and more easily without any special features of markedness, whereas the dispreferred second pair parts are structurally more complex and often delayed. Structural complexity often takes the form of accounts, apologies and explanations that either precede or follow the actual response.

The notion of turn has received considerable space here because it is central to all the transcribing work, which is the first and very decisive step in the analysis. Exact theoretical definitions of turn and turn boundaries are not directly essential for many episodes in the study, but the interlocutors' concept of turn has an interactional and interpretational importance for the participants in most trouble sequences.

The problems and the diversity of approaches in defining turn and utterance reflect the variety and mutability of the structural and contextual cues that are relevant in conversations. On one hand, both the amount and quality of the cues offered vary. On the other hand, the interlocutors choose which of the competing cues they consider to be most relevant and how they interpret them. The choices and the

interpretations are guided by the norms and by both the local and the global context. I will illustrate this with examples from the present data. The data frequently reveal differences in the interlocutors' conceptions regarding the structural elements.

3.3.2 Accountability, norm and rule

A central concept in ethnomethodological conversation analysis is that of the "sequential relevance" of action, which means that an actor's behavior is formed in the light of how s/he expects the other actor(s) to react to it. Heritage (1984b: 107) discusses the concept by giving an example of greeting someone passing in the corridor. The person that is greeted is put in a position of either following the rule "return a greeting" or failing to do so. In the latter case, the first actor will interpret the rule-violating behavior in a certain way because s/he holds the other actor's behavior accountable. S/he may infer that the other actor did not hear him/her, did not recognize him/her, was preoccupied, or purposely 'snubbed' the greeter, etc.

The preference system utilizes various degrees of structural complexity to favor preferred responses and inhibit dispreferred responses. As was mentioned above, the dispreferred ones are marked so that their negative status is displayed. Preferred second pair parts have a simple structure and are produced more rapidly and more easily without any special features of markedness, whereas the dispreferred second pair parts are structurally more complex and often delayed. Structural complexity often takes the form of accounts, apologies and explanations that either precede or follow the actual response.

The conscious and unconscious knowledge of the organization and the orderliness of conversation that the speakers possess is knowledge both about the structural aspects such as turns, sequences and preferences and about the norms, rules and maxims of conduct that underlie conversational behavior. A conversational norm, rule or maxim is not a right-or-wrong rule but rather a matter of expectations and probability of occurrence. The terms "accountability", "norm" and "rule" are used in conversation analysis without any clear distinctions. In the present study I will mostly use the term "norm" in the general meaning it has been assigned in conversation analysis.

In a conversation, the norm may be subjected to breaches of varying degrees, but these are not unequivocal violations as e.g. in grammar. The norm is seen more as expected behavior that facilitates interaction. The norms do not control the behavior but they are material through which the interpretation of conduct is possible. In other words, the speakers follow the norm because they are conscious of both the norm and the consequences that following or breaking it will have on the

interaction. At this point ethnomethodology differs both from the theory of action that regards the rules as internalized "need positions" that are used in situations where the behavior is seen as "guided" or "caused" by the rules (Heritage 1984b: 104), and from the deterministic model of structural and generative linguistics.

The significance of the norms is exhibited in breaches. For instance, when the second speaker fails to respond to a question, the first speaker has the right to express his/her dissatisfaction by a sanctioning behavior that may be a repetition of the question or a remark on the lack of response. In the investigated data, breaches of norms are relatively frequent, but sanctioning behavior does not automatically occur since the speakers do not automatically rely on their knowledge of the general norms of conversation but adjust their expectations to the special character of the situation.

Conversation analysis does not claim that there are specific norms for all situations. The social knowledge that speakers have seems to contain norms that underlie most social actions although they are not explicitly taught or sanctioned. Their existence can be discerned in both interpretation and production in interaction. One of the main goals of conversation analysis is to reveal information about these norms.

3.3.3 Intersubjectivity

The notion of the "architecture of intersubjectivity" is related to the notions of accountability, rule and norm. It refers to the means by which individuals in an interaction can reach a shared interpretation of the situation. The idea of intersubjectivity was introduced by the phenomenologist Alfred Schutz and developed further by Garfinkel (Heritage 1984b: 45f.). Garfinkel (1967: 30) also uses the term "shared agreement" to refer to various social methods used in interpreting and reacting to an interactant's actions.

Intersubjectivity means that the actors can achieve an intersubjective, shared world as an ordinary practical accomplishment. They are not prevented by the fact that each individual has his/her own private experiences that are inaccessible to others, because the actors assume that the differences between their experiences are not interactionally relevant. The sequential construction of intersubjectivity is built out of linked actions (Heritage 1984b: 256): an actor's response to another actor's behavior will be taken as indicating understanding of that behavior. This indication is then confirmed or corrected in a third action (see 4.3). In interaction, the actors display their understandings of the components of the situation and the rules they are orienting themselves to through a sequential progression, and thus both reach a shared interactional world and make it observable to the analyst.

The CA claim that the participants have an intersubjective understanding sufficient for practical purposes implies that it is not necessary to reach and display exact understanding of prior turns (Taylor & Cameron 1987). In fact, the issue of understanding *per se* is only rarely topicalised on the conversational surface. The speakers may respond to earlier talk in ways which blur, conceal or otherwise avoid displaying their appreciation of it. Thus the ambiguity of turns is also a resource that the speakers can take advantage of if, for instance, they want to avoid displaying their true feelings in dealing with delicate issues (Heritage 1984b: 260; Goodwin & Goodwin 1987: 3).

Ambiguity is a fundamental feature of all communication and cannot be seen as a defect or an exception. Schegloff (1984) distinguishes between empirical and theoretical ambiguities. Empirical ambiguities are experienced by participants in the course of ongoing talk, whereas theoretical ambiguity is a feature either overheard or constructed by a nonparticipating analyst. Grimshaw (1987: 187) assumes that all naturally occurring discourse is potentially ambiguous. The participants have a high ability to tolerate and handle ambiguities. In fact, as stated above, ambiguities are often a resource.

Within CA the conversations analyzed have until recently been everyday conversations between native speakers. Therefore, not much attention has been paid to variations in the degree of intersubjectivity. In very asymmetric conversations the participants' assumptions as to the shared world may at times be incompatible, with the result that the participants do not reach an intersubjective understanding.

3.3.4 Repair

Repair is a conversational resource that is used when the speakers have difficulties in reaching an intersubjective understanding. Repairs can be done when an utterance contains a problem, when the recipient has problems in comprehending, or when a speaker wants to revise her/his utterance or express her/himself more accurately.

Repairs have an organized and universal structure in conversations (Schegloff et al. 1977; Schegloff 1979 & 1992b; Jefferson 1974 & 1987). They occur, for instance, in the same positions as other sorts of problems in conversations.

The repairs that occur in an ordinary NS-NNS conversation (classroom discourse is different) are only occasionally repairs of speaker errors or mistakes, although this might be expected since NNSs have difficulties in expressing themselves in the second language. Most of the repairs in my data have to do with the NNS's problems in understanding, which means that they are produced by the NS in an attempt to make her/his talk more comprehensible to the recipient. However, there are no

unequivocal distinctions between these two types of repairs. A speaker error may pass unnoticed and unrepaired, whereas a speaker may be forced to repair an utterance s/he considers correct and adequate when the recipient displays non-understanding or misunderstanding. Schegloff et al. (1977: 363) also note that "correction" or "repair" are not limited to the phenomena of error correction as generally understood. Anything can be repairable or a trouble source and therefore dealt with as such.

Schegloff et al. (1977) have specified distinctions on the one hand between repair initiation and repair-outcome, and on the other hand between self-initiation or self-repair and other-initiation or other-repair. Repairs are made sequentially in two main segments: initiation and outcome. Self- and other-initiations have different placements relative to the trouble-source. Self-initiations may be placed within the same turn as the trouble-source either before a TRP or in the space reserved for a transition. The third alternative is the third turn. The three placements can be illustrated with examples from the data:

(3)

01	Leo	<i>hans sist/ nej hans hennes sista</i>	his las/ no his her last cast
02		<i>skast</i>	

(4)

01	Olle	<i>ha- har man ingen grej man</i>	i- isn't there anything you
02		<i>gör? (1)</i>	do? (1)
→		<i>skjuter raketer å (.) dricker</i>	fire off rockets and (.) drink
→		<i>champagne?</i>	champagne?

(5)

01	Mari	<i>där e (3) m:</i>	there is (3) m:
02		<i>(5)</i>	(5)
03		<i>skrivmaskinkursen</i>	the typing course
04	Staffan	<i>jaa</i>	yes
05		<i>(4)</i>	(4)
→	Mari	<i>ell[er]</i>	[or]
07	Staffan	<i>[har du] gått på</i>	[have you] taken
08		<i>skrivmaskinskurs där?</i>	a typing course there?
09	Mari	<i>nej ja städar där</i>	no I do cleaning there
10	Staffan	<i>.h jaha å dom har</i>	.h uhu and they have
11		<i>en skrivmaskinskurs där</i>	a typing course there

The examples also illustrate the variation both in the repairable elements and the ways the repairs are initiated and accomplished. In Example (3) the speaker interrupts in the middle of a word, gives a minimal

metalinguistic comment *nej*, repeats the repairable word *hans*, 'his', and latches onto it the correct pronoun. In the second example, where the repair is done after a TRP, the repair consists of suggesting answers after a short pause. This fragment also introduces one of the central types of repair in the data: silence or lack of response as repair initiation. The third example illustrates both a third-turn repair-initiation and the interactive way of doing the repair which is highly characteristic of the data.

Other-initiations occur mainly in the turn that follows the trouble source turn (Schegloff et al. 1977: 367). Schegloff (1992b: 1302) later gives a more detailed account of the repair phenomenon. He claims that virtually all efforts to deal with problems of understanding that are initiated by the hearer are made in the turn after the trouble-source turn. He calls these instances "next turn repair initiations" (NTRI).

(6)

01	Staffan	<i>jaha #</i>	uhu
02		<i>men du har inte köpt en e (1)</i>	but you haven't bought an eh (1)
03		<i>du har inte köpt en beskrivning</i>	you haven't bought a plan
04		<i>(1)</i>	(1)
05		<i>du har inte köpt en:: mall?</i>	you haven't bought a pattern?
→	Mari	<i>'modell?</i>	model
07	Staffan	<i>jaa</i>	yes

Schegloff et al. (1977: 367-369) also describe the regular, clearly different initiator techniques that are used in the different types of repair processes. When self-initiation is done in the same turn, repair is signalled by various, mostly non-lexical speech perturbations:

(7)

01	Staffan	<i>nää (.) man säger e (.)</i>	no (.) it is said eh (.)
→		<i>pt. när e (2)</i>	pt. when eh (2)
→		<i>när e (1) pt.</i>	when eh (1) pt.
04		<i>i svenska kyrkan (1)</i>	in the church of Sweden (1)
05		<i>när små barn döps va</i>	when small children are baptized

Other-initiations are made by employing various turn-constructural devices, question words, partial repeats, segments like *you mean*, or combinations of these. Schegloff et al. do not, however, mention the type of reaction to problems that is most frequent in my data: silence or lack of reaction. It mostly occurs in NNS conduct, but is not infrequent as an NS reaction to NNS turns. In the following example the hearer combines lapse (line 05) and explicit repair initiation (line 06).

01	Ville	<i>ja känner int igen den där</i>	I don't recognize that
02		<i>rösten. (1)</i>	voice. (1)
03		<i>ja vet inte vem som (1)</i>	I don't know who (1)
04		<i>sjunger.</i>	is singing.
→		(3)	(3)
→	Mari	<i>menar du att du känner inte:?</i>	do you mean that you don't know
07		(2)	(2)
08	Ville	<i>(nä) ja vet inte vem vem som</i>	(no) I don't know who who
09		<i>sjunger</i>	is singing
10		(3)	(3)

Both self-initiation and self-repair are preferred over other-initiation and other-repair. Because of this Schegloff et al. (1977) consider self- and other-initiation as two distinct types of repair, which, however, are related in an organized way, since they operate in the same domains and their respective placements are at the same time distinct and ordered relative to each other. Repair can be initiated from any of the positions mentioned above, whether the trouble-source is word replacement, person-reference, or next-speaker selection.

Repair mechanisms are related to the relationship between the participants. In interaction studies with a close connection with CA, this relationship is discussed in terms of face. The notion of face was first introduced by Goffman (1955, 1967). Face can be divided into positive and negative face. Positive face refers to a speaker's or hearer's desire to be regarded as worthy of approval, and negative face deals with the desire for autonomy and freedom from imposition. The need to maintain both one's own face, i.e. to be socially accepted, and the face of one's interlocutor is of major importance in all interaction. In CA many scholars have been critical of the notion of face, because it has to do with the speakers' intentions. However, some CA scholars acknowledge the connection between face and preference structure (see e.g. Heritage 1984b: 269, 272-273). Saari, whose conversation studies are influenced by CA, sees a close connection between preference structure and other attentiveness in her analyses of Swedish conversations (Saari 1992). In the present study the speakers can often be seen avoiding risks in coping with problems of understanding in order to save both their own and their interlocutor's face. Many severe problems remain unsolved in situations where the speakers anticipate great difficulties in negotiating for shared understanding.

The concept of face was later linked with the concept of politeness by Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson (1978; 1987) who claim that politeness strategies in coping with various face-threatening acts underlie most of our actions. Brown and Levinson also divide the concept of politeness into positive and negative politeness in the same way as

Goffman divided face. While, according to them, politeness is based on the speakers' intentions and the relationship between the speakers, conversation analysts do not see expressions of politeness or considerateness as products of individual intentions but as a culture-bound system.

The role of face can be seen in the present data: the speakers often avoid risks in order to save both their own and their interlocutor's face. Instead of developing the topic or checking understanding the speakers initiate new sequences, which gives parts of the conversations the character of an interview with short questions and answers.

3.4 Institutional conversations

Conversation analysts are in the first place interested in analyzing naturally occurring interaction in everyday conversations. During the past ten years there has also been a growing interest in various kinds of institutional conversations. A number of studies have been done on legal, medical and social work encounters (e.g. Jönsson 1988; von Raffler-Engel 1990; Peräkylä & Silverman 1991). Institutional conversations differ from ordinary conversations through certain built-in asymmetries that also influence the structure of the conversation. In contrast to everyday conversations many aspects are fixed, such as topics, time allowed, types of turns, and the roles of the speakers. In many institutional conversations, the variety of turns is very narrow. The most common structure is that of an interview with questions by the expert and answers by the client. The speakers have expert and client roles that entitle them to certain types of turns and also determine the amount of time they can use. The term "expert" refers both to the knowledge and the power a speaker possesses in an institutional situation.

The difference between everyday conversations and institutional talk is not a simple one. Speakers in everyday conversations are said to have equal rights and obligations. There is also evidence that there are no restrictions in the turn-taking system, in dealing with topics and in changing topic, but, as a matter of fact, everyday conversations do contain various asymmetries. There are differences in the speakers' knowledge, ages, attitudes, speaking habits and so on that may cause asymmetries. The restrictions and asymmetries in everyday conversations are, however, different from those in institutional conversations, since they may vary greatly during a conversation and are not determined in advance by the type of the encounter. As Drew and Heritage (1992: 3) state "the institutionality of an interaction is not determined by its setting". Any talk-in-interaction can become institutional if the participants' institutional

or professional identities are made relevant. This also applies to the present data, since the point of departure for the encounters studied is two-fold: the speakers interact with each other because their relationship is institutional, but the specific encounters chosen for the study are relaxed conversations where the institutional identities become relevant at times. The identities of the speakers range from acquaintances who see each other occasionally to researchers versus informants in a research project.

3.5 Transcription

Although the propositional content of utterances may be the same whether spoken or written, these two forms are in many respects two different languages in which meanings are built up in essentially different ways. The differences between spoken and written language may be self-evident to linguists, but it is not so self-evident that awareness of them has always been a point of departure for linguistic research (Linell 1982). Moreover, it has not been self-evident that the differences between speech, transcribed speech and the ideas of speech conveyed by transcripts need to be taken into account in research of spoken interaction. The media and methods used mean that the differences between speech and transcribed speech are partly the same as those between spoken and written language. In certain respects the differences are deeper as will be demonstrated below.

Transcription is never more than a partial and therefore biased representation of speech, and especially of conversation, because there is no system of transcription that is able to compensate for many of the phenomena in the speech situation comparable to the way a similar task is performed by the written language with the use of special elements and structures for deixis, foregrounding, etc.

In a transcript, sequences of auditively perceived speech sounds are transferred into a visual mode that is linear and based primarily on the phonetic alphabet or standard orthography. The use of standard orthography is a natural choice that facilitates perception, because the symbols and the sequences are well-known to everybody. Nevertheless, standard orthography is misleading: firstly, because it confirms our bias toward the written language, and secondly, because it cannot convey even the most primary characteristics of speech such as individual variation. Especially in cases where the speaker represents a special linguistic group, e.g. small children, non-native speakers, hard of hearing or dialect speakers, the reader of a transcript gets a heavily biased understanding of the situation if standard orthography alone is used.

The use of diacritic markers provides the reader with some information about prosodic and segmental features. However, even diacritics cannot give a precise idea of the spoken utterance, because the visual and auditive perceptions are essentially different. The perception of the visual symbols of auditive and visual entities stretches out in time and space and has an atomistic and incremental character and bears no relation to the very quick holistic analyses the listener makes in real speech situations.

Another area that is poorly represented in transcripts is the mass of visual-auditive-tactile contextual information that exists alongside the verbal behavior in the conversation situation. This problem has been discussed in various contexts (e.g. Ochs 1979; Heritage 1984b; Hakulinen 1989; Edwards & Lampert 1993). One way to solve the problem has been to limit the study of conversations to telephone calls which do not contain any visual information (Sacks et al. 1974; Hakulinen 1989; Edwards & Lampert 1993). In telephone calls the problem of visual information is avoided, but transcribing vocalizations of various kinds also presents problems in choosing how to best describe the quality of what is uttered and finding a way to present overlapping and unclear timing.

The transcriber's role is very important for each transcript. The transcriber's theoretical background determines the decisions taken in the transcribing process, including the degree of accuracy of the transcript, the amount of prosodic and contextual information and the visual layout in general. These all direct the reader's interpretation of the content of the transcribed speech situation.

When choosing the degree of precision for a transcript the researcher makes a subjective choice based on her/his knowledge of cognitive processes and knowledge of human behavior in social interaction in general. Knowledge of cognitive processes is mostly limited to less complex activities than a conversation with all the of inner and outer stimuli that influence the actions and interpretations of the speakers. Because conversations are such an essential part of human life it is, however, reasonable to assume that researchers are lead by an intuition similar to that leading the speakers in a conversation when the latter interpret their own and their interlocutor's actions. If this is the case the researcher's analysis, although selective, may not be very far from the way the speakers themselves have perceived the conversation.

The analysis can also be biased by the fact that the contact the researcher has with the conversation to be analyzed is fundamentally different from that of the speakers. For the speakers, the situation is unique and every auditive element and most of the visual elements (gestures, movements, etc.) in it disappear as fast as they appear, whereas the researcher can listen to a recording over and over again. Furthermore, the researcher can manipulate the speed, volume and quality of the recording. On the other hand, the researcher does not have access to all

the contextual cues that are available to the speakers.

The task of transcribing a discourse involving both native and non-native speakers is particularly difficult, because the transcriber has to decide to what extent to represent the deviant features in the language of the non-native speaker. The transcriber also has to choose how to represent the weak forms in the native speakers language that for another native speaker would be the most natural way of pronunciation but might pose difficulties for a non-native to identify. From a native speaker's point of view it would be perfectly natural to transcribe *hur långt åkte ni* instead of *hu långt åkte ni*, since other common weak forms are not shown either in the present transcriptions. On the other hand, these weak forms can, together with the speech rate which generates them, constitute sources of difficulties for the learner. Some reductions, therefore, have been marked in the transcripts in this study.

My criterion for transcribing a non-native speaker's deviant pronunciation is to do so only when it differs so much from the pronunciation of native speakers that it might cause problems for understanding. Sometimes it is also important to report deviations in order to remind the reader of the transcripts that the non-native speaker's speech is different. For instance, all the newly arrived learners pronounce the voiced stops as voiceless but without aspiration. Since this mostly approximates sufficiently to the Swedish phonemes, it does not usually lead to any problems of understanding. Sometimes the whole utterance is so deviant that an almost phonetic transcript is given in order to inform the reader of the difficulty the speakers are experiencing.

A far more complicated problem than transcribing segmental elements is how to treat non-verbal expressions. Unclear vocalizations are not very frequent in the present study, and there is not much variation in the use of paralinguistic means, thus facilitating the transcription process in this particular case. In more fluent conversations the speakers use vocalizations and approximations that would be difficult to capture in a transcript. Because the present conversations are audiorecorded, the transcriber cannot appeal to visual information but on the other hand is not faced by problems of transcribing visual signals such as body movements and facial expressions. The lack of visual information must, however, weaken the reliability of the analyst's interpretation of the verbal actions.

Each conversation has been transcribed by at least three persons each in order to achieve high reliability. First, the conversations were transcribed and checked within the EALA project according to the principles and the goals of the project. I subsequently carried out new checks on the conversations when focussing on the analysis of problems of understanding. The transcription in the present study of the examples follows CA principles as largely developed by Gail Jefferson (Atkinson & Heritage 1984b: ix-xvi) with minor changes that depend on the nature of

the data. For instance, the symbol for laughter is not *h* or *heh* but #, as there are many vocalizations and ungrammatical approximations to words that these symbols could be confused with. A list of the symbols is given in Appendix 1.

Despite the avoidance of transcribing smaller phonetic deviancies and using diacritic markers, the examples in the present study may give a chaotic impression at first sight because the NNSs' language, especially, contains many anomalies and is often discontinuous in a way which makes it difficult to follow the development of the topic. Moreover, the examples are extracts from larger contexts which naturally influence both the participants' and the analyst's interpretations of actions in the fragments and which, if known, would render them less chaotic. Moreover, the paralinguistic cues that are excluded from the transcripts guide and facilitate the interpretations when listening to the tapes.

All the actions that are interpreted as repair initiations in this investigation could in other contexts and accompanied by other paralinguistic features be interpreted as newsmarks, in Jefferson's terminology (Heritage 1984a: 339-340), or as markers of surprise (West 1984: 109). The reliability of the interpretations was checked by a partial double-checking of the conversations. A linguistically trained anthropologist listened to four conversations in the database and found the same sequences to display non-understanding. Two of these conversations are included in the present study.

4 SOME STRUCTURAL FEATURES OF THE CONVERSATIONS IN THE DATA

Although there are several problems in defining the turn, the turn structure of the conversations analyzed constitutes an important background for the present study, firstly because it gives a rough global description of the conversations and, secondly, because conversational patterns, including those used in negotiations for understanding, are closely related to the processes of the turn-taking system.

4.1 Turn-taking

The already classical presentation of the rule system of turn-taking by Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974: 704) gives the criteria for allocations of turns in a conversation:

1. At initial turn-constructural unit's initial transition-relevance place:
 - (a) If the turn-so-far is so constructed as to involve the use of a "current speaker selects next" technique, then the party so selected has rights, and is obliged, to take next turn to speak; no others have such rights or obligations, and transfer occurs at that place.
 - (b) 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, and transfer occurs at that place.
 - (c) If the turn-so-far is constructed as not to involve the use of a "current speaker selects next" technique, then current speaker may, but need not, continue, unless another self-selects.
2. If, at the initial transition-relevance place of an initial turn-constructural unit, neither 1 (a) nor 1 (b) has operated, and, following the provision of 1 (c), current speaker has continued, then the rule set (a)-(c) reapplies at the next transition-relevance place, until transfer is effected.

In the data analyzed the conversations are potential three-party conversations where two of the interactants have a more prominent role: the newly arrived immigrant and the native speaker. This has obvious consequences on the turn-taking system. As to the allocation of rules, the NS and the NNS mostly select each other. Self-selection is done by the NS and the BS, whereas the NNS very seldom self-selects. In most instances this is not necessary, since the NNS is almost always selected by the others: the conversations are constructed of dyadic sequences where the NNS is mostly the second party. There are also dyads between the two other speakers, but they are both linguistically and topically so demanding that the NNS is unable to participate in them. In fact, both the topics and the mode of speaking are restricted in those parts of the conversations in which the NNSs participate. Where even slight changes occur in these, the NNS is left out of the conversation. The following extract illustrates this pattern. The episode started with a question directed to the NNS while the participants are looking at a book about cars. After a ratifying response to the NNS's answer the NS changes his mode of speaking and thus directs the talk to the BS. They have a sequence of five turns, after which the NNS, Leo, self-selects and continues the answer he gave prior to the sequence.

(9)

01	Staffan	<i>kofångare (.) va skulle du vilja ha för bil här (.)</i>	bumper (.) what kind of car would you like to have here (.)
02		<i>har du någon favoritbil (1)</i>	do you have a favorite car (1)
03		<i>har du någon drömbil så där</i>	do you have a car you dream of
04	Leo	<i>ja vet inte #</i>	I don't know
05	Staffan	<i>oja</i>	ojeso
06		<i>(2)</i>	(2)
07		<i>de måste du nästan ha</i>	you must have one don't you
08	Leo	<i>ja (1)</i>	yes (1)
09		<i>kanske någon</i>	perhaps one
10	Ville	<i>moskvitsh?</i>	moskvitsh?
11	Leo	<i>chevy eller cadillac</i>	chevy or cadillac
12	Staffan	<i>ja ja (1)</i>	yes yes (1)
13		<i>ja ja oja deno här ja tycker den här är fin va</i>	yeah yeah oyeah thiso one i think this one is fine isn't it
14		<i>(3)</i>	(3)
15	Ville	<i>jaa</i>	yes
16	Staffan	<i>stoppa man familjen i den å sen åker man ut</i>	you put the family in it and then drive out
17		<i>å plockar blåbär (1)</i>	to pick blueberries (1)
18	Ville	<i># (.) den här bruden</i>	# (.) this girl here
19		<i>(2)</i>	(2)
20		<i>jää</i>	yes
21	Staffan	<i>vicka bönor</i>	such girls
22		<i>(3)</i>	(3)
23	Leo	<i>eller kanske golf #</i>	or perhaps golf #

27	Staffan	<i>åka å spela golf</i>	drive out for golf
28	Leo	# (1) <i>nä volkswagen golf #</i>	# (1) no volkswagen golf #
29	Staffan	<i>ja ja (1) jaa</i>	yes yes (1) well
30	Leo	<i>mm</i>	mm

The example above displays the asymmetry that influences the turn structure of the conversation. Episodes like this are not frequent, because the NSs do not often talk to the BS except when they need their help in talking to the NNS. The episode, however, highlights the difference of the modes that the NSs use when talking to the BSs and the NNSs. The NNS' conduct is similar in other episodes where the NS directs his talk to the BS: Leo ignores the sequence of five turns between his own contributions as if there had not been any perturbations between the turns he interprets as an adjacency pair.

The literature about conversations show that violations of a smooth turn-taking system are minimized in most conversations both in face-to-face and telephone communication (see e.g. Sacks et al. 1974). There are only few instances of overlap or longer gaps. Overlap may occur because the rules allow for "competing self-selector". This means that a self-selected next speaker starts her/his turn before the first speaker has quite completed her/his turn. It may also happen that a speaker consciously interrupts the first speaker. On the other hand, overlaps are possible, at least in English conversations, because the turn-constructive unit can be extended beyond a first possible completion point by e.g. a tag or address term. Pauses may also occur because the turn-transfer rules are optional (ibid.: 708) and the speaker always must have time enough to react to the fact that nobody else has taken the turn. The slow pace of the present conversations implies that there are very few overt overlaps, whereas pauses are frequent and often long.

Sacks et al. (1974: 721) consider that the interactants in normal everyday conversations recognize "transition-relevant points" (TRP) with the help of syntactic and intonational cues. A turn-constructive unit is a syntactic unit and has a rising or falling intonation that signals its completion. As already mentioned, Sacks et al. also have a functional criterion for the turn-constructive unit while asserting that all turns have a past, present and future reference in order to be considered complete. Sacks et al., however, do not define the cues precisely, but there are other studies of speaker behaviors that occur near actual transfer and seem to signal transition points. In addition to the criteria mentioned by Sacks et al., turn-yielding signals such as slowing the speech rate, relaxation of hand positioning, increasing volume, gaze behavior, shift of head direction, and certain verbal expressions like *you know*, *so* and *anyway* have been found in studies by Bernstein (1962) and Duncan (1972 & 1973).

TRPs are also used for advancing the topic through back-

channelling. The recipient encourages the speaker to continue by using "continuers" or "back-channels". These can, however, also be given earlier, before the turn-constructural unit is completed. Linell and Gustavsson (1987: 19) describe these units of talk as "sufficient information" (*tillräcklig information*). Since the criteria for transition-relevant points and turn constructional units in NS-NNS conversations are less clear, it is "sufficient information" the speakers seem to be looking for in their turn-taking system. Moreover, the notion of sufficient information is locally determined in the turn by turn collaboration by the speakers. This means that the goals of understanding are set in each situation with respect to the conditions of the context. Explicit understanding is more important in goal-oriented talk-in-interactions and in conversations between native speakers than in phatic talk and conversations with non-native speakers.

According to Sacks et al. (1974: 725), the turn-taking system is "locally managed" and "interactionally determined" which means that the allocation of turns operates on a turn-by-turn basis and that the interactants continuously cooperate in determining the length of turns and choosing the point of transfer. In order to achieve a coordinated action, the participants must display to each other the intelligibility of the events they are engaged in, including what activities are in progress and what they expect to happen next. When the speakers cannot design their talk with knowledge of what the other does and does not know, they cannot avoid potential ambiguity at points where their knowledge is not isomorphic (see e.g. Schegloff 1984: 50). In the present data the speakers' assumptions as to turn structure, however, differ to an extent that often impedes collaboration. When, for instance, the NSs cannot rely on their knowledge of conversations in general, they consider a turn to be completed and take the turn whenever there is a long pause notwithstanding the absence of any other signals of that the turn is ending. The NNS, however, often ignores the interruption and continues her/his turn which sometimes gives a strong impression of incoherence.

(10)

01	Mari	<i>ja (.) låna den min (.) lärare</i>	yes (.) borrowed it my (.) <u>teacher</u>
02		<i>(4)</i>	<i>(4)</i>
03		<i>där e mycke:</i>	there are much::
04	Staffan	<i>ja <u>just</u> de</i>	yes exactly
05	Mari	<i>många olika 'modell (.)</i>	many different <i>pattern</i> (.)
06		<i>men vet inte (.) ha (.)</i>	but don't know (.) have (.)
07		<i>e <u>att</u> (.) också (.) förkläde</i>	eh <u>that</u> (.) also (.) apron

The NNS has a long pause after the utterance on line 01 in which the last word receives both emphasis and the pitch peak. The NS interprets this as a transition cue, but there is a delay in his reaction and the NNS continues. The utterance on line 03 is said with soft voice in contrast to

the distinctively pronounced first one in which there is no fall in the intonation contour, which clearly indicates that the speaker is going to complete the utterance; however, the NS has already decided to react to the first transition relevance point with an affirmative that here sounds unmotivatedly engaged and strong. The impression of incoherence lies in the amount of engagement the recipient expresses even though the previous turn does not contain any elements that would demand a strong reaction. A response token like *mm* would have shown a less marked reaction here. As the example does not give a wider context, the involvement that Staffan expresses could be interpreted as an example of the exaggerated politeness that occurs in asymmetric conversations (Kalin & Leiwo 1990). As it happens, however, Staffan reacts as strongly as he does because he suddenly identifies the book as one he was given when he got married. This is an item of knowledge that is not available to the co-participant, and so the sequence remains incoherent.

In conversations featuring deviant language the criteria for transition-relevance points lack the grounds they normally rest on. In conversations featuring NS and NNS, both parties face problems in interpreting turn-constructural units. The NS has to reorganize the rules he has for his native language and adjust to the deviations that occur in syntax, intonation, and in both the length and location of pauses. The NNS has a more or less fragmentary knowledge of the grammar and the prosody in the language used. S/he has to make hypothetical assumptions combining generic rules of conversational behavior with her/his knowledge of the structure of the language used. Both interactants share the stress in such an encounter which, together with the absence of mutual knowledge, often leads to a less accurate perception of the co-participant's reactions. The speakers simply cannot rely on the assumptions they usually have regarding a conversation. Instead, they seem to look for compromises between the functional and technical criteria for turn-constructural units.

As became apparent in 3.3.1, CA researchers do not give exact definitions of turn. This is in accordance with the theory: conversations are locally managed and the participants negotiate for and interpret all the components in the conversation. Goodwin (1981: 19) claims that turn boundaries in conversations are mutable. Accordingly, a definition of turn as a static unit with fixed boundaries does not accurately describe its structure; rather, turn needs to be conceptualized as a time-bound process. In the present study it is impossible to draw a line between turn and non-turn with respect to response tokens. Speech rate and intonation are so strongly deviant that it is impossible to identify uniform criteria for turn boundaries that would allow an interpretation of out-of-turn expressions. In the present study all instances of vocal response that are located in clear slots and do not overlap the interlocutor's talk in the middle of a continuous turn are considered as turns.

In three whole conversations (C2, C4 and C5) and in parts of all the other conversations the speech rate is so slow and the grammar and the prosody so deviant that a "normal" turn-taking structure is difficult to find. Both the NS and the NNS contribute to slowing down the pace. The speech and reaction rate of the NNS is, self-evidently, the slowest, and this, together with the deviant utterance structure, leads to two main types of difficulties in interpreting turn-taking. Firstly, the NNS turns are often very short and torso-like. Sometimes, however, the NNS tries to produce a longer turn, but is "interrupted" by NS feedback, comments or questions as shown in Examples (9) and (11 & 12). Secondly, the lack of response that the NNS exhibits is either a means of expressing difficulties in understanding or prolonged preparation time for a reaction. Although the NSs are adjusted to the situation to some extent, they do not always have the patience to wait for the delayed NNS reactions.

The minimal responses in Example (11) and (12) on lines 10, 11, 18, and 23 could be analyzed as turns or as instances of in-turn back-channelling. Consequently, Mari's utterances on lines 05-09 & 12, 17 & 20, and 22 & 24 could be considered as three turns instead of six.

(11) [67]

01	Ville	<i>har du varit på arbete i da?</i>	have you been at work today?
02		(3)	(3)
→	Mari	<i>va säger du a-?</i>	what do you say th-?
04	Ville	<i>har du varit på arbete i da? (för)=</i>	have you been at work today? (cause)=
05	Mari	<i>=jå: varje da (1)</i>	=ye:s every day (1)
06		<i>vet inte nu (.) men (.) kanske i (.)</i>	don't know now (.) but (.) perhaps in (.)
07		<i>nu e tisdag (.) kanske i morron</i>	now is tuesday (.) perhaps tomorrow
08		<i>ja vill ta att e kan ja .h</i>	I want to take that eh if I can .h
09		<i>ofoortsättao där</i>	ocontinueo there
10	Ville	[[mm	[[mm
11	Staffan	[[mm	[[mm
12	Mari	<i>när ja e 'vikariat</i>	when I am substitute
13		(2)	(2)
14	Ville	[mm]	[mm]
15	Staffan	[aha]	[uhu]
16		(2)	(2)
17	Mari	<i>mycket jubbit</i>	very hard
18	Ville	<i>m</i>	m
19		(2)	(2)
20	Mari	<i>städa (.) åtta timmar varje dag</i>	to clean (.) eight hours every day
21	Staffan	<i>.h m du sliter</i>	.h m you work hard

The asymmetry in the turn-taking is continued as the conversation progresses. In the excerpt below, Example (12), Mari tries to explain where she works, but is not able to do it in a single turn. The long pause at the beginning of her turn signals her difficulties in expressing herself, and thus enables Staffan to take time and find a way to help her. The

structures of Mari's utterances are ungrammatical, and it is not quite clear what Mari refers to with *de e*, 'it is', and *också*, 'also', in the first unit, but she obviously wants to describe her place of work by listing the offices she cleans and giving the location of the building. The non-falling intonation of the first unit, however, makes it clear that she is going to continue. Staffan's emphatic *jaha* comes without a delay, although the syntactic form of the utterance does not offer an immediate interpretation in the context. From Staffan's point of view, it is a constructive reaction both to the difficulty exhibited by and content of Mari's turn, although it interrupts Mari's turn. As in many other instances, Mari seems to ignore the response: she simply continues her own turn.

(12) [67]

22 Mari	<i>.hjá: (2) de e också amucenter</i>	<i>.hyes: (2) it is also AMUcenter</i>
23 Staffan	<i>jaha:</i>	<i>uh<u>u</u></i>
24 Mari	<i>där e (.) stampen</i>	<i>there is stampen</i>
25 Ville	<i>.hja já</i>	<i>.hyes yes</i>
26 Staffan	<i>var e de</i>	<i>where is it</i>
27 Mari	<i>där e. (3) m:: (4) skrivmaskinkursen</i>	<i>there is. (3) m:: (4) a typewriting course</i>
28 Staffan	<i>jaa</i>	<i>yes</i>
29	<i>(4)</i>	<i>(4)</i>
30 Mari	<i>ell(er)</i>	<i>o[r]</i>
31 Staffan	<i>[har du] gått på</i>	<i>[have you] taken a</i>
32	<i>skrivmaskinkurs där</i>	<i>typewriting course there</i>
33 Mari	<i>nej ja städar där</i>	<i>no I clean there</i>
34 Staffan	<i>jaha. å dom har</i>	<i>uhu. and then have</i>
35	<i>en skrivmaskinskurs där?</i>	<i>a typewriting course there</i>
36 Mari	<i>jå där e (2)</i>	<i>yes there is (2)</i>
37	<i>var så god sitta nu</i>	<i>please take a seat now</i>

Mari, in fact, gives a three-part list which the recipients do not perceive as a list because of the long pauses and the recipients' reactions between them. The prosody in Mari's turns is so monotonous that it is difficult to interpret termination points. The prosody actually hints that the lines 22, 24, 27 and 30 construct one turn instead of four. Mari's conduct in other parts of this conversation and in other recorded conversations supports this interpretation.

4.2 Turn length

As suggested above there is no unanimous agreement as to the definition of turn and both the functional and the technical points of departures can be criticized. Looking at conversations that are deviant in certain respects

highlights the weaknesses of the available definitions. Turn length is affected by the choice of definition, as suggested above. The technical definition means that back-channelling or other short comments by the other speaker cut longer turns into pieces as seen in several examples in the study (e.g. Ex. (9) and (11)). On the other hand, a functional definition has its disadvantages in instances where the function is difficult to define but the next speaker's reaction shows that an utterance has been interpreted as a turn.

To define turn boundaries in an NS-NNS conversation is particularly problematic because the assessment of syntactical completeness and the meaning of intonational contours is complicated by many factors in the encounter. In the present data NNS talk contains the most syntactic and prosodic deviations but NS talk, too, is different from that usually found in NS-NS communication.

The asymmetric character of NS-NNS conversations is also manifest in inter-speaker differences as to turn content and function as well as turn length. NS turns contain more propositions, they initiate and close sequences, and they are mostly considerably longer than NNS turns. There are also differences in the speakers' interpretations of the length of their own and their interlocutor's turns.

Long turns are few in the present data. They consist of explanations or short narrations in sequences where the speakers exhibit an engagement with the topic either out of interest or because of a need to repair a breakdown in communication. Some data on turn length are given here in order to illustrate the overall structure of the conversations and the way in which the interactants actively participate in the conversations. The number of words has been chosen as the measure of turn length rather than the time used, because of the large amount of pauses both within and between the turns.

Turns that contain more than 20 words are here counted as long turns. Most of these are NS turns, but Mari and Rauni have a considerable amount of long turns compared with the other NNSs. Mari has 19 out of 32 long turns in conversation C2, and Rauni has 8 of the 11 long turns in the two short conversations C4 and C5 which have a combined duration of 39 minutes. The NSs accommodate their talk and in only few instances forget this role and take longer turns without splitting them up by comprehension checks. The proportion of long turns in all five conversations is less than two per cent.

A vast majority, two thirds, of the turns in the data contain only one utterance. This is partly due to the fact that the way turn is defined results in brief turns. In conversations C4 and C5, where back-channelling often overlaps the current speaker's talk, the short back-channel items are not counted as turns in contrast to the other three conversations where minimal responses mostly fall into clear slots within or after the current speaker's talk. Nonetheless the amount of one-utterance turns in these

conversations is as high as in the others.

As suggested above, it is often difficult to identify utterances in NNS turns because of their deviant language, which makes the quantitative data less reliable. The objective here in giving quantitative data about the conversations is only to give a very rough approximation of the structure. Minimal responses, which mostly account for the one-utterance turns, are used for a variety of functions (see Ch. 7). They all have in common that there is no explicit orientation forward; minimal responses do not advance the topic except indirectly when used or interpreted as encouragers or back-channelling. Even in such instances the topic is advanced slowly, as can be seen in Example (13).

(13)

01	Staffan	<i>har du många (1)</i>	have you got many
02		<i>som du ska köpa julklappar till?</i>	you buy christmas presents for?
03	Leo	<i>o₁ne_o</i>	<i>o₁no_o</i>
03		<i>(7)</i>	<i>(7)</i>
04	Staffan	<i>du har många å skriva julkort</i>	you have many to write christmas
05		<i>till i alla fall</i>	cards for anyway
06	Leo	<i>bara några</i>	only a few
07		<i>(4)</i>	<i>(4)</i>
08	Leo	<i>alla till finland</i>	all to finland
09	Staffan	<i>mm</i>	mm
10	Leo	<i>inte alla en (.) en till sverige</i>	not all one (.) <u>one</u> to sweden
11	Staffan	<i>mhm</i>	mhm
12	Leo	<i>#bara en#</i>	<i>#just one#</i>
13		<i>(4)</i>	<i>(4)</i>
14	Leo	<i>ja har (1) tänkt mycke att (1)</i>	I have (1) thought much that (1)
15		<i>va ska ja (1) köpa (1)</i>	what shall I (1) buy (1)
16		<i>till min systers dotter</i>	to my sister's daughter
17	Staffan	<i>jaa</i>	yes
18		<i>(2)</i>	<i>(2)</i>
19	Leo	<i>hon e nu (1) ett å å (.) halv år</i>	she is now (1) one and and (.) a half year
20	Staffan	<i>mm</i>	mm
21		<i>(10)</i>	<i>(10)</i>
22	Leo	<i>ja har tänkt att om ja (2)</i>	I have thought that if I (2)
23		<i>hittar nån (1) stor (2)</i>	find a (1) big (2)
24		<i>va e de nalle elle?</i>	what is it teddybear or?
25	Staffan	<i>jaa</i>	yes
26	Leo	<i>nånting annat (.) nästan samma</i>	something else (.) almost same
27	Staffan	<i>mm</i>	mm
28	Leo	<i>dom kostar jättemycke</i>	they cost a fortune
29	Staffan	<i>jaa# hhh</i>	yes# hhh
30		<i>(10)</i>	<i>(10)</i>

In this example the NNS has the floor while the NS gives encouragers. This is a typical distribution of roles in the conversations when the NNS is producing a narrative. The structure is similar when the situation is the other way round and the NS is narrating: there are long switching pauses

and the hearer responds with minimal feedback. However, the function of such pauses and cutting the propositional content into short pieces is to create an opportunity to check the hearer's understanding.

In a study of simulated Finnish business negotiations, Kangasharju (1991) reports very low occurrences of minimal responses: only 7.2 % and 9.4 %. The shortest negotiation (82 turns) did not contain any minimal responses. Of the 12 negotiators in her data only seven gave minimal responses. Hakulinen reports much higher occurrences of minimal responses in Finnish everyday conversations (Kangasharju 1991: 75). Also Green-Vänttinen (1993: 82), who has investigated encouragers in Swedish conversations in Helsinki, has found that the amount of encouragers varies greatly in different types of conversations. She claims that conversations with short turns contain less encouragers. Moreover, she found a difference between men and women in the use of encouragers. The women had 73,6 % and the men 26,2 % of all the encouragers in her data, which supports earlier studies of gender differences (see e.g. Nordenstam 1987).

The proportions of one-word turns in the present study vary between 30 % and 37 % of all turns in a conversation as shown in Table 4. The differences in the nature of the conversations can also be seen here. Of the newly arrived immigrants, Tarja is the least active in initiating and advancing the topic, which is also manifest in her high proportion of the minimal responses in conversation C3. Conversations C4 and C5 that Rauni participates in are, in spite of the deviant language, very smooth conversations in which all the interactants actively participate and generously give each other feedback, mostly in the form of back-channelling. There is evidence in other conversational data that the amount of minimal feedback is higher in more spontaneous conversations (Tiittula 1985: 59), whereas on the other hand the speakers in institutional conversations tend to avoid certain features that are common in informal conversations (Atkinson 1982: 112-114). This might explain the clear-cut difference between the proportions of minimal responses in the negotiations in Kangasharju's study and in the informal conversations in the present data.

TABLE 4 Proportions of one-word turns

	C1 Leo		C2 Mari		C3 Tarja		C4 Rauni		C5 Rauni	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
One-word turns	298	30	222	32	205	33	79	37	103	37
NNS one-word turns	143	15	75	11	125	20	29	14	42	15

The items counted as minimal responses in the present data are such as *m*, *mm*, *mhm*, *aha*, *a*, *aa* etc. (cf. Ch. 7). The meaning of these depends on the prosody used. Both *ja* and *nej* are included in the group, although, especially in the present data, they are less multifunctional and less ambiguous than the others.

All turns are relatively short and question-answer sequences are common, whereas narrative sequences are relatively rare. They consist of short turns irrespective of whether the narrator is the NNS or the NS. The amount of short turns in narratives by the NS depends on the extent to which the narrator is controlling understanding. The following example shows how a narrative is accomplished by an NNS, Leo.

(14)

01	Ville	<i>du kan berätta för staffan</i>	you can tell staffan
02		<i>hur de gick me (.) granen (1)</i>	what happened to (.) the spruce (1)
03		<i>hemma hos liisa (.)</i>	at liisa's (.)
04		<i>har du hört?</i>	have you heard?
05	Staffan	<i>#nej#</i>	#no#
06	Ville	<i>du kan berätta för honom</i>	you can tell him
07	Leo	<i>om julgran?</i>	about christmas tree?
08	Ville	<i>jåå (1)</i>	yes (1)
09		<i>va hände me den?</i>	what happened to it?
10	Leo	<i>ja #vi (1) vi lånade de (.)</i>	well #we (1) we borrowed it (.)
11		<i>kan man säga#</i>	you can say#
12	Staffan	<i>jasså</i>	oh uhu
13	Leo	<i>jå</i>	yes
14		<i>(5)</i>	(5)
15	Leo	<i>de va på (1) vi hämtade den (2)</i>	it was at (1) we brought it (2)
16		<i>åå (1) på kvällen</i>	well (1) at night
17	Staffan	<i>mm</i>	mm
18	Leo	<i>just direkt (.) innan vi kom dit (1)</i>	just direct (.) before we came there (1)
19		<i>de va mycke mörk(t)</i>	it was very dark
20	Staffan	<i>asså (.) d du tog dit den (.)</i>	uhu (.) y you took it there (.)
21		<i>till henne?</i>	to her?
22	Leo	<i>jåå</i>	yes
23	Staffan	<i>jaha: de visste inte ja</i>	oh I see I didn't know that
24	Leo	<i>ja nästan går över den (.)</i>	I almost walk over it (.)
25		<i>julgran (.) å ja såg (.)</i>	christmas tree (.) and I saw (.)
26		<i>va e de här (.)</i>	what is this (.)
27		<i>aha de e gran #</i>	oh it is a spruce #
28	Staffan	<i>#</i>	#
29	Leo	<i>de va mycke mörk</i>	it was very dark
30	Staffan	<i>var fick ni tag på den då?</i>	where did you get hold of it then?
31	Leo	<i>var?</i>	where?
32	Staffan	<i>jaa</i>	yes
33	Leo	<i>mm (1) nära tuve</i>	mm (1) near tuve
34	Staffan	<i>jaha</i>	uhu
35		<i>(4)</i>	(4)
36	Staffan	<i>ute i skogen?</i>	out in the woods?
37	Leo	<i>mm</i>	mm
38	Staffan	<i>jaha::</i>	uhu::

39	(12)	(12)
40	Staffan <i>står den e kvar hos liisa nu?</i>	is it still there at liisa's now?
41	Leo #	#
42	(5)	(5)
43	Leo <i>de va mycke (.) fin gran</i>	it was very (.) nice spruce
44	Staffan <i>ja de va de</i>	yes it was
45	Ville <i>jaa</i>	yes
46	(5)	(5)
47	Staffan <i>väl (1) proportionerad</i>	good (1) proportions
48	Ville <i>#mh# (1) jä</i>	#mh# (1) yes
49	(7)	(7)

The narrative is given in cooperation between NNS Leo and NS Staffan. BS Ville has given a frame for the story by inviting Leo to tell about the spruce. In four short turns Leo specifies the topic and offers a very general description of what happened: they took the Christmas tree home to her (Liisa) one dark evening. The intensity rises and the turn lengthens when he gives a dynamic description of the moment he found the tree (lines 24-27). Of NS Staffan's 14 turns, seven are minimal responses.

The special structure of NS-NNS conversations is due to several characteristics that have already been dealt with. One feature that gives an impression of discontinuous talk is the use of ambiguous expressions before a change of topic. The speakers and the analyst are left without confirmation of understanding of the previous turns because the sequences are not completed; they do not end in closure. There are studies showing that speakers experience dissatisfaction in interactions where assessing or confirming feedback is withheld (Severinson Eklundh 1983). The use of assessing or confirming feedback is a matter of politeness or engagement in the cooperative building up of an interaction. Its absence is interpreted in different ways depending on the speaker's status. If an NNS does not give confirming cooperative feedback, her/his behavior is interpreted as insufficient understanding, whereas an NS in similar circumstances is considered to exhibit a lack of interest and engagement, which is seen as face-threatening by the NNS.

4.3 Adjacency pairs and sequences

In normal conversations the speakers rely on the sequential implicativeness of a turn's talk (Schegloff & Sacks 1973: 296), which means that the current speaker can expect the next speaker to accomplish a relevant next action. This pattern has the status of a norm, which can be seen in the behavior of the speakers, for instance in contexts of adjacency pairs. If a question is not followed by an answer, the first speaker's next

turn will be a remark of some kind, whereas an expected reaction will be followed by a concluding confirmation or an adequate way of advancing the topic. Consequently, when expectations are met, turns are smoothly connected to each other both semantically and prosodically (which sometimes causes problems of defining turn boundaries). Bakhtin and Volosinov's theory of dialogism stresses the same properties of verbal interaction: each turn is a response to an earlier one and projects a response in the next turn (Volosinov 1973: 95). Turns can also be linked to each other without immediately following each other.

The concept of the adjacency pair is of central importance in the ethnomethodological model of conversation. The term was introduced by Emanuel Schegloff and Harvey Sacks (1973) as one way to discuss paired actions. An adjacency pair is a sequence of two communicative actions that often occur adjacent to each other and are produced by different speakers. They are sequentially ordered so that one action is a "first pair part" and the other a "second pair part". They are further categorized so that any given first pair part must be followed by a certain type of second pair part, for example, a greeting is followed by a greeting and an offer by acceptance or rejection.

The central position of the adjacency pair is also stressed by Heritage (1984b: 253) when he claims that the methodology of ethnomethodological conversation analysis is best revealed in the study of adjacency pairs: the form in which they are analyzed is repeated in the analysis of more complex and nuanced conversational activities. Each action is analyzed as projecting the production of a relevant next action by another speaker. The adjacency pair structure is a normative but not determinative framework for actions, and is accountably implemented. This means that it is a structural organization to which the speakers orient themselves and which shapes their expectation that a relevant action will follow the first pair part.

A sequence is a unit of at least two turns by different speakers in which the speakers reach a conversational outcome. The turns that constitute a sequence have a referential relationship or they form a coherent whole in some other way. Adjacency pairs are the smallest sequences, but the most common type in ordinary conversations is the three-part sequence. These are formed of a first pair part, a second pair part and a third turn that has the function of ratifying and sometimes assessing or correcting the understanding expressed in the second pair part. The following example illustrates sequences in the present data.

(15)

01	Olle	<i>mm (.)</i>	<i>mm (.)</i>
02		<i>du har träffat dom nu ja</i>	you have met them now haven't you
03		<i>du va till (.) finland</i>	you were in (.) finland

04	Tarja	åå	yes
→	Olle	mm (.)	mm (.)
06		berätta om resan - - -	tell me about the trip - - -

Example (15) is very torso-like but it is given here as a typical example of a three-part sequence in the investigated data. Second pair parts that consist of minimal response only are very common. The interactional information and the degree of confirming is expressed by intonation and paralinguistic means. In this case the understanding exhibited in the second pair part (line 04) is obvious and it is confirmed by the first speaker in the third turn with a minimal response mumble. The example also illustrates the chain character of the turn structure. The beginning of Olle's first turn is a response, a third turn ratification, in the previous sequence. After a short pause he continues with a question that initiates a new sequence. The question is answered with minimal feedback and the understanding exhibited by Tarja is then confirmed by Olle with minimal feedback in the third turn of the sequence. The remaining part of the third turn again initiates a new sequence which, in this case, is a close continuation of the former one.

The third turn assessment can also be less direct and explicit. In many cases when the understanding exhibited in the second turn is accepted by the first speaker, s/he goes on developing the topic without any comment on the second turn.

(16)

01		(5)	(5)
02	Olle	<i>ni va inte ti kyrkan</i>	you did not go to church
03		<i>på julottan? [#]</i>	christmas morning [#]
03	Tarja	[#ne#]	[#no#]
04	Olle	<i>gör man de i finland?</i>	do people do that in finland?
05	Tarja	<i>jå: dom gamla gör de</i>	ye:s the old ones do that
06		(5)	(5)

Olle agrees with Tarja's answer but he does not display agreement by repeating the negative feedback word. Instead, he advances the topic by expanding the scope of the question from Tarja's family to Finnish people in general.

A conversation mostly advances in sequences of three turns, as opposed to interviews (Sinclair & Coulthard 1975; Heritage 1985). A speaker initiates (which also is a projection of an earlier turn) by saying something that the interlocutor responds to. The second pair part indicates if and how the interlocutor has understood what the first speaker said. In the third turn the first speaker gives his assessment of the understanding expressed by the interlocutor. Thus the third turn constitutes the often needed feedback to the second pair part and has in

many cases the joint function of evaluation and termination (Severinson Eklundh & Linell 1983: 294).

There are, however, circumstances in which the third turn can be omitted. This is often the case in interviews and interrogations. The present data exhibit some of the features of institutional discourse and interviews, which partly explains the relatively frequent occurrences of two-part structures without the final feedback. Many of these instances give an impression of an unfinished act because there is no closure. Because the atmosphere of the conversations is friendly, this contributes to the impression of ambiguity. In ordinary everyday conversations, providing feedback is interpreted as a matter of politeness.

Longer sequences can often be divided into smaller relatively independent sequences, such as presequences and insertion sequences. Presequences are used for preparing both the listener and the speaker for the actual sequence, especially in cases where the reaction is going to be dispreferred. "Preferred" and "dispreferred" do not have to do with the ordinary meaning of individual motivations and desires but with structural primacy and with the response being typical or expected.

In conversations between equals the participants' behavior shows that they know the structure of the preference system (mostly unconsciously) but in the present data there are instances where the speakers exhibit behavioral uncertainty. The structural organization of the preference system is disturbed because of the asymmetric character of conversations between native and non-native speakers. The speakers lack mutual knowledge and have both grammatical and pragmatic difficulties in producing and interpreting actions. This means that the preference system is partly or entirely out of use in very asymmetric conversations, though the native speaker sometimes relies on the knowledge he has of the preference system in interpreting actions by the interlocutor. Therefore some pauses can be interpreted as delayed starts and consequently as dispreferred second pair parts.

In conversations that are asymmetric in regard to the cultural background and the linguistic proficiency of the speakers, the utterances are often related to each other in a less transparent way. This imposes extra strain on the speakers in the interaction. When the interactants have different assumptions about the context, the speaker cannot predict how her/his interlocutor is going to react and the latter does not know which utterance or other contextual factor the current utterance is supposed to be linked to. This gives the conversation a discontinuous character, although it may be that one of the speakers finds it coherent.

The present conversations have many similarities with ethnographic interviews. The information the researchers are looking for is the language proficiency of the informants, and they do this by interviewing the informants about their daily life and about some special areas of their life experience. The reason for using interviews as means of eliciting

language is the asymmetry in language proficiencies of the participants. An interview is, however, also a conversation where both parties contribute to the content and the structure of the interaction. This aspect of two-way information-transfer has been highlighted by Pinxten (1991) in a discussion of ethnographic interviews.

4.4 Pauses

Pauses are a natural part of a conversation. They do not occur randomly but have an interactive function both within a turn and between turns. They are a part of the rhythmical structure of the conversation. Pauses are mostly defined as silences, but there is also a disagreement about their definition in the literature. Is there a continuum from silence to "proper" speech or should various vocalizations like *ehm* be counted as speech as opposed to pauses (Uhmann 1992: 305)? In the present study only silence has been considered as pause.

Within-turn silence is usually called a hesitation pause, and the silence between turns a switching pause (McLaughlin 1984: 111). Sacks et al. (1974: 706) use the term transition space for the time interval during which the transition from current to next speaker is accomplished. The criterion for distinguishing between the two types of pauses is that the former is bound by the current speaker on either side while the latter is bound by the talk of different speakers. This criterion has been used in the present study in accordance with the technical definition of the turn but there are several instances that could, in fact, be interpreted in another way. The NNS often speaks so slowly and has such long hesitation pauses that the NS either fills the gaps with encouragers (which are interpreted as turns according to the technical definition of turn in the present analysis but not by the speakers) or with longer utterances, which interrupt the semantic or syntactic whole the NNS is about to produce.

The duration of the pause cannot be used to distinguish between hesitation pauses and switching pauses. Both the hesitation pauses and switching times reported in the literature to be around 0.5 seconds. Hakulinen (1989) and Tiittula (1985) have investigated Finnish conversations and found considerably higher means for pauses, but the most occurrences are shorter than 0.5 seconds.

The pauses in the present data seem to be longer than those reported in the literature, although there are also short pauses both within turns and between them. The within-turn pauses tend to be shorter, the vast majority around 0.5 seconds (noted as (.) in the transcripts), but pauses of 5 seconds also occur within a turn. Most switching pauses are around or less than one second. Only pauses of more than one second are

noted with numbers in the transcripts.

Earlier studies offer some explanations for the variation in the duration of a switching pause. Children tend to have longer switching pauses than adults. The pauses in telephone calls are shorter than those in face-to-face communication where the amount of transition cues is larger and therefore a longer monitoring time is needed. The properties of the second pair part also influence the duration of switching time. Garvey and Berninger (1981) report longer times tied to the higher variability and complexity of the second pair parts. Similarly, a response is usually delayed when it is dispreferred, e.g. rejection of an offer (Heritage 1984b).

There is evidence in the literature that both the number and duration of pauses is a decisive cue to the perception of the speech rate. It is not unproblematic to judge which is more important. Speech rates vary across cultures and ethnic groups, and it has also been found to have speaker-independent contextualisation functions (Uhmann 1992: 304-305) as we can see, for instance, in Example (9) in which Leo, Staffan and Ville discuss cars.

The ability to tolerate pauses varies in different cultures. Swedes seem to tolerate pauses better than Americans (see e.g. Arnstberg 1988: Daun 1989: McLaughlin & Cody 1982). Finns have been found to tolerate even longer pauses (Lehtonen & Sajavaara 1985). It is reasonable to assume that the tolerance of pauses will be even higher in a Swedish-Finnish encounter where a language learner is a "guest of honor" and s/he is actually offered to have the floor most of the time. However, long pauses are normally interpreted as exhibiting a low degree of social skill. McLaughlin and Cody (1982) selected 3 seconds as an "awkwardness limen" and found that speakers in 30-minute dyads considered their partners as less competent if there were three or more lapses of longer than 3 seconds. In NNS-NS communication, although the NS is aware of the restrictions in the language skill of the NNS, lapses are often interpreted according to the criteria used in NS encounters, and the deviant behavior thus interpreted as the result of a lack of social skill.

The present data reinforces the view that silence is an interactive phenomenon, and not attributable solely to either speaker or hearer. In many cases it is difficult to decide if a long pause is due to the hearer's problems in preparing a response or the speaker's way of making heavy demands on the next speaker instead of continuing to take the floor. Both these aspects are central in interpreting the behavior of the speakers in an asymmetric conversation. There are also extra-conversational factors to consider, such as the speaker's ability or willingness to communicate as well as her/his familiarity with the topics.

Pauses also remind of the weakness of the data: the fact that the conversations are only audiorecorded. During pauses the interlocutors may be reacting non-verbally and so lead the first speaker to the inter-

pretation s/he displays in her/his next turn. In doing the analyses I have had access to information about the participants' nonverbal behavior in similar encounters. All the speakers in the present data have also been videorecorded in other communication situations which for various reasons could not be used in this study. Both these recordings and the personal contact I have had with the informants suggest that the nonverbal cues given by the NNS during lapses are ambiguous and difficult to interpret. For example, the NNSs display facial expressions that express strain, but their expressions can also be interpreted as insecure questioning or a request for help. The NNSs in the data concentrate heavily on the task of keeping the conversation going both through interpreting and producing messages. This effort often becomes the most salient feature of their conduct and it expresses the fact that they do not have time or energy for metacommunication. The interlocutor can interpret the strain in their facial expressions either as a sign of concentrating on the interpretation of the previous turn or planning a response. This is not only a problem for the NNSs, but the NSs in the data are also forced to concentrate heavily on producing and interpreting utterances, which leads to pauses that are not easy to interpret.

It can, however, be argued that an analysis of only the verbal actions around the lapses, although deficient, clearly reveals some of the essential features of the conversations. This does not mean underestimating the importance of the nonverbal part of the communication. Rather, the data were selected despite this shortcoming because the conversations show other qualities that are very valuable for research on talk-in-interaction. Consequently, it can be necessary to compromise and ignore all the non-audible contextual information. This reservation and speculations about the nonverbal behavior will not be repeated in the analyses in the present study unless there are special reasons for it. Thus the point of departure for all the analyses is in the verbal actions and audible contextual cues only.

5 NEGOTIATING FOR UNDERSTANDING: LACK OF RESPONSE INTERPRETED AS REPAIR INITIATION

5.1 Lack of response

As already noted in Chapter 4 a speaker in a conversation is, in principle, entitled to a turn lasting up to one turn-constructive unit. Each possible completion of such a unit, which can be a sentence, a phrase or a lexical unit, constitutes a potential transition-relevance place. At these points a change of speaker can occur, but the current speaker can also continue. The transition is locally managed by the participants within the frame of norms and expectations they have about conversational behavior. The speaker has an obligation to yield to the next speaker if the latter starts a new turn at a transition-relevance point. Alternatively, if selected at such a point, the interlocutor is obliged to take the turn. It may, however, happen that the selected next speaker does not take the turn offered so obliging the first speaker to continue. This may happen without any problems, but there are instances where the first speaker may also show that the second speaker has not behaved as expected. In the present study, these instances are called lack of response or failure to respond. This chapter focuses on breaches of this type and the speakers' conduct before and after them.

The reasons for lack of response are various in a normal conversation, but the most probable interpretations are non-hearing, misunderstanding or deliberate avoidance. In conversations with an NNS, problems of understanding constitute a plausible explanation for instances where the second speaker does not take the turn at a transition-relevance point although the first speaker has signalled that s/he has completed

her/his turn. In some instances this is obvious, for example, when the first speaker continues after a short pause but, instead of developing the topic, repeats or reformulates what he has said in the previous unit. In such cases the conduct of the second speaker during the pause is seen as failure to respond. The most unambiguous instances are those where the turn-constructural unit is a question or a solicitation that has a high degree of sequential implicativeness.

Conversations vary as to the strength of the obligation to take the turn. In a dyad there is a strong pressure on the members to participate in a way that keeps the group together (Bales & Borgatta 1965: 502). In a dyadic conversation it is very difficult not to take the turn when it is explicitly offered, whereas in a group conversation turn-taking is more varied and lack of response could be interpreted in various ways. For instance, the selected participant may accomplish a relevant action by turning to a third participant and so avoid responding to the first speaker. Even in a dyad, lack of response can occur without being face-threatening if the utterance is not an explicit question or solicitation but a statement which has a lesser degree of sequential implicativeness and the listener can reasonably expect the current speaker to continue. Although the fragments analyzed in the present study are mostly dyadic, the expectations about taking the turn are not always the same as in 'normal' conversations. The speakers are aware of the asymmetry of the language proficiencies between them, and failure to respond is not seen as very face-threatening. As a matter of fact, the NNS is actually expected to exhibit low proficiency, and this affects the conduct of both speakers. The NSs tolerate breaches from their NS norms and the NNSs do not need to avoid displaying their inability to use L2.

In negotiating about the transition the recipient is always allowed time to prepare her/his response (see e.g. McLaughlin, 1984: 112). The length of this transition time is determined by the particular circumstances of the interaction but the speakers nonetheless have an idea of its reasonable limits. When no switch occurs the current speaker still has time to retake the floor (Sacks & Schegloff & Jefferson 1974: 704). This means that pauses of considerable length occur naturally in all conversations. When pauses at transition relevance points, however, exceed 3 seconds, especially in focused dyadic conversations, they are often called lapses (Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson 1974: 714; McLaughlin 1984: 115). Jefferson (1984), however, argues that pauses of more than one second are long in a normal conversation. McLaughlin and Gody (1982) have found an "awkwardness limen" of 3 seconds in their study of pauses in conversation. The limen may be culture-specific. Both Finns and Swedes are said to tolerate silence more than e.g. Anglo-Americans (Daun 1989; Daun & Ehn 1988; Lehtonen & Sajavaara 1985).

The present data suggest that pauses are interpreted differently in conversations with an NNS with low language proficiency. The speakers

become uncertain of the limits of transition times. To identify lack of response is not easy in NS-NNS conversations because of the special character of the discourse. The overall pace in such conversations is slow, but that does not mean that all pauses are automatically and systematically prolonged. Words are mostly pronounced slowly and distinctively, there are pauses within utterances and the pauses between utterances may be long. On most occasions the time offered is adjusted to the overall slower speech rate, which then means long turn-allocating pauses. The transition time can, however, also be very short in instances when the NS is speaking and, anticipating difficulties, does not wait for any reaction but rushes into a paraphrase or giving further information (see e.g. Ex. 39).

Furthermore, the talk-silence structure of conversations is always in a complex way influenced by the situation and the speakers. The conversations in the present data are a part of a task the speakers are committed to since they have joined the project either as researchers or as informants. As mentioned before, the episodes analyzed are mostly dyads with time limits set before the encounter and without the presence of distracting elements. These aspects of the situation might lead the participants to make more effort to keep the conversation going than they otherwise would. On the other hand breaches occur, since, in these conversations, being non-native or having a non-native interlocutor is a valuable point of departure, and all the strategies of communication, such as long waiting and repairing times, are more acceptable than in situations where native-like language behavior is expected.

In the present study the starting point in describing lack of response is not the exact physical length of pauses but the interlocutor's reaction which indicates that a breach has occurred. Such breaches are either factual instances of non-understanding or cases interpreted by the interlocutor as such.

In the following sections, I shall present a description of the participants' behavior in fragments where the first speaker has to continue and undertake repairs after a longer lapse. Although both the difficulties and the repairs are jointly produced, the speakers have different roles when they occur. Firstly, 5.2 addresses instances where the first speaker reaction constitutes a border line case between clear-cut repairs and joint production that is slow for other reasons, thus the lapses cannot always be labeled as failures to respond. Secondly, 5.3 describes efforts to negotiate for understanding in instances where the lack of response initiates a repair. Thirdly, 5.4 deals with instances where the first speaker initiates a self-repair, but this complicates the situation and a lack of response follows. After this lapse the repair is resumed.

5.2 Borderline cases

According to Schegloff et al. (1977) the initiation of a repair is either a verbal or a nonverbal action. I shall argue that the present data exhibits still another way of accomplishing repair initiation, which is lack of reaction or silence. The lapses in these instances are so long and the new start by the first speaker is so unambiguously a reaction to the lapse that the lapses are interpreted as repair initiations. Thus these instances can, in Schegloff's terms, be designated other-initiated self-repairs. Consequently, the lapses can be called next-turn repair initiations, NTRI (Schegloff 1992b: 1318).

Lack of response occurs in some instances where first speaker turns seemingly have a clear propositional content and an unambiguous message but the second speaker has difficulties in comprehending primarily because of her/his own language problems. The difficulty is interpreted as a problem of comprehending either lexical units or the sequential implication of an utterance. Yet, a narrower look at the trouble fragments shows that the trouble source is more complicated and mostly interactional.

In the following example the lapses are not long, but the first speaker's reactions follow typical patterns of indicating that the recipient's reaction has not been what the first speaker expected. In this example the "active" role of silence is not unambiguous. The first speaker's reaction can be interpreted as self-initiation as is often the case when a delay is interpreted as a dispreferred second (Heritage 1984b: 273).

(17) [77]

The conversation began with Olle, Tarja and Anna briefly discussing Christmas and Tarja's trip to Finland. The immediately preceding topic was going to church at Christmas and Tarja's attitudes to the church. The previous sequence was clearly closed by a formulation by Tarja and minimal response by Olle that also initiates the first turn in the following sequence.

01	Olle	<i>mm (1)</i>	mm (1)
02		<i>nu får ja fråga (.)</i>	now can I ask (.)
03		<i>när du var liten (.) å va hemma (.)</i>	when you were little (.) and at home (.)
04		<i>hur firade ni jul <u>då</u>?</i>	how did you celebrate christmas <u>then</u> ?
05		<i>(1)</i>	(1)
→		<i>u/ undrar om de e samma som</i>	w/ wonder if it is the same as
07		<i>i sverige (.)</i>	in sweden (.)
08		<i>va gjorde ni</i>	what did you do
09	Tarja	<i>m::</i>	m::
10		<i>(2)</i>	(2)
11	Olle	<i>gjorde mamma nåt speciellt?</i>	did mum make something special
12	Tarja	<i>maten å #</i>	the food and #
13	Olle	<i>va?</i>	what?
14	Tarja	<i>vi hade julmaten</i>	we had the christmas food

Olle prefaces his talk in two parts. First he informs Tarja what kind of action is going to follow. The first statement is a "preliminary to preliminaries" (Schegloff 1980) which projects the action type. This is a common feature in advancing the topic. For instance, speakers use a question in order to preface another question: "Can I ask you a question?" (Schegloff 1982: 76). After the metacommunicative account of his next action, Olle also prepares the context for the question he is going to present. This second part of the pre is also divided in two smaller parts. Olle's speech rate is slow and he makes distinct pauses between the utterances so that his efforts in giving the contextual information needed for understanding the question are optimal. The question is also uttered very slowly and clearly with emphasis on the temporal adverb that refers to the time that has been so explicitly described in the prefatory part.

Tarja's failure to respond immediately after the question illustrates the preference structure of the question-answer adjacency pair. The preferred, expected, reaction should come without a delay, whereas a delay always signals a problem. There is a pause of more than one second. This kind of silence can also be interpreted either as a sign of arrogant ignorance, which is improbable in a friendly and cooperative conversation, or that the answer is going to be a dispreferred one. A response can be labeled dispreferred when the speaker obtains a negative response where an affirmative one is expected or where the answer indicates that there is something problematic in the first pair part. The first speaker usually reacts in instances like this by modifying or revising the content of his turn (Heritage 1984b: 274). Olle does not find his question indelicate or inappropriate and thus needing revision so he explains why he is asking and displays the perspective he has for his question. After this he repeats the question with a simplified reformulation *va gjorde ni*, 'what did you do', and thus reminds Tarja of the sequential implication of the turn.

Tarja once more fails to give an answer at this point. It is reasonable to assume that the question is so general that starting to answer it takes time. The minimal response Tarja gives here can be interpreted as a turn holder. Acknowledgement tokens are often used to display plans to take the turn (Schegloff 1982). Olle is either giving Tarja time to prepare her response or he is attempting to facilitate understanding by dividing the propositional content of the utterance into smaller components. He starts by asking what mother did and then goes on asking about the Christmas dinner, the Christmas tree, and so on. These actions both clarify the original question and suggest what kind of answers are expected. This is one of the collaborative ways of constructing answers that speakers use in conversations between equals but especially in teacher talk and caretakers' talk to small children.

Olle has a comprehension problem after Tarja's short turn *maten å #*, which prosodically sounds like a beginning of a longer turn, but except

for the laughter, leads to no continuation. Olle thinks that he has missed the end of the turn and requests clarification. The clarification is rather a more precise formulation of *maten*, 'food' or 'dinner'. After the clarification, Tarja starts describing what her family used to do at Christmas. The roles of the speakers are switched here: she offers two rudimentary descriptions in short turns, each of which is followed by minimal feedback by Olle. After this the role structure transforms into that common to all the conversations in the data: Olle, the NS, asks the questions and Tarja, the NNS, gives one-utterance answers.

Not all lapses are interpreted as problems of understanding. Similar instances can be interpreted and reacted to in different ways on the basis of differences in the preceding and current actions of the interlocutor. This was illustrated by Example (15) where Olle interpreted pauses as non-understanding and made efforts to resolve the problem. When the dialogue then progresses around the topic 'Christmas in Finland when Tarja was a child', Olle does not get worried when pauses occur but gives Tarja the time she needs for producing her next action, as can be seen in the following example.

(18)

Olle and Tarja continue discussing Christmas habits in Tarja's childhood. Tarja has in four short turns related how her mother made the Christmas dinner, her father was Santa Claus and everybody got many Christmas presents.

01	Olle	<i>va gjorde mamma för julmat?</i>	what kind of christmas food did mum make
02		(5)	(5)
03	Tarja	<i>de va olika men (.)</i>	it was various but (.)
04		<i>de e (.) skinkan (...) å</i>	it is (.) the pork (...) an
05		(3)	(3)
06	Tarja	<i>de va potatis å</i>	it was potatoes and

In this example Olle's cooperativeness is exhibited. He continues the conversation after Tarja's minimal narratives by using the word *julmat*, 'Christmas food', which Tarja introduced in the previous sequence. In doing this Olle goes back to the previous sequence where Tarja had created expectations by using the particle *och*, 'and', which normally at the end of an utterance points forward and may implicate continuation, whereas it refers backwards and means nextness when used in the beginning of a turn, especially in questions (Sorjonen & Heritage 1991). The NNSs seem to use *och* or *å* as a compensatory strategy similar to the way they use generalisations and extreme lexical simplifications such as *all kinds of*, *always* or *often* when lacking more accurate means of expressing what they intended to say (see e.g. Faerch & Kasper 1983b and Kalin & Leiwo 1990).

The two Examples (15 & 16) pinpoint the already mentioned weakness of the data: the fact that the conversations are only audiorecorded. The analysis lacks all the non-audible contextual information, which makes the interpretations of many instances problematic and weakens the reliability of the analysis. The analysis is based on audible behavior, which mostly gives all the needed hints, but the lack of visual information is particularly aggravating during the pauses. It is both the speakers' non-verbal behavior and things that happen in the local context that we miss.

Lack of response often leads to a behavior that does not have a clear repair character although the hearer fails to contribute to the advancing of the conversation. Examples (17) and (18) are taken from the end of a sequence in which Staffan and Leo are discussing the Swedish system of employee investment funds. Staffan tries to finish off the sequence, but he has to do it alone. Leo's withdrawal is a breach of seeing the conversation as a joint achievement and displays non-engagement. Gass and Varonis (1991: 121-122) divide non-engagement into non-communication and communication break-off. Leo does not completely avoid the encounter: he does not leave the room and he possibly displays cooperation through gaze and gestures. He, however, performs a break-off by terminating the interaction in silence. This could be analyzed as a weakness or breach in the participation framework that should be a collaborative achievement by the participants (Goffman 1981: 141). There are, however, no signs of disturbance, except the pauses, in Staffan's conduct. Staffan's talk and Leo's silence display the roles the speakers have assumed in the conversations they have had together during the past year: the asymmetry in the access to knowledge in general has given Staffan an expert role even in private conversations with Leo. He does not expect Leo to cooperate in finishing the topic although there are several transition-relevance points in his turn with pitch fall and long transition times where Leo could take the turn for a third position ratification and contribute to the closing of the sequence. Finally, Staffan abandons the topic and selects a new one with local reference.

(19)

Staffan and Leo have been discussing the Swedish system of employee investment funds. In the beginning of the episode there was a repair sequence evoked by Leo's problem in understanding the Swedish word for employee investment fund (Ex. 82 ab). The following are the closing turns of the episode.

01	(7)	(7)
02	Staffan <i>ja de va en väldi debatt ett tag</i> (.)	yeah there was an enormous amount of discussion for a while (.)
03	<i>väldit intensiv debatt ett tag</i>	a very intense discussion for a while
04	<i>men nu</i> (.) <i>e de in!</i> (1)	but now (.) there is no/ (1)
05	<i>inte så</i> (.) <i>mycke prat om</i> (1)	not so (.) much talk about (1)
06	<i>löntagarfonderna</i>	employee investment funds

07	(2)	(2)
→	<i>mm</i>	mm
09	(4)	(4)
→ Staffan	((clears throat))	((clears throat))
11	(4)	(4)
→ Staffan	<i>jaa</i>	yeah
13	(3)	(3)
14 Staffan	<i>de e så skönt å sitta i den här</i>	it is so good sitting in this
15	<i>fätöljen så ja blir allde/</i>	chair that I get quite/
16	<i>ja blir lite sömni #</i>	I get a little drowsy #
17	(6)	(6)

When Leo does not take the turn for a confirming response after Staffan's feedback (lines 02-06) to the previous turn, Staffan actually takes Leo's role of feedback giver and confirms his own understanding with *mm*, which at the same time is an attempt to close the topic. Staffan's *mm* also has the function of keeping the conversation going. After the long pause that follows, Staffan again has a minimal turn or an attempt to start a turn through clearing his throat. This shows that he is about to take the obligation to continue in a situation where the other participant does not take the turn at a transition relevance point. The conversation is ebbing away. Staffan, however, takes the turn again and ratifies both the silence and the earlier turns with an acknowledgement token. The structure is common: closing the topic is often done with acknowledgement tokens, but normally it is done jointly by both participants (Hakulinen 1992). Staffan's behavior here resembles the way e.g. a mother communicates with a baby: she performs both the speaker's and the recipient's obligations (see e.g. Snow 1977; Junefelt 1991).

Staffan's reaction to the silence towards the end of the sequence (lines 14-16) illustrates the two features of the structure of a conversation. Firstly, he finds a local reference when the conversation is fading (Bergmann 1990: 211). Secondly, the turn is an attempt to account for the fading of the conversation. Although Staffan is the only person talking by the end of the sequence, he gives an explanation or apology for the inefficient progress of the talk. This turn highlights the institutional roles of the speakers which are held back most of the time: Staffan is the researcher who was responsible for arranging this visit to Leo. Similarly, data on talk-in-interaction in cooperatively oriented processes within juridical or medical encounters confirm that the asymmetry of the roles is reinforced during the process (see e.g. Jönsson 1988). For instance, a patient very seldom expresses mistrust in the doctor's diagnosis even when it is not in agreement with her own knowledge and expectations (see e.g. Heath 1992 & Maynard 1992).

5.3 Reformulation as a reaction to the lack of response

Studies of communication between NS and NNS suggest of that NSs accommodate their speech when talking to NNSs in order to make it more comprehensible. The studies have focussed on establishing and identifying the linguistic changes made by NSs (see e.g. Chaudron 1983, 1985, 1986 & 1987; Long 1983ab; Gass & Varonis 1985; Perdue 1982; Varonis & Gass 1985; Snow et al. 1981). For NS talk in interaction between NS and NNS a specific term has also been coined: Foreigner Talk (Ferguson 1971: 143). On the other hand, some researchers have seen the native speaker accommodation to nonfluent speakers as only part of a continuum. They suggest that all speakers continually adjust their speech to their interlocutor in order to make it more comprehensible (see e.g. Giles & Smith 1979).

A common means in accommodation is to repeat or rephrase utterances and thereby give the recipient more data for interpretation. The speakers in the present data do not repeat utterances or parts of them verbatim as a reaction to lack of response. Rather, they present reformulations in different ways. This may be a part of the individual style of the speaker, a way of holding the floor, or a means for keeping the conversation going, but it can also be used as an attempt to clarify what has been said in instances where the speaker suspects that s/he has not been understood. The relatively unvarying prosody of the turns supports the latter interpretation: the speakers in the data only do what is absolutely necessary to keep a friendly conversation going and do not express their emotions or use other expressive rhetorical means. In this aspect the institutional character of the conversations becomes visible. In an institutional setting the speakers mostly confine themselves to a minimum of devices for personal expression (Drew & Heritage 1992; Linell 1990).

A reformulation is often used as a means of repair when the speaker has problems in finding an adequate form of expression. In a similar way, the speaker uses reformulations when the next speaker fails to react in the way the first speaker expects. These are, in fact, two sides of the goal of mutual understanding. The aim of reformulation is to find a new expression closer to the recipient's interpretation of the context and thus make it easier to understand. The fact that speech situations are always highly intricate and that the recipient's reactions and expectations put a severe strain on the speaker make the implementation of the reformulation very difficult. Furthermore, the speaker may lack knowledge of the recipient's resources, as is often the case in NS-NNS conversations. These problems sometimes result in a discourse so convoluted that it does not facilitate the recipient's chances of understanding.

I shall begin dealing with reformulations by the following example

which illustrates the variation in both speaker and recipient reactions in an intricate trouble sequence. The speaker interprets the difficulty to lie in the comprehension of linguistic units. He makes several reformulations to repair the turn on line 07 which the recipient does not respond to. The recipient reacts with silence after all the contributions by the speaker, but also combines this with more explicit indications of problems of understanding.

(20) [9, 34, 74, 97]

The episode is preceded by a negotiation about serving tea or coffee (Ex. 45) and a 12-second pause that is noted in the beginning of the transcript. Mari is preparing tea in the kitchen when Ville initiates the following episode about the background music.

01		(12)((Mari goes to the kitchen))	(12) ((Mari goes to the kitchen))
02	Ville	<i>va e den där musiken som (1)</i>	what's this music that (1)
03		<i>hörs?</i>	sounds
04	Mari	<i>aha (.) de e (4) de e kristen musik</i>	uhu (.) it is (4) it is christian music
05	Ville	<i>aha</i>	uhu
06		<i>(4)</i>	<i>(4)</i>
07	Ville	<i>e de nån (.) känd sångare</i>	is it a (.) well-known singer
08		<i>(3)</i>	<i>(3)</i>
09	Mari	<i>va säger du att?</i>	what do you say that?
→	Ville	<i>e de nån (.) sångare som ja (.)</i>	is it a (.) singer that I (.)
11		<i>själv borde (1) känna till.</i>	myself should (1) know.
12		<i>(4)</i>	<i>(4)</i>
→	Ville	<i>ja känner int igen den där</i>	I don't recognize that
14		<i>rösten (1)</i>	voice (1)
→		<i>ja vet inte vem som (1) sjunger</i>	I don't know who (1) is singing
16		<i>(4)</i>	<i>(4)</i>
17	Mari	<i>menar du att du känner inte,</i>	do you mean that you know not.,
18		<i>(1)</i>	<i>(1)</i>
→	Ville	<i>(nå) ja vet inte vem som sjunger.</i>	(no) I don't know who is singing.
20		<i>(3)</i>	<i>(3)</i>
→	Ville	<i>e de nån (.) känd (.) (s) finsk?</i>	is it someone (.) well-known (.) (s) finnish
22		<i>(1)</i>	<i>(1)</i>
23	Mari	<i>finsk (.) vet inte heller att</i>	finnish (.) don't know either that
24		<i>e vilken heter hon/ han</i>	eh which is she/ he called
25		<i>(4)</i>	<i>(4)</i>
26	Mari	<i>kanske 'sekera</i>	perhaps 'sekera
27	Ville	<i>se kera aha:: (se)</i>	se kera uhu:: (se)
28		<i>(7)</i>	<i>(7)</i>
29	Ville	<i>det e lu lugnande musik #</i>	it is pea peaceful music #
30	Mari	<i>jå::</i>	yea::h
31		<i>(8)</i>	<i>(8)</i>

The four first lines of the excerpt give the immediate background to the episode. Both Mari and Ville know the local reference they are talking about. When Ville develops the topic by asking if the singer is well-known, Mari fails to respond, and there is a lapse of three seconds. The lapse displays Mari's uncertainty about the sequential implication of

Ville's turn. When Ville does not continue, she realizes that the turn might project obligations on her, and she requests clarification, which leads to a lengthy paraphrasing chain by Ville.

Line 10 is a reformulation of Ville's prior question *e de nån känd sångare?*, 'is it a well-known singer?'. The reformulation moves the focus from 'well-known singer' to 'I myself', which does not help Mari to interpret the content and the sequential implication of the utterance. She does not respond at the completion point. After the long lapse Ville accepts the obligation to continue and does so with another reformulation that contains a new lexical cue, *rösten*, 'the voice'. Mari again fails to respond. Now Ville takes the trouble source to be the lexical item *känna*, 'to know/recognize etc'. The third reformulation is done with a change of the verb that also changes the perspective, and this is the most transparent reformulation seen from Ville's point of view. If, however, Mari did not understand the original question, it is difficult for her to interpret the functions of the reformulations. The last of these is followed by a longer pause which shows that Ville is not going to continue once more. Thus Mari is forced to take the turn. She does this with a question (line 17) using the trouble word, thereby indicating that she is familiar with at least some uses of the verb and that the trouble source is more complicated than the interlocutor can infer.

Mari's request for confirmation could here also be interpreted as an expression of astonishment that Ville does not know a well-known singer. Yet Mari's next turn reveals that she is not sure whether she knows the singer, either. During the negotiation she has not been able to contribute to a smooth collective flow with her interlocutor, but in this final turn, notwithstanding the pragmatic-grammatical breaches, she creates a mutual understanding of the fact that neither one of the speakers knows the singer. She suggests a name that she is uncertain about. Ville makes a repair that reinforces the asymmetry between the speakers: he repeats the name with another stress placement, although he, too, is very uncertain about it, and closes the sequence.

Reformulations constitute the largest group within the methods of repair after a lack of response. In the following three sections I shall analyze sequences where different types of reformulation are used.

5.3.1 Reformulation through paraphrase

Paraphrase could be expected to occur frequently in instances where the participants are negotiating for understanding. In my data, however, paraphrases are not very common. This, along with the infrequent occurrence of other reformulations may be due to the 'pruned' character of the dialogue. The speakers confine themselves to a restricted set of structures in both their verbal and non-verbal behavior. This is partly due

to the fact that the NNSs lack linguistic means in L2 to express themselves and partly the NSs avoid using all their NS linguistic repertoire. In a study of NS-NNS conversations, Long (1983a) found that topics were treated briefly, and that repetitions of all the participants' utterances were frequent. His data, however, was experimental, and the speakers had tasks to accomplish, which may explain the high occurrences of repeats.

In the following example the paraphrase is done using both prosodic and lexical means. There is also a slight change in the sequential implication of the trouble utterance.

(21) [32]

Before the episode the baby is crying and Olle asks if he is well. Rauni says that he has got a cold. When Olle asks if they have seen a doctor, Rauni replies that her husband has gone to the pharmacy for nose drops. Olle then goes back to his question about the visit to the doctor, which Rauni misinterprets as a more general question. She also tells him about an earlier visit to the doctor, which was a routine check up. She describes in a couple of turns how the doctor found the baby tall and well developed. Olle reacts to that with the first turn in the following episode.

01	Olle	(...) <i>jaa</i> (.) <i>va rolit</i> (.) <i>mm</i> (.)	(...) yeah (.) how nice (.) mm (.)
02		<i>de gick bra å prata me doktorn?</i>	it was all right talking with the doctor?
03		(2)	(2)
→	Olle	<i>de gick bra att <tala></i> (.)	it was all right to <talk> (.)
05		<i>du förstod va doktorn sa.</i>	you understood what the doctor said.
06	Rauni	<i>å min man</i>	and my husband
07	Olle	<i>asså [de va din man som] jaha</i>	uhu [it was your husband who] uhu
08	Rauni	<i>[han prata]</i>	[he was talking]

On line 01 Olle first concludes the preceding sequence and then poses a question that resumes the topic of the previous sequence. There is a lapse of two seconds after Olle's question on line 02 about talking to the doctor. The syntactic form is that of a statement, which is a common strategy when an NS accommodates her/his speech (Håkansson, 1987: 41), but the intonation makes it an unambiguous question. The question does not contain a second person pronoun or any other address term, which may make the meaning unclear to Rauni, although impersonal expressions similar to the one here are also very common in Finnish (Hakulinen 1987).

As we can see in the example, Olle makes an analysis of Rauni's problem of understanding and interprets it as a purely lexical one. The way Olle analyzes the situation sheds light on the difference in the contexts of the speakers and the breach in intersubjectivity in the situation. The lapse on line 03 initiates a repair: Olle makes the first self-repair, an attempt to repair the trouble source with an utterance in which he reformulates the face-threatening question intonation towards a statement that suggests the expected affirmative answer. The statement

has only a slightly rising intonation, but the sequential implication is not unequivocal, especially because the next reformulation is added without waiting for a response. In fact the statement with its ambiguous prosody is a word search. In the reformulated statement the semantically central element, the verb *prata*, has been replaced by a synonym, *tala*. The original verb is the most common colloquial variant for 'talk' and it is replaced in the statement by the standard language variant. When Olle notices that this does not solve the problem, he does not let the waiting time become too long but rushes into a new paraphrase with a change of perspective (see Ex. (32), p. 92). In this last repair he also uses a direct address term. The problem is resolved after this and Rauni makes her context visible by mentioning her husband. Changing the verb was not needed for securing understanding, which can be seen in Rauni's turn where she herself uses the first, colloquial, verb. A larger context reveals that the problem was a misunderstanding of the context.

Rauni's context is displayed in the preceding sequence. The baby is crying, which keeps Rauni occupied with him. Furthermore, Olle has asked questions about the baby's health and the visit to the doctor. Thus Rauni's focus is on the baby and his well-being, whereas Olle thinks of Rauni as an immigrant with a low command of Swedish and problems in communicating with a Swedish doctor. He refers to the many things Rauni has reported the doctor saying about the baby, and therefore asks the question on line 02. His question is actually a positive comment on Rauni's reported understanding and a request for confirmation of his implicit interpretation of her conduct.

In NS-NS conversations the speaker can, by this means, make her/himself clearer in certain parts of the utterance when s/he interprets that the main content of the utterance has been understood. In NNS-NS conversations, however, a relatively long negotiation can be difficult to follow and the recipient has difficulties in combining parts of the old interpretations with the new ones. The following example illustrates how the reformulation of the repairable utterance can be done stepwise: the speaker reformulates parts of the utterance. The example is an extract from a long episode (89 turns) in which the number of Pentecostals in Finland and Sweden is discussed. A short chain of misunderstandings preceded the sequence below, when Staffan introduced a question about the total number of Pentecostals in Finland. The original question was displayed in two turns:

(22)

Ville has introduced the topic about the number of Pentecostals. He has also reminded Mari about their earlier discussions on the church activities Mari has participated in. Staffan has made two efforts to take the turn, which displays the difficulty in finding an adequate form for the question in a situation where serving and drinking tea distracts the participants to some extent. The first time he overlapped with Ville who continued his turn. The second time was a false start that has been interrupted by having tea, but there have been space

and opportunities for Staffan to go on. Long pauses occur both before and during the episode below.

→	Staffan	<i>eh pingstvännerna är ju jättestora i Sverige</i>	eh pentecostals are very big in sweden aren't they
03	Mari	<i>jå mycke</i>	yes very
→	Staffan	<i>ja (.) e e dom de i Finland också</i>	yes (.) ar are they that in finland also
05	Mari	<i>jå ja tror att där e också</i>	yes I believe that there are also
06		<i>(6)</i>	<i>(6)</i>

Mari and Staffan have different assumptions about the level of explicitness when discussing the number of Pentecostals in Sweden and Finland. For Mari, it seems to be enough to confirm that there are also many Pentecostals in Finland. The difference hampers the speakers in the following negotiation.

(23) [98]

After the lapse of six seconds on line 06 at the end of Ex. (22), there follows a long negotiation in which Mari first takes the turn and states the amount of members in the congregation in her Finnish home town. Staffan has explicitly said that he was only interested in the total amount and has tried to get an approximation from Mari. He has offered guesses, but Mari has not been able to tell if they are correct. After this, Staffan proceeds to ask if there are special areas with many Pentecostals, which starts the negotiating sequence in the present example on lines 07 and 09.

01	Staffan	<i>=näü (.) för att ja tror de e: nästan en halv miljon i sverige</i>	=no (.) because I believe it is: almost half a million in sweden
02		<i>(3)</i>	<i>(3)</i>
03		<i>(3)</i>	<i>(3)</i>
04	Mari	<i>.ja (.) [så]</i>	.yeah (.) [so]
05	Staffan	<i>[s] (.)</i>	<i>[s] (.)</i>
06	Mari	<i>mycke</i>	many
07	Staffan	<i>jaa (.) särskilt i småland [#]</i>	yes (.) especially in småland [#]
08	Mari	<i>[#]</i>	<i>[#]</i>
09	Staffan	<i>jönköping e ju den stora (.) pings pingststaden (3)</i>	jönköping is the great (.) pente pentecostal town isn't it (3)
10		<i>e de nåt sär- särskilt område</i>	is there any spe special area
11		<i>i finland också som (.)</i>	in finland also like (.)
12		<i>som småland här då (1)</i>	like småland here (1)
→		<i>i finland där de e mycke (1)</i>	in finland where there is a lot (1)
→		<i>där där de e (1)</i>	where where there is (1)
→		<i>där pingstkyrkan e</i>	where the pentecostal church is
→		<i>särskilt (1) stor</i>	especially (1) big
18		<i>(3)</i>	<i>(3)</i>
→	Staffan	<i>nåt nåt <u>distrikt</u> så där? (1)</i>	any any district or something (1)
20		<i>vet du de</i>	do you know
21		<i>(2)</i>	<i>(2)</i>
22	Mari	<i>ja förstår inte nu att e</i>	I don't understand now that e
23		<i>menar du att .h</i>	do you mean that .h

In this excerpt, Staffan makes an effort to preface his next question about the situation in Finland by describing how it is in Sweden. The course of the topic development is not very clear when seen from Mari's point of view:

because I think it is almost half a million in Sweden -
 yes, so many -
 yes, especially in Småland # -
 # -
 Jönköping is the big Pentecostal city -PAUSE (3 s)-
 is there a special area in Finland, too, like Småland here - - - .
a district

The interpretation of the turn *ja (.) särskilt i småland*, 'well (.) especially in småland' seems to be too difficult for Mari, but not only for her: the laughter at the end of Staffan's turn expresses uneasiness or consciousness of the mutual problem. The prefacing is continued on lines 09 and 10 and followed by a pause of three seconds before the question is posed. When Mari does not take the turn at the binding transition relevance point after the question, Staffan makes an effort to reformulate the question (lines 14-17). The word search makes the order of the components he takes up before another pause of three seconds too difficult for Mari to follow and she fails to respond here, too. Staffan also realizes that the utterance was diffuse and makes a new self-repair (line 19). He assumes that the problem is a lexical one and tries to clarify his question by using a synonym for the word *område*, 'area'. The word *distrikt* is certainly unknown to Mari and the new question does not add any cues that could facilitate understanding. On the contrary, the last question, *vet du de*, 'do you know that', although said in a friendly tone, is very demanding and face-threatening because it checks and measures Mari's knowledge and reminds her of the sequential implication of the turn.

Access to knowledge and asymmetry of knowledge are clearly present in the whole long negotiation on the number of Pentecostals and have a clear impact on understanding. The speakers seem to switch between their institutional roles and their roles as participants in an everyday conversation. This switching, or insecurity about the participation framework and access to knowledge (see Goodwin & Goodwin 1987; Kendon 1992), impedes the speakers from relying on their interpretations of the context. The speakers' way and degree of participation varies throughout the conversation, and their roles as knowing or unknowing participants also vary (Goodwin & Goodwin 1992: 164-165). These terms refer to the amount of knowledge and experience of the events talked about that the participants in a conversation have access to. Goodwin & Goodwin (*ibid.*) describe a situation where the speakers have different access to and experience of the event being assessed in a conversation and display this by the choice

of words and grammatical entities, for instance the use of the conditional tense. They are aware of the differences and manage to express themselves and understand each other in spite of their differences in perspective. In my data, however, the participants' inferences are impeded by the fact that they do not know if there is a real discrepancy in knowledge or if it is only due to weaknesses in language proficiency.

The problem in the sequence above and in several other episodes in the data is that the speakers, especially the NNSs, are not sure if they are knowing participants or not. This is mostly due to the fact that the speakers cannot rely on any contextualization cues, because they lack shared means to produce and interpret them. Conversation C2, for instance, shows that Mari, who mostly exhibits confidence about her knowledge on religious questions, becomes unsure about that knowledge when she has problems of understanding. Likewise, the NSs do not always know if the NNSs are knowing participants. As everyday life demonstrates, adult NNSs are often treated like children because of their language problems.

In doing the repair the participants progress from less explicit to more explicit means until the outcome is reached. The strategies used in the sequence on lines 08-20 can be presented in a schematic way as follows:

NS		NNS
prefaced statement	→	lack of response (1 s)
↓		↓
word search	→	lack of response (3 s)
↓		↓
paraphrase	→	lack of response (1 s)
↓		↓
remark/check	→	lack of response (2 s) & explicit indication

The negotiations under investigation can also be analysed in terms of different types of events according to the knowledge the speakers have access to. In particular, when the institutional roles are relevant, the setting exhibits some similarities to the therapeutic discourse described by Labov and Fanshel (1977). They classify events according to the knowledge the participants have about them in the following way:

A-events:	Known to A, but not to B.
B-events:	Known to B, but not to A.
AB-events:	Known to both A and B.
O-events:	Known to everyone present.
D-events:	Known to be disputable (Labov & Fanshel 1977: 100).

Normally A, or the NS in the present data, has access to the A-events and can deal with them as an expert without fear of contradiction, whereas D-events are disputable events. The type of turn and the linguistic structure that can be expected depend on the event type. A-events can be responded to by B through reinforcement or acknowledgement. B-events, which often are questions or their equivalents, project information, agreement or interpretation. D-events can project either denial, agreement, support or reinterpretation (Labov & Fanshel 1977: 62). The breaches of intersubjectivity that occur where complicated problems of understanding arise often lead to a situation where the speakers become unsure of which of the participants has the relevant knowledge and whether this knowledge is negotiable.

The long episode (Ex. (23) & (24)) illustrates Mari's insecurity about the relevance of her knowledge and the strain in following the NS's reformulations.

(24) [98]

24	Staffan	<i>jo alltså i sverige så (2)</i>	yes you see in sweden so (2)
25		<i>a de de:: (.) m:: just i småland va</i>	a it it: (.) m:: just in småland you know
26	Mari	<i>mm</i>	mm
27	Staffan	<i>så e de (.) de e de s starkaste</i>	so e it (.) it is the m most important
28		<i>området så att säga va de (.)</i>	area you could say couldn't you
29		<i>de- de e väldigt mycke pingstväänner</i>	the- there are very many pentecostals
30		<i>just i småland (.)</i>	particularly in småland (.)
31		<i>eh å så e de(n) (.)</i>	eh an so i(t) is (.)
32		<i>ganska många i göteborg</i>	rather a lot in gothenburg
33		<i>men inte så många i stockholm å</i>	but not so many in stockholm and
34		<i>inte så många i:: (.)</i>	not so many i:: (.)
35		<i>dalarna å inte så många i norra</i>	dalarna and not so many in northern
36		<i>sverige (å)</i>	sweden (and)
37		<i>utan de e allt mest i småland</i>	but most of all in småland
38	Mari	<i>nej inte där (1)</i>	no not there (1)
39		<i>ehm va (.) menar du att h</i>	ehm what (.) do you mean that .h
40		<i>småland e de mycke stor (.) plats</i>	småland is there very big (.) place
41	Staffan	<i>nää (.) men de e mycke::</i>	no (.) but there are a lo::t
42		<i>många pingstväänner (.) där</i>	a lot of pentecostals (.) there
43	Mari	<i>aha ((insecure, questioning))</i>	uhu ((insecure, questioning))
44	Staffan	<i>förstår du [då e då]</i>	do you understand [then is then]
45	Mari	<i>[om ja] vet å (.)</i>	[if I] know and (.)
46		<i>va e de må småland (1)</i>	what is it må småland (1)
47		<i>att (.) ja förstår att inte <u>där</u></i>	that (.) I understand that not <u>there</u> ,
48		<i>e inte så mycke</i>	is not so much
49		<i>(2)</i>	(2)
50	Staffan	<i>joo (.) de e de .h (.) alltså=</i>	well (.) it is it .h (.) you see=
51	Mari	<i>=du vet?</i>	=you know?

Lack of response forces Staffan to continue the turn that starts on line 27 with both affirmative and negated utterances for describing the amount

of Pentecostals in different parts of Sweden. He substitutes *område* for *distrikt* with and gives a list of areas in Sweden without stopping to wait for a reaction. Here he exhibits similar nervous behavior to that at a point in the beginning of the same conversation when he described how the tram broke down (see Ex. (43/54)). He does not give clear transition points, but the overall pace is so slow that Mari has good opportunities to display understanding or to request clarification. Staffan speaks slowly, attends to Mari's reactions, and continues the expansion of the turn on the basis of her reactions.

Staffan's stylistic means in describing the distribution of the Pentecostals in Sweden are interesting. He starts with a superlative *starkaste*, 'strongest', and when there is no response he reformulates it into an utterance with a strong quantifier, *väldigt mycket*, 'very much'. After the TRP he produces a three-part list with negated expressions that is bound by affirmative utterances on both sides. According to Jefferson (1990) and Atkinson (1984) the participants in a conversation orient to "three-partedness" in list constructions. When a list is recognizably under way, a completion and thus also a transition-relevance point is projected. This is one of the cues for the recipient to prepare her/himself for a response. An interesting outcome of this is Mari's response on line 38. She responds first to the list by ratifying the negated utterances with *nej inte där*, 'no not there' and after a lapse starts dealing with the very end of Staffan's turn. Mari's reaction exhibits partial understanding: she agrees with the fact that there are not so many Pentecostals in many areas of Sweden. The important point, that most Pentecostals in Sweden live in Småland, is still unclear to her.

Mari displays her tentative interpretation with a yes/no question. In most other instances in the data the requests for clarification are done with actions that leave more options for the recipient, for instance with repeats or responses such as 'I don't understand'. Staffan rejects Mari's interpretation with a plain negation word and then gives a very transparent paraphrase 'but there are many pentecostals there' for his original utterance *småland är det starkaste området*, 'småland is the strongest area'.

Staffan reacts to Mari's very insecure *aha*, 'uhu', with an explicit knowledge check that ends in a word search. Mari's next turn, which she starts by overlapping Staffan's word search, initiates the resolving of the problem. Mari states explicitly that she thinks that there are not very many Pentecostals in Småland. The statement is followed by a pause that displays both the linguistic difficulties the participants are having and the dispreferred character of the next action. Staffan starts his turn with *joo*, 'well' which in Swedish is used in the beginning of repairs or accounts. He does not get further in his word search before Mari latches onto his turn and makes a knowledge check which gives the trouble sequence a new perspective and reveals the trouble source.

Up to the end of the sequence, Mari's reactions have been

interpreted as non-understanding, but here she demonstrates that she has other information about the number and distribution of Pentecostals and that she mistrusts Staffan. Thus both speakers have considered themselves as knowing participants in spite of the differences in their knowledge, and this has made the progress of the conversation incoherent. Seven turns later, however, she admits that she knows less than Staffan about the topic and closes the topic.

5.3.2 Reformulation through expansion

Expansion can be done through exemplification or through widening or specifying the concept. In the following example the speaker makes a self-repair after lack of response by a repetition in which only the end is changed. The expansion is done by replacing a deictic adverb with a semantically fuller expression.

(25)

In the conversation between Olle and Rauni there has been an interruption lasting 30 seconds during which Olle has left the room. He has come back and resumes the previous topic. He and Rauni had been talking about the different beliefs Rauni and her husband have about baptizing the baby. Rauni is an active member of the Pentecostal congregation and her husband is a Lutheran.

01	Olle	<i>men (2)</i>	but
02		<i>är de svårt de där att (1)</i>	is it difficult this that (1)
03		<i>din man inte e me i pingstkyrkan?</i>	your husband isn't a pentecostalist
04	Rauni	<i>jo de e svårt</i>	yes it is difficult
05	Olle	<i>de de måste de vara</i>	it it must be that
06	Rauni	<i>mm</i>	mm
07		<i>(5)</i>	(5)
08	Rauni	<i>[[men</i>	[[but
09	Olle	<i>[[men han han kanske kommer (1)</i>	[[but he he perhaps will (1)
10		<i>att följa dej di dit (1)</i>	follow you the/ there (1)
→		<i>han han kanske kommer att (1)</i>	he he perhaps will (1)
12		<i>följa dej (.)</i>	follow you (.)
13	Rauni	<i>mm</i>	mm
→	Olle	<i>till pingstkyrkan ^onån gång^o</i>	to the pentecostal church ^o some time ^o
15	Rauni	<i>jåå (.) åm (1) (...)</i>	yeah (.) ohm (1) (...)
16	Olle	<i>en da kanske han gör de</i>	one day he will perhaps do that
17	Rauni	<i>joo (.) ja tror (.) riktig</i>	yeah (.) I <u>believe</u> (.) really
18	Olle	<i>mm</i>	mm

Before the lack of response at the end of line 10 Rauni has told Olle that her husband is not a member of the Pentecostal church and that she sees it as a problem. Olle displays understanding and advances the topic with the utterance on line 05. He continues on line 09 and comforts Rauni by saying that her husband will, perhaps, some day go with Rauni to the

church. When Rauni does not react during and after the first utterance, Olle repeats the main part of it and gets a minimal response. Olle's turn on lines 09-13 displays an NS's insecurity in interpreting an NNS's reactions. Olle repairs the first utterance by replacing the deictic adverbial of place by a prepositional phrase with an explicit reference (line 14), lowers his voice and adds an indefinite time adverbial (line 14). Rauni responds to this with two acknowledgement tokens, but she also adds something inaudible. It seems to support the interpretation of understanding that Olle displays in the following turn. On line 16 he makes another reformulation, but this time the aim is not clarification but conclusion. The verb phrase is replaced by a proword construction to express agreement with Rauni about the topic. The function of the turn is a third-turn ratification that, however, is delayed because of the negotiation for understanding in the previous turns. Rauni's last turn in the sequence contains an explicit confirmation which projects a minimal response that is the final part of the jointly accomplished closing of the topic.

Expansion through exemplification of the utterance or the part of utterance that has been interpreted as the trouble source is frequently used by Clara (BS) and Olle. Exemplification ties the talk closer to the context and thus contributes to repair problems that a deficient production or interpretation has brought about. Context has been seen as alternative to syntax, especially in unplanned discourse (Ochs 1983: 145). The syntactic and grammatical means the speakers in the data share are very limited.

(26)

Anna and Olle are visiting Tarja. The following episode is preceded by eight turns at the beginning of the visit during which Anna and Olle enter the living room and start the conversation by commenting on a painting on the wall. Olle asks if Tarja has done it, and she answers that it was done by her father.

01	Olle	<i>mm (.) du har träffat dom nu</i>	mm (.) you have met them now
02		<i>ja du va till (.) finland</i>	well you were in finland
03	Tarja	<i>åå</i>	yeah
04	Olle	<i>mm (.)</i>	mm
05		<i>berätta om resan hu/ hur ni</i>	tell me about the trip ho/ how did you
06		<i>gjorde vilken väg ni åkte å</i>	do which route did you take and
07		<i>(2)</i>	(2)
→		<i>flög ni eller åkte ni tåg</i>	did you fly or did you take the train
09		<i>eller åkte ni bil eller</i>	or did you take the car or
10	Tarja	<i>nej vi åkte: me bil (.) och (.) sen=</i>	now we too:k the car (.) and (.) then=
11	Olle	<i>=när åkte ni.</i>	=when did you leave.
12	Tarja	<i>de va:: fre:dag (1)</i>	it wa:s fri:day (1)
13		<i>när vi gick till finland</i>	when we went to finland
14	Olle	<i>mm</i>	mm

The utterance that introduces the new topic is first formulated as a very general request with a noun as object, and then, without pausing, Olle initiates a self-repair: the request is reformulated into two indirect questions that replace the noun object in the original request. There is a short disturbance at the beginning of the repair when he makes a false start and immediately after repeats the word he had interrupted. The first part of the request is more abstract: 'tell me about the trip', 'what did you do?' and 'which route did you take?'. The indirect questions exemplify the goal of the original request. They give Tarja hints about how to start. Both the questions are still rather general, although the second one 'which route did you take?' is a somewhat more concrete exemplification of the original concept 'trip'. After the request there is a TRP with no response, after which the exemplifying is continued. This additional complementary reformulation picks up three subcategories ('fly', 'train' and 'car') that are more concrete and transparent and are guaranteed to be well-known to the NNS. Using concrete subcategories instead of concepts that are higher up in the hierarchy is a well-known strategy in NS talk to NNS (e.g. Ellis 1994; Gass & Selinker 1994). It also occurs in teacher talk and caretakers' talk to small children (e.g. Snow 1977; Håkansson 1987; Junefelt 1991). Furthermore, approximations either higher or lower in the hierarchy are a common compensatory strategy found in NNS talk when the speaker lacks words for the concepts under discussion (e.g. Haastrup & Phillipson 1983).

Olle's utterance before the lapse ends in an *å*, 'and', which can create expectations in the recipient that the turn is to be continued. The particle 'and' is often used with that function, but it can also serve as an ambiguous ending to a turn that contains insecurity as to the continuation. In NNS talk in the present data *å* is frequently used both for holding the floor and for compensating for a more elaborated continuation (see e.g. Ex. (15)). The assumption that Tarja would interpret *å* as an expression promising continuation is contradicted by the observations that the NNSs in the data mostly miss pragmatic particles where they are used as contextualization cues.

The following is an example of a very complicated but not unusual problem of understanding. The analysis focuses on the first speaker's action, when she expands her utterance through exemplification. The first more precise formulation on line 08 is not a repair but a natural way of advancing the topic through asking for more specific information.

(27) [64, 81]

The episode is from the beginning of the conversation between Clara, Rauni and Ville. It is preceded by an episode in which both Finnish and Swedish have been used in discussing how long the guests will stay, whether there is enough time for Rauni to serve tea, and whether the baby lets Rauni sleep at nights. So the topic 'baby' has already been introduced when the sequence starts. The immediately preceding turns have been in Finnish.

01	(4)	(4)
02	Ville <i>[[*turnet sä]/*</i>	[[*do you know /*
03	Clara <i>[[när föddes flickan?</i>	[[when was the girl born?
04	Rauni <i>ah?</i>	ah?
05	Clara <i>när föddes flickan.</i>	when was the girl born.
06	Rauni <i>ah m december ofemte</i>	ah m december othe fifth
07	Clara <i>december (.) aha (1)</i>	december (.) uhu (1)
08	<i>slutet (.) av december? (1)</i>	the end (.) of december? (1)
→	<i>e eh:: i början av december</i>	e eh:: in the beginning of december
→	<i>eller i slutet (.)</i>	or at the end. (.)
→	<i>under jultid?</i>	during christmas time?
12	Rauni <i>ah nu inte vösstå riktig ähm</i>	ah now not understand right ohm (1)
13	(1)	
14	<i>fli eh nej eh födda [när]</i>	gir eh no eh born [when]
15	Clara <i>[ja (.)] när</i>	[yes (.)] when
16	Rauni <i>e födda</i>	is born
17	Clara <i>ja</i>	yes
18	Rauni <i>å:: (.) född den eh (2)</i>	o::h (.) born the eh (2)
19	<i>december femte</i>	fifth of december
20	Clara <i>femte=</i>	the fifth=
21	Rauni <i>=han e nu två månader</i>	=he is now two months
22	Clara <i>aha (.) två månader</i>	I see (.) two months
23	Rauni <i>mm ja</i>	mm yeah

Ville and Clara start their turns simultaneously. Ville, who has been speaking Finnish to Rauni before the pause, continues in Finnish but yields to Clara. Switching from Finnish to Swedish and from listening to Ville and then to Clara gives a partial explanation for Rauni's difficulty in understanding Clara's question. Another source of difficulty lies in Clara's misconception of the sex of the baby. Talking about a girl instead of a boy is an additional confusing factor for Rauni. However, her conduct is very illustrative of conversations between two NNSs: the speakers are flexible in interpreting each other and accepting major deviances from the norms. In the present data some repeats are used as understanding checks but the NNSs only correct each other a couple of times. In these instances the participant who corrects has clearly the higher proficiency in Swedish (cf. Ex. (100)). In only one of all the repair sequences in the data does an NNS react in a way that can be interpreted as correction of an NS's utterance (Ex. (44)).

Clara repeats the first question very distinctively word for word. Rauni ignores the misconception about the sex of the baby and gives the date, but Clara does not capture the last part of it, the day. She confirms understanding by repeating the word *december* and adding an acknowledgement token, which constitutes a possible end for the third position ratification and thus also a transition-relevance point (line 07). There is no strong obligation for Rauni to take the turn after the answer she gave. If Clara had heard Rauni's response, she could as well have commented on it and in that way given an account of why she had asked

the question.

When Rauni does not take the turn Clara continues the conversation by asking about when exactly in December the baby was born. After the short pause which follows the first question she anticipates non-understanding, because in her hearing Rauni only answered by giving the month. Her method in continuing after the first lapse (line 08) is the same as the one she uses in solving problems of understanding that have actually surfaced. She acts in a way that is often used in order to preclude further problems of understanding. Because there is a great difference in the assumptions that she and Rauni have about their respective knowledge of the date, the method, successful in many other cases, here fails to invoke a response from Rauni (lines 09-11).

Clara starts doing the repair by splitting the question 'when in December' into more transparent components. There are two clear transition-relevance points in Clara's turn but Rauni does not use these opportunities to respond. Her interactive contribution is to wait, which forces Clara to find new ways to put the question 'when in December?' more concretely. The strategy does not help because Rauni has already given the date and therefore cannot now understand what Clara is asking about. Rauni gets very confused by the new questions and expresses this explicitly (line 12). She seems also to reinterpret the earlier question, when, on line 14, she makes an attempt to repeat it: *fli eh nej eh födda [när]*, 'gir eh no born [when]'. The insecurity in her voice displays that she has become unsure about her earlier interpretation of it. After Rauni's hypothetical interpretation of Clara's question, however, Clara confirms her understanding and the problem is resolved. The end of the sequence is analysed in more detail in chapter 6.

The following is a short and illustrative example of first speaker repair with expansion. The expansion is also here done through splitting the general word 'time' into its concrete components. The speaker also makes another effort to facilitate understanding through adding the pronominal paraphrase *när*, 'when', in the original question to the end of the turn.

(28) [41]

Clara and Rauni have been discussing details of the childbirth and the size of the baby. At the end of the previous episode Clara has made a formulation on the basis of Rauni's turns about how big the baby is at the moment.

01	(6)	(6)
02	Clara <i>var var föddes? (2)</i>	where was born? (2)
03	<i>[eh] pojken (1)</i>	[eh] the boy (1)
04	Rauni <i>[(östra)]</i>	[(east)]
05	Clara <i>eh eh i (.) östra sjukhus eller?</i>	eh eh in (.) the eastern hospital or?
06	Rauni <i>ja</i>	yes
07	(6)	(6)
08	Clara <i>å vilken tid?</i>	and what time?

09	(2)	(2)
→ Clara	<i>på morronen på natten? när</i>	in the morning at night? when
11 Rauni	<i>på natten</i>	at night
12 Clara	<i>på natten</i>	at night
13 Rauni	<i>å de eh (1) o*mitähän se oli*o</i>	and it eh (1) o*what was it*o
14	(2)	(2)
15	<i>kvart i ett</i>	quarter to one
16 Clara	<i>aha</i>	i see
17 Rauni	<i>.ja</i>	.ja
18	(2)	(2)

The beginning of this sequence is dealt with on page 104 (Ex. (41)). The utterance that leads to a lapse is on line 08. Clara asks about the time of the childbirth after a long lapse. She ties the question to her earlier question with the connector *å*, 'and', in the beginning of a turn which consists of only an adverb of time constructed from an interrogative pronoun and a noun with rising intonation. The preface with *and* expresses nextness and is a common means of tying a question to an earlier question or immediately preceding answer (Sorjonen & Heritage 1991). The connector is obviously not strong enough to reach back to the previous question about the time, and Rauni fails to respond. After a lapse of two seconds Clara makes a repair with a new question. The disjunctive question *på morronen på natten?*, 'in the morning in the night?', is an intonational whole that forms only one question, whereas *när*, 'when', is clearly a second attempt to repair. It is a separate prosodic whole, although it comes without a pause after the first reformulation. Rauni responds by repeating the latter part of the disjunctive question. Clara concludes with an explicit third position confirmation by repeating *på natten* once more; this time with a terminating intonation.

Rauni, however, elaborates her response in a turn that displays her strategies in producing talk in Swedish. Firstly, she takes the turn by using the particle *å*, 'and' that projects continuation of her prior turn. The beginning is followed by a word search vocalization and a lapse. She codeswitches in the following utterance and performs a paralinguistic change that is characteristic of her: she lowers her voice when she does planning and thinking aloud in Finnish. Rauni's gaze behavior has been studied by Strömquist (1986). He found that the gaze is moved away from the interlocutor during the metalinguistic analyses. There is a long lapse after the codeswitch before she gives the exact time. The sequence is closed jointly by both speakers in a way also commonly found in other conversations. The acknowledgement tokens used here are not identical. Clara uses *aha*, which is a part of her individual style, and Rauni closes with an inhaled acknowledgement token. Hakulinen (1992) has reported that inhalation is often used in the second part of jointly accomplished closings of topics.

The following example illustrates a longer negotiation for finding

mutual understanding. There are two instances where the speaker interprets a lapse as initiation of repair. In the first one, the recipient not only fails to react, but also gives an incoherent response that confirms that she did not understand. Finally she ends the turn by explicitly indicating that she does not understand.

(29) [82]

The episode is a direct continuation of Ex. (27).

01	Clara	<i>när åkte ni/ du till sjukhuset? (1)</i>	when did you/ you go to the hospital (1)
→		<i>när (.) vilken tid åkte du till</i>	when (.) what time did you go to
→		<i>sjukhuset?</i>	the hospital
04	Rauni	<i>åhm (2) ehm (2) två veckor (1)</i>	ohm (2) ehm (2) two weeks (1)
05		<i>nej (.) förstår (.) nu förstå inte%</i>	no (.) understand (.) now not understand
06	Clara	<i>nejnej (.)</i>	nono (.)
07		<i>ja ja sa vilken tid (.)</i>	i i said what time (.)
08		<i>och startade du härifrån till</i>	and did you start from here to
09		<i>sjukhuset?</i>	the hospital
10		<i>(3)</i>	(3)
→	Clara	<i>du var <u>här</u> hemma</i>	you were <u>here</u> at home
12	Rauni	<i>mm ja</i>	mm yes
13	Clara	<i>å så du e:h (.) de:: (.)</i>	and so you e:h (.) i:t (.)
14		<i>du kände att de/ något hände</i>	you noticed that it/ something happened
15	Rauni	<i>.hah</i>	.hah
16	Clara	<i>så du / du skulle åka</i>	so you / you would leave for
17		<i>till sjukhuset m[m (.)]</i>	the hospital m[m (.)]
18	Rauni	<i>[mm ja]</i>	[mm yes]
19	Clara	<i>så vilken tid åkte du (.)</i>	so what time did you leave (.)
20		<i>till sjukhuset</i>	for the hospital
21	Rauni	<i>de e natten</i>	it is the night
22	Clara	<i>på natten?</i>	at night?
23	Rauni	<i>ja::</i>	ye::s
24	Clara	<i>aha</i>	i see

Clara continues asking about the childbirth. Her speech rate is slow, which gives Rauni good opportunities to start the second pair part, but she fails to respond. With her first question Clara actually goes back in time beyond the former question, which might be the explanation for Rauni's problems in following her. On the other hand, Rauni and Clara have just negotiated for an understanding of *vilken tid*, 'which time', in the preceding sequence where also the question word *när*, 'when', was used in the turn that resulted in the solving of the problem. This shows that conversation is such an enormously complex activity that it cannot always function as a situation for immediate learning. Shapira (1978) reports similar failures to use input and correction as a resource in conversations. Her informant was an adult learner of English with an immigrant history parallel the four immigrants in my study. However, there is evidence that learning through interaction is an effective means of language learning. In

the 1970s the role of interaction in language learning was emphasized by some researchers (see e.g. Hatch 1978b). Hatch (1978a: 404) points out that learners acquire syntactic structures through learning how to carry on conversations. Some studies provide evidence that an NNS also can learn words and word order in conversations by using the interlocutor as a resource. The relationship between interaction and learning and the features to be learned have, however, been problematized by counter-evidence for these findings in more recent investigations. For instance, Sato (1986) and Swain (1985) argue that interaction has no direct impact on acquiring grammatical structures, but it certainly advances the ability to carry on conversation.

After the lapse Clara initially makes a false start to repeat the question on line 02, but then changes her mind and reformulates the question word into the more transparent expression *vilken tid*, 'what time', that comes from the recent negotiation. The false start displays the unstable context native and near-native speakers have when speaking with non-natives. Clara made the false start with a repeat. The native context would invoke interpretations such as non-hearing rather than non-understanding in instances like the opening turn in the sequence. The repair strategy to non-hearing would be a plain repeat.

Rauni understands the sequential implication of the utterance and takes the turn. Clara's speech rate has been slow and as a non-native speaker she has pronounced each word distinctly without any weak forms. Rauni, however, is confused and hesitates at the beginning of the turn before offering *två veckor*, 'two weeks', which is very difficult to find any meaning for either in the local or the more global context. She then rejects this hypothetical suggestion and ends the turn with a direct indication of non-understanding in a voice that turns almost inaudible towards the end. She and the other three NNSs in the data exhibit a similar lowering of the voice when they do metalinguistic analyses of their own or their interlocutor's turns.

In the third turn Clara reformulates the question again (lines 06-09), but Rauni fails to respond here, too. The lapse is longer than the prior one. Furthermore, the fact that the participants have already been negotiating for understanding makes the problem more severe. Clara moves on to a new strategy. She divides the action 'starting off to the hospital' into the components 'being at home', 'noticing that something has happened', 'need to leave for the hospital' and 'leaving for the hospital'. The two instances of minimal response after Clara's turns have the function of encouragers and possibly indications of partial understanding (lines 12 & 15). After Clara has uttered the third component, Rauni understands and expresses this in a very clear voice when answering in the affirmative. This, however overlaps with the confirmation check at the end of Clara's turn, and Clara completes the strategy she has chosen here. Rauni lets her finish the question before she

gives the answer. Here again, Clara does something that differs from the conduct of the other interviewers and makes the negotiation more "serious", or switches off the institutional roles of the participants: she makes her own interpretation of Rauni's response unambiguously explicit by the checking question *på natten?*, 'at night' instead of ratifying it by a plain acknowledgement token. The sequence is finished off jointly with ratifying confirmations by Rauni and Clara.

The beginning of the next example shows how the difficulty of the conversation is displayed in the relatively long pause after closing the previous topic (line 07). Since the overall pace of the conversation is slow, such pauses do not seem to be awkward for the speakers. The lapse after the first utterance that introduces the new subtopic about the baby is not very long, but the speaker is an NNS whose speech rate is always slower than that of an NS. Moreover, she also adjusts her speaking rate here to the needs of an NNS with a low language proficiency. The slow rate perhaps also compensates for the lexical and syntactical breaches that occur.

(30)

The episode is from the beginning part of the conversation. The participants are looking at the baby. Clara still thinks that the baby is a girl.

01	(4)	4)
02	Clara <i>hon är lugn</i>	she is quiet
03	Rauni <i>mm [ja]</i>	mm [yes]
04	Clara <i>[ska]</i>	[will]
05	Rauni <i>mm ätit just</i>	mm just eaten
06	Clara <i>aha</i>	uhu
07	(3)	(3)
08	Clara <i>äter hon mycke ofta? (1)</i>	does she eat very often (1)
→	<i>äter hon varje:: e:h fjärde::</i>	does she eat ea::ch e:h fou::r
→	<i>eh timma?</i>	eh hour
11	Rauni <i>å (.) han (.) äta <u>natt</u> (1)</i>	and (.) he (.) eat <u>night</u> (1)
12	<i>varje timma</i>	every hour
13	Clara <i>varje timma?</i>	every hour?
14	Rauni <i>åå (.) å nu ä (.)</i>	yeah (.) and now is (.)
15	<i>en vecka så att ah (.)</i>	one week so that ah (.)
16	<i>ja behöver (.) ta maten (.)</i>	I need (.) to take the food (.)
17	<i>eh en gång natten (.)</i>	eh once the night (.)
18	<i>å förra veckan varje timma</i>	and last week every hour

The new topics or subtopics after lapses often have local referents, which is the case also in the above example. Clara introduces a new subtopic by presenting an assessment about the baby. Rauni agrees and gives an account and Clara ratifies it. The new question after the pause contains no particle or other element that might display a connection with the prior turns. The misconception as to the sex of the baby is still present, but the

use of the pronoun perhaps makes it less confusing for a Finnish speaker, because Finnish does not have a gender difference in third person singular pronouns and therefore Finnish speakers often confuse them when they speak other languages. When Clara fails to receive any reaction she reformulates the question more specifically by making reference to a common schedule in feeding babies (lines 09-10). Rauni takes the turn without delay, which shows that she has understood the sequential implication. The turn begins with a vocalizer that she often uses as a non-specific connector or as a mere turn holder to indicate that she is preparing her response, which seems to be the case here.

The response is followed by an immediate reaction by Clara. She repeats the salient information in the turn, the adverb of time, which is not interpreted as a comprehension check but as an understanding of the peculiarity of the fact. In her last turn Rauni first confirms Clara's utterance with the acknowledgement token *ää*, after which she explains that the situation has not been the same all the time and gives a more detailed account of the baby's eating habits.

In the following example the NS uses a similar method to elicit an answer after lack of response, although this conversation does not show such severe problems of understanding as those with Rauni which lead the NS to anticipate problems and therefore do repairs after pauses. In a 'normal' conversation Olle's question on line 04 could also be interpreted as a mild remark about a hearer who refuses to reply.

(31)

In the episode Olle resumes dealing with what Tarja and her family did on New Year's Eve. Olle has asked Tarja whether she did anything special and whether they had made fun about Tarja's relatives having let off the New Year's rockets at Christmas. Now Olle goes back to the beginning of the previous episode and comments on the fact that Tarja and her boyfriend did not do anything special on New Year's Eve.

01	Olle	<i>mm (.)</i>	<i>mm (.)</i>
02		<i>men (.)</i>	<i>but (.)</i>
		<i>så man gör inge speciellt (.)</i>	<i>so you don't do anything special (.)</i>
		<i>när klockan har blivit (1)</i>	<i>when its' (1)</i>
03		<i>tolv då å de e ett nytt år</i>	<i>twelve o'clock and it is new year</i>
		<i>(2)</i>	<i>(2)</i>
	→	<i>gö/ ehm låg ni å sov eller</i>	<i>do/ ehm were you sleeping or</i>
		<i>va ni uppe</i>	<i>did you stay up</i>
05	Tarja	<i>vi va p/ vi va på:: (.)</i>	<i>we were a/ we were at:: (.)</i>
		<i>dansplatsen eller va #</i>	<i>the dancing place or what #</i>
06	Olle	<i>jaha (.) ni va ut å dansa</i>	<i>uhu (.) you were out dancing</i>
07	Tarja	<i>jå</i>	<i>yes</i>
08		<i>(4)</i>	<i>(4)</i>

Olle's formulation projects either a reaction with minimal negative feedback in order to confirm and ratify the comment, or an explanation of

the circumstances commented on. There are two transition-relevance points before Olle puts an explicit question about Tarja's doings on New Year's Eve. The first one is after *speciellt*, 'special': this is sufficient information when tied to the earlier turns and the context they have created. As there is no reaction, Olle produces a longer utterance to define the context and makes an explicit tie to the earlier turn by using the same words.

Olle's method in doing the repair is the same that Clara uses: he transforms an abstract proposition into concrete components. The question expresses Olle's literal interpretation of Tarja's earlier answer. Tarja's earlier answer *inget speciellt*, 'nothing special' is interpreted by Olle as staying at home. The "pruned" or polite and cautious character of the conversation again surfaces after Tarja reveals that they had gone out to dance when Olle does not comment on the contradiction between this and the earlier answer according to which they had not been doing anything special. The participants' actions display their contextual differences in interpreting the expression 'nothing special'.

The fact that Tarja does not react at all can be explained by the role structure the interactants have in the conversation. Tarja exhibits similar avoidance in all her other conversations with both NS and BS in the data collected (Tarone et al. 1983). She is inferior both because of her difficulties in using Swedish and because her status in the research project is lower than that of a researcher who controls and plans the encounters. This has obviously led her as an NNS to adapt a passive role in the encounters. There is a similar pattern, although not always as salient, in the conversations with the other NSs and NNSs.

5.3.3 Reformulation through change of perspective

One way of doing a reformulation is to change the perspective on the propositional content of the original utterance. In the first example below, the speaker-perspective 'talk' is changed into the recipient-perspective 'understand'. Similar changes are performed in many other sequences with comprehension problems.

(32) [21]

Before the episode the baby is crying and Olle asks if he is well. Rauni says that he has got a cold. When Olle asks if they have seen a doctor, Rauni replies that her husband has gone to the pharmacy for nose drops. Olle then goes back to his question about the visit to the doctor, which Rauni misinterprets as a more general question. She also tells him about an earlier visit to the doctor, which was a routine check up. She describes in a couple of turns how the doctor found the baby tall and well developed. Olle reacts to that with the first turn in the following episode.

01 Olle (...) *jaa* (.) *va rolit* (.) *mm* (.) (...) yeah (.) how nice (.) *mm* (.)

02	<i>de gick bra å prata me doktorn?</i>	it was all right talking with the doctor?
03	(2)	(2)
→ Olle	<i>de gick bra att <tala> (.)</i>	it was all right to <talk> (.)
05	<i>du förstod va doktorn sa.</i>	you understood what the doctor said.
06 Rauni	<i>å min man</i>	and my husband
07 Olle	<i>asså [de va din man som] jaha</i>	uhu [it was your husband who] uhu
08 Rauni	<i>[han prata]</i>	[he was talking]

In the beginning of the fragment above Olle finishes off the sequence about a visit to the doctor and what the doctor had said about the baby with confirming feedback and the closing comment *va rolit*, 'so nice'. After that he goes back to the topic just closed, this time from another perspective. Rauni fails to understand and does not react although the utterance is unambiguously a question (cf. Ex. (21)). She does not display any effort to respond, for instance by an acknowledgement token or by a request for clarification. She shows no sign of understanding after Olle's reformulation through a paraphrase either. For Olle, the reformulation is a word search. After a short pause he presents a new reformulation that changes the perspective and is more transparent because the utterance is constructed with a personal pronoun as subject and the word 'doctor' in the object. Rauni repairs the misunderstanding. The speech rate is accelerated so that Rauni overlaps with Olle's confirming turn and gives additional information that does not exactly match with the last reformulation (*förstod*, 'understood') of the question but rather with the original question (*prata*, 'talk') which Rauni also displays in the last turn where she makes her own interpretation explicit.

In this episode the source of the non-understanding and misunderstanding lies in the differences of the contexts in which the participants did their respective inferencing rather than in any linguistic item or structure. The difficulties in shaping contexts together is, however, a consequence of possessing a limited linguistic means for conveying meanings.

In the following example Olle tries to create a shared context. He prefaces his question with an utterance, but he ends with pauses and a short vocalization, which in the light of what follows (line 05), is part of a word search. This gives Olle time to prepare the continuation of the turn.

(33)

The episode begins after a pause 13 of seconds following an episode about grandparents' loving relation to grandchildren. During the pause the baby is babbling and the rustling of paper can be heard.

01	(13)	(13)
02 Olle	<i>men (.) nu när ni fått barn (2)</i>	but (.) now that you have got a child (2)
03	<i>eh (1)</i>	eh (1)

04		<i>behöver ni mera rum</i>	do you need more space
05		(3)	(3)
→	Olle	<i>[[räcker eh (1)</i>	[[is it enough eh (1)
07	Rauni	<i>[[eh: (1)</i>	[[eh: (1)
08	Olle	<i>[[e lägenheten för liten nu</i>	[is the flat] too small now
09	Rauni	<i>[[åm</i>	[[ohm
10	Rauni	<i>m: joo ja ha prata (1) med min (1)</i>	m: yeah i have talked (1) with my (1)
11		<i>man att vi behöver nya (1)</i>	husband that we need new (1)
12		<i>vi har nu (1)</i>	we have now (1)
13		<i>bara två rummet å köket</i>	only two room and the kitchen
14	Olle	<i>mm</i>	mm

The question *behöver ni mera rum*, 'do you need more space' has the word order VSO which has been considered a difficult alternative compared to questions with SVO and rising intonation (e.g. Håkansson 1987). Rauni does not even employ the vocalization she often uses for displaying that she has understood at least the sequential implication, and there is a long lapse. Olle interprets the lapse as non-understanding and continues the word search, ending the turn with a well-formed utterance that changes the perspective (line 07). Simultaneously, however, Rauni starts and exhibits in her following turn (line 09) that she has understood the question but needs a long time to prepare her answer. Her second attempt to take the turn overlaps with Olle's utterance with its change of perspective. He changes the perspective entirely from the family's need for more space to the small size of the apartment. He continues and completes the repair utterance he started with the assumption that Rauni did not understand the first question. Rauni's answer, however, displays that she has in fact understood the first question. So, the delay before answering was rather due to her slowness in planning. This slowness is not only a deficiency but, together with the following action, exhibits Rauni's ambitions in the conversation. If her strategy had been to respond only with 'yes' or 'no', as Tarja especially did at an earlier stage of development, she would not have needed all the planning time. Consequently the lapses would have been fewer and shorter.

In the intricate negotiation for understanding in the following example which I already have dealt with (Ex. (8) & (20)), there are two instances of a change of perspective after lack of response. In the first of these, on line 12, the embedded sentence from the previous turn is made more transparent by transforming it into a main clause with SVO word order and statement prosody. This is then further reformulated by using a high frequency phrase 'I don't know' which the speaker offers as a new cue. In the second instance, where only the lapse indicates non-understanding (line 19), Ville goes back to the original, general content of the question and abandons the frame 'I do not know' or 'should I know'. He does not repeat the original question as such but specifies it by asking if the singer is a well-known Finnish one.

(34) [8, 20, 74, 97]

The episode is preceded by a negotiation about serving tea or coffee (see Ex. (45)) and a pause of 12 seconds that is noted in the beginning of the transcript. Mari is preparing tea in the kitchen when Ville starts talking about the music in the background.

01		(12) ((Mari goes to the kitchen))	(12) ((Mari goes to the kitchen))
02	Ville	<i>va e den där musiken som (1) hörs?</i>	what's this music that (1) sounds
03	Mari	<i>aha (.) de e (4) de e kristen musik</i>	i see (.) it is (4) it is christian music
04	Ville	<i>aha</i>	i see
05		(4)	(4)
06	Ville	<i>e de nån (.) känd sångare</i>	is it a (.) well-known singer
07		(3)	(3)
08	Mari	<i>va säger du att?</i>	what do you say that?
→	Ville	<i>e de nån (.) sångare som ja (.)</i>	is it a (.) singer that I (.)
10		<i>själv borde (1) känna till.</i>	myself should (1) know about.
11		(4)	(4)
→	Ville	<i>ja känner int igen den där rösten</i>	I don't recognize that voice
13		(1)	(1)
→		<i>ja vet inte vem som (1) sjunger</i>	I don't know who (1) is singing
15		(4)	(4)
16	Mari	<i>menar du att du känner inte.,</i>	do you mean that you know not.,
17		(1)	(1)
→	Ville	<i>(nä) ja vet inte vem som sjunger.</i>	(no) I don't know who is singing.
19		(3)	(3)
→	Ville	<i>e de nån (.) känd (.) (s) finsk?</i>	is it someone (.) well-known (.) (s) finnish
21		(1)	(1)
22	Mari	<i>finsk (.) vet inte heller att</i>	finnish (.) don't know either that
23		<i>e vilken heter hon/ han</i>	e which is she/ he called
24		(4)	(4)
25	Mari	<i>kanske 'sekera</i>	perhaps 'sekera
26	Ville	<i>se kera aha:: (se)</i>	se kera i see:: (se)
27		(7)	(7)
28	Ville	<i>det e lu lugnande musik #</i>	it is pea peaceful music #
29	Mari	<i>jå::</i>	yea::h
30		(8)	(8)

The final repairs are started with a phrase that is used three times in this sequence (lines 06, 09 & 20). First, Ville uses it when he asks the question the first time: *e de nån*, 'is it something like', on line 06. Each of the three times the phrase is uttered the same way and is followed by a short pause that, in fact, marks the salient words which follow. Repeats of simple frame structures are frequent in simplified talk to language learners both in second or foreign language learning as in first language learning (e.g. Long 1983a; Snow 1977). Within second language acquisition research, reformulations by NSs and teachers have been investigated in input studies and studies of comprehension (see e.g. Gass & Madden 1985; Chaudron 1986; Ellis 1994).

5.4 Remarks as reactions to a lack of response

Each action projects a relevant next action, and when there is no relevant next action the first speaker can display her/his dissatisfaction with the situation. This accountability of conversational behavior implies that the first speaker also has the right to present remarks and impose sanctions. In the instances dealt with so far, the first speaker has interpreted a lack of response as non-understanding, which s/he has displayed by doing repairs to her/his own utterances. The borderline between these repairs and remarks is vague and the speakers negotiate their interpretation for each case separately.

In the following example the remark is mild. Olle asks Tarja about New Year's customs in Finland. He does not get any reaction to his first question which contains two TRPs. The first of these is a tentative one, and with all the contextual information it can supply it constitutes sufficient information for the recipient. As Tarja does not react, Olle continues with the adverbial of time, thus explicitly tying the question to the earlier turns. When there is no response now either, Olle expands and specifies ways of predicting the future. He also pauses at points where he thinks that sufficient information has been given. After the fifth such pause he reminds Tarja of the sequential implication of the turn and gets an answer.

(35)

The episode is an immediate continuation of Ex. (31) where Olle made a formulation about Tarja's doings on New Year's Eve. There is a pause of four seconds between the episodes.

01		(4)	(4)
02	Olle	<i>brukar man spå? (1)</i>	do you usually tell fortunes (1)
03		<i>till nyår (1)</i>	at new year (1)
04		<i>att man (.) lägger kort eller (.)</i>	do you (.) use cards or (.)
05		<i>man tar <u>bly</u> (1)</i>	you take lead (1)
06		<i>å s/ å smälter (1)</i>	and s/ and melt it (1)
07		<i>å ser in i de nya året (1)</i>	and look into the new year (1)
→		<i>gör man de?</i>	do you do that?
09	Tarja	<i>ja har aldrig [gjort]</i>	I have never [done]
10	Olle	<i>[de har du]</i>	[you have]
11		<i>aldrig gjort (.)</i>	never done that
12		<i>har du hört talas om nån som (.)</i>	have you heard about anyone who (.)
13		<i>gör så?</i>	does that?
14		(3)	(3)
15	Tarja	<i>jå min (.) mormor (.)</i>	yes my (.) grandmother (.)
16		<i>har berättat nånting [men]</i>	has told something [but]
17	Olle	<i>[mm]</i>	[mm]
18	Tarja	<i>ja minns se/ de e så #länge sen#</i>	i remember th/ it is #long ago#

The understanding difficulty in the sequence above lies in the first turn. The turn is preceded by a long pause after a jointly accomplished confirmation of the answer to the previous question. Thus the prior sequence is definitely closed, and the first question above comes without any obvious tie to it. The turn gives no contextual cues, and consequently it can be difficult to know that it has to do with New Year's Eve before Olle adds the connecting temporal adverb after a pause of one second, which in an NS conversation can be considered long but in the present data is relatively short. It is not clear that Tarja understands all the utterances in the turn - there is evidence elsewhere in the conversation that she does not - but she obviously does understand most of it, which is also confirmed on lines 09, 15 and 18.

In the following example the NNS does not interpret the lack of reaction by an NS as non-understanding but takes this to be a difference in access to knowledge and remarks on it.

(36) [2]

Mari is showing Staffan and Ville photos about events in the Pentecostal congregation. Staffan has wondered whether baptisms are being done in a lake in one of the photos. The question has been followed by a negotiation about the Swedish word for baptism.

01	(3)	(3)
02	Staffan <i>men dom här ä inte: (.)</i>	but these are not: (.)
03	<i>så små va (.)</i>	so small, are they
04	<i>de ä inga bäbi[sar]</i>	they are no bab[ies]
05	Mari <i>[#jå in#]</i>	[#yes not#]
06	Staffan #	#
07	Mari <i>eh:m (.) de e (.) döpps (.)</i>	eh:m (.) it is (.) baptized (.)
08	<i>som pippeln (1)</i>	as the bible (1)
09	<i>lärar sej</i>	teaches
10	(3)	(3)
11	Mari <i>vi:: (.) många olika: fri::</i>	we:: (.) many differe:nt free::
12	(3)	(3)
13	<i>försäljning (1) döps som</i>	sale (1) baptized as
14	(5)	(5)
→	<i>de e nya te (1) till dej</i>	this is new to (1) to you
16	Staffan <i>e näj int/ inte helt e (1)</i>	eh no not/ not quite eh (1)
17	<i>hur gammal ska man va för att döpas</i>	how old do you have to be to be baptized

When Mari starts elaborating her response on line 07, she has great difficulties in expressing herself and produces pauses within the utterance. At the end of line 09 there is a TRP: Mari has completed a turn constructional unit by saying *de e döpps som pippeln lärar sej* which can be interpreted as something like 'they baptize the way the Bible has taught them'. The turn constitutes both a grammatical and a prosodic whole. As there is a considerable lapse after the turn constructional unit, Mari makes

an effort to give further information. The participants' assumptions of sufficient information differ after the previous turn and the lapse. The lapse in these conversations often indicates a problem of understanding, but Mari, the first speaker, relies on the information she has already given. She adds only fragmentary completion to it, whereas Staffan interprets that the turn is not finished because of the grammatical incompleteness and discontinuous prosody of the utterance. Staffan does not react during the following lapse either. At the earlier lapses within this turn Mari has interpreted the lack of response as waiting for more information and has provided Staffan with it. Now she makes a clear remark: she interprets the lack of reaction as astonishment and asks Staffan whether the information was new to him. This action shows that Mari is able to cope with challenges in the interaction and exhibits her status as a qualified participant in the conversation. In many other similar instances the speakers avoid displaying their interpretations of each other's conduct and the "pruned" character of the conversations is accentuated.

The following example is another illustration of Mari's ability to manage the conversation despite her low fluency in Swedish. In this case, the breach is different. It is a breach against the turn-taking system: the response is given by a person not selected (Sacks & Schegloff & Jefferson 1974: 723). There is a change in the participation framework which Mari does not approve.

(37)

Mari is showing photos of the Pentecostal congregation and social life to Staffan and Ville.

01	(2)	(2)
02	Staffan <i>Ville kan du [skick]a den (det)</i>	Ville can you [pass] that (that)
03	Ville <i>[jåjå]</i>	[yesyes]
04	Ville <i>jå (.) där (var så go)</i>	yes (.) there (here you are)
05	Staffan <i>tack</i>	thank you
06	Mari <i>där e (2)</i>	there is (2)
07	<i>haj tsappara! (1)</i>	high chapparal
08	Ville <i>aha j[å::]</i>	uhu y[e::s]
→	Mari <i>[hör] du?</i>	[do you] hear?
10	Staffan <i>ah ligger den nära?</i>	ah is it near?
11	Mari <i>jåå .h (.)</i>	yeah .h (.)
12	<i>under e tjugo kilometer</i>	under eh twenty kilometer
13	Staffan <i>aha:: # där har ja aldri varit</i>	uhu:: # I have never been there
14	Ville <i>h.h</i>	h.h
15	Staffan <i>de skulle va skoj å s</i>	it'd be fun to s/
16	Ville <i>va heter den där ägaren? (.)</i>	what is the name of the owner? (.)
17	<i>kommer du ihåg? (.)</i>	do you remember? (.)
18	<i>nån (.) de va en rik</i>	someone (.) it was a rich

The turn-taking system implies that the participants have to listen to each other and follow the conversation in order to be able to take the turn when selected as next speaker or to notice a TRP where a new speaker can start a turn. This seems to be a universal feature in everyday conversations. In Example (37) Mari comments on a popular place that she expects would interest both of them (line 07). When only Ville reacts, she requests Staffan's attention by asking if he heard her (line 09). Staffan responds to the remark with an *ah* and continues then in a way that proves that he had heard what Mari said and obviously knows where High Chaparall is. The importance of it seems, however, to be considerably lower for Staffan than for Mari.

The discrepancy between Mari's and Staffan's assumptions about the participation framework may depend on various factors in the context. Before the turns in the excerpt Staffan has asked Ville to pass the photo to him. In doing so he has taken an initiative that exhibits interest in the situation and projects a continuation of involvement. On the other hand, Staffan's lack of reaction relates to the arrangement of the conversation and its institutional character. The visit is a project activity and not a spontaneously chosen social encounter, and the speakers may at times become tired of being social. Mari's expectations, however, are high, because she and Staffan are the main interactants in the conversation that is being conducted in order to elicit talk from her. Most of the conversation takes place between them, which leads Mari to direct her utterances to Staffan in the first place and expect him to participate to a greater extent than Ville.

Whichever of the two suggested interpretations for the absence of reaction is right, Staffan's behavior threatens Mari's face, because the power structure in the interaction becomes apparent. Mari, however, does not accept Staffan's withdrawal from the conversation and she remarks on it. She does so in an undramatic way that is similar to her metalinguistic comments in general. This makes the remark less severe, but at the same time sheds light on the complexity of the power structure of the conversations: the NNSs are not powerless. It must, however, be remembered that the general tone of the conversation is friendly and there is no competition for power.

The following example is one of the few in the data where the NS directly asks whether the lack of response depends on limited knowledge or a problem of understanding. This of course would be a severe remark on the recipient's behavior if the participants were NSs. In an NS-NNS encounter it reminds the participants of the prevailing asymmetry in the access to knowledge.

The episode is preceded by several short sequences about differences in beliefs and baptismal ceremonies between the Pentecostal and Lutheran churches. The participants are looking at photos.

01		(3)	(3)
02	Mari	<i>de e också s/ nära (1)</i>	it is also s/ near (1)
03		<i>ze pa (.) svalby</i>	<i>ze pa (.) svalby</i>
04	Staffan	<i>mm</i>	mm
05		(10)	(10)
06	Staffan	<i>va händer då då (.)</i>	what happens then (.)
07		<i>man blir välsignad då eller?</i>	do you get a blessing then or?
08		(3)	(3)
→	Staffan	<i>välsignad (.)</i>	blessing (.)
→		<i>vet du? (.)</i>	do you know? (.)
→		<i>förstår du?</i>	do you understand?
12	Mari	<i>signad (1)</i>	bless
13	Staffan	<i>nää (.) man säger e (.)</i>	no (: it is said eh (.)
14		<i>pt. (.) när e (2)</i>	pt. (.) when eh (2)
15		<i>när e (1) pt.</i>	when eh (1) pt.
16		<i>i svenska kyrkan (1)</i>	in the church of sweden
17		<i>när små barn döps va</i>	when small children are baptized
18	Mari	<i>mm</i>	mm
19	Staffan	<i>eh .h då ta (.) tar prästen</i>	eh .h then the priest take (.) sprinkles
20		<i>lite vatten på huvet på barnet</i>	a little water on the head of the child
21		<i>så va</i>	doesn't he
22	Mari	<i>m[m]</i>	m[m]
23	Staffan	<i>[å] säger e (.)</i>	[and] says eh (.)
24		<i>ja döper dej i faderns å sonens</i>	i baptize you in the name of the father
25		<i>å den helige andens namn va</i>	and the son and the holy ghost
26		<i>.h å då blir man välsignad (.)</i>	.h and then you get a blessing (.)
27		<i>de vill säga man får (.)</i>	it means you get (.)
28		<i>man får e (.)</i>	you get eh (.)
29		<i># hur ska man säga?</i>	# how do you say?
30		(2)	(2)
31		<i>man får guds skydd va</i>	you get the protection of god don't you
32		(3)	(3)
33	Mari	<i>föstår inte den sista:</i>	don't understand the la:st
34	Staffan	<i>jo man s- man e (3)</i>	yes you s/ you eh (3)
35		<i>pt. välsigna(d) va heter de (.)</i>	pt. blessing what do you call it
36		<i>Vill/ Vill[e]</i>	vill/vill[e]
37	Ville	<i>[*siu]nata*</i>	[*ble]ssing*
38	Staffan	<i>va sa du?</i>	what did you say?
39	Ville	<i>*siunata*</i>	*blessing*
40	Staffan	<i>*siunata*</i>	*blessing*
41	Mari	<i>mm</i>	mm
42	Staffan	<i>o*siunata*o</i>	o*blessing*o
43	Mari	<i>att e:</i>	that e:
44	Staffan	<i>e de också en del av de här?</i>	is it also a part of this?
45		(3)	(3)
46	Mari	<i>jåå (1) dom också</i>	yes (1) they also
47		(2)	(2)
48	Staffan	<i>välsignas</i>	get a blessing
49	Mari	<i>välsignas</i>	get a blessing
50	Staffan	<i>ja ja (.) mm</i>	yes yes (.) mm

Staffan's question after a lapse of ten seconds (line 05) relies on an assumption of mutual inferencing from the previous episode. The first question is only indexically connected to the previous turns. Staffan does not allow any waiting time but goes immediately over to a self-repair by explicating the inferences through suggesting an answer. This, however leads to a considerable lapse and new repair. The second attempt at repair (line 09) is a repeat of the salient word, but as there is no response, he proceeds to check Mari's knowledge and comprehension (lines 10-11). Directness such as this is not common in the data, which is due to the face-supporting way the NSs negotiate in the data (cf. Bublitz 1988). Mari does not give a direct answer to the question about knowledge but she repeats the part of the salient word she has captured. Thus she reassures Staffan about the problem and they initiate a long negotiation over the word *vålsigna*, 'bless'.

Staffan interprets the repeat as a negated answer to his question *förstår du*, 'do you understand', and he gives a third turn ratification *nää*, 'no', that expresses agreement with a negated turn. After that he initiates a lengthy description of the content of the problem word. Mari contributes to the description by giving continuers after Staffan's elicitors *va* after some TCUs (lines 17 & 21). The last utterance with *va* contains the main paraphrase and ends Staffan's description (line 31), but Mari fails to react and there is a long lapse before she explicitly indicates that she does not understand. The other aspects of the repair and the problems of understanding in this sequence are dealt with in the chapters to come.

5.5 Lack of response after first speaker's self-initiation of repair

The source for the problem of understanding may originate in the NS utterance that is to be interpreted. In a conversation between equals, the listener will need clarification and will often request this before the topic can be advanced. In the conversations in the present data there are several instances where the recipient does not display any explicit action in an instance where a clarification is obviously needed. In all these instances the recipient is the NNS. The difficulty of understanding seems to originate primarily in the word-search character of the utterance of the first speaker. For various reasons, some of which are interactional, s/he does not succeed in constructing and displaying a turn that has a context clear enough for the interlocutor. These instances display one side of the NNS features that appear in NS conduct in conversations with NNSs.

In the instances dealt with in this section the first speaker is uncertain about the construction of the utterance. This affects the

recipient, and the recipient's conduct for its part increases the speaker's uncertainty, as can be seen in the following examples.

(39)

The episode is from the beginning part of the conversation between Mari, Staffan and Ville. The guests have arrived and apologized for being late. Ville has been speaking Finnish with Mari. Mari is obviously showing her wedding photo to the guests and this has led them to ask questions about the wedding. Ville has shown a wedding announcement to Staffan immediately before the episode.

01		(5)		(5)
02	Ville	<i>tjuffjärde i (.) september mm</i>		twenty fourth in (.) september mm
03		(2)		(2)
04	Ville	<i>titta</i>		look
05	Staffan	<i>#</i>		#
06		(2)		(2)
07		<i>mm</i>		mm
08		(2)		(2)
09	Ville	<i>var hade du den här (1)</i>		where did you have this (1)
10		<i>notisen (.)</i>		notice (.)
11		<i>eh annonsen va heter de (1)</i>		eh ad what is it called (1)
12		<i>va var stod de den här (.)</i>		where was th this (.)
13		<i>i vilken tidning?</i>		in which paper?
14		(3)		(3)
15	Mari	<i>va e de finska (2)</i>		what is it finnish (2)
16		<i>m:: finnsanoma</i>		m:: finn news
17	Ville	<i>aha. finnsanomat (1) oj #</i>		i see. finn news (1) oh #
18		(7)		(7)

The bilingual speaker has the first turn in the sequence above. He is a fluent although not a native-like speaker of Swedish. The beginning of his turn is characterized by a high degree of uncertainty in finding words. He has great problems in finding a way of expressing himself. The Swedish words for 'announcement' are difficult for him and he is obviously aware of the fact that the same words are unknown to Mari. The instance can be analysed from Mari's point of view in that the two Swedish words, *notis* (line 10) and *annons* (line 11) are a problem for her, but the insecurity that Ville shows also intensifies her difficulties in coping with the problem. The situation is face-threatening for both participants. For Mari, this is because the topic is important to her. She has exhibited high involvement when showing her wedding photos and the announcement cut out of a newspaper. Ville, however, cannot join in because he has to concentrate on word search and his paralinguistic conduct threatens Mari's face. On the other hand Ville's uncertainty and accentuated status as an NNS are also related to the instability of the situation and the lack of response that he interprets as a sign of non-understanding.

Mari exhibits lack of response and thus forces Ville to continue (line 12). Ville also needs a new start to express what he wants to say

because of his difficulties in word search. He does not give any explicit turn-holding signals but it is reasonable to assume that Mari interprets his insecurity as a non-specific signal of wanting to continue. Mari's means of coping with the problem here could also be interpreted as waiting to see rather than a failure to respond.

Example (40) below demonstrates two different instances of the lack of response. The first one of these passes smoothly in the sequence but the second one leads to a breakdown of communication.

(40)

The episode is from the very beginning of the conversation between Leo, Staffan and Ville. The participants have exchanged greetings and the guests have taken their coats off.

01		(3)	(3)
02	Ville	<i>du har disko på #</i>	you have the disco on #
03		(3)	(3)
04	Ville	<i>hur mår du?</i>	how are you?
05		(2)	(2)
06	Leo	<i>jaa (.) bra</i>	well (.) OK
07	Ville	<i>bra (well) (.)</i>	fine (well) (.)
08		<i>du har inte (.) dagen efter (1)</i>	you don't have (.) hangover (1)
→		<i>efter julfesten</i>	after the christmas party
→		<i>(...) *oliks sulla?*</i>	(...) *did you have?*
11	Staffan	<i>(...) *kankkunen*</i>	(...) *hangover*
12	Ville	<i># *kauhee kankkune*</i>	# *an awful hangover*
13	Staffan	<i>*kakkunen?*</i>	*hangover?*
14	Ville	<i>*kankkunen*</i>	*hangover*
15	Staffan	<i>*kankkunen* ja</i>	*hangover* yes

Ville comments on the music. The comment does not carry a strong sequential implicativeness because of the statement form and the phatic character, but being the first speaker he has the right to indicate that he has expected a reaction. There is no vocal response, and Ville's laughter expressing strong uneasiness also indicates that there cannot be any non-verbal reaction. This first instance of the lack of response in the sequence is not particularly aggravating because it forms part of the less organized early beginning of the encounter. The laughter is followed by a pause when no one takes the turn, so Ville continues. He changes the topic to that of Leo's general well-being and gets an adequate response.

In the fourth turn after the ratification of Leo's response (line 08) Ville tries to find something to start a conversation with. He links back to his preceding question by repeating the answer and chooses a topic that is well known to all the participants in the conversation: a Christmas party they all were present at. He asks whether Leo has a hangover after the Christmas party. The question is tied to the affirmative answer Leo gave to the previous question as it is presented in the form of a negated statement: 'you don't have a hangover'. Leo does not respond although there is a syntactically and prosodically signalled transition point after *du*

har inte (.) dagen efter, 'you don't have (.) a hangover'. Ville gives him an extra cue by completing the utterance with the time adverbial *efter julfesten*, 'after the Christmas party'. When Leo fails to respond here, too, Ville marks the problem very clearly by switching over to Finnish and starting a question that Staffan completes with the object, a Finnish word for 'hangover'. The problem in this sequence seems to lie in the propositional content of the question: Ville uses the present tense in his question in Swedish although the Christmas party had taken place two weeks earlier. In the question in Finnish the tense is changed into the past. The side sequence, the negotiating for the Finnish word for 'hangover' that Staffan and Ville slip into, turns the two speakers' interest away from Leo and the original question which leads to abandoning the topic. The understanding is not checked or confirmed.

In the following example Clara does not react to Rauni's attempt to answer and continues the question after what she perceived as lack of response.

(41) [28]

Clara and Rauni have been discussing details of the childbirth and the size of the baby. At the end of the previous episode Clara has made a formulation on the basis of Rauni's turns about how big the baby is at the moment.

01	Clara	<i>ja</i>	yes
02		<i>(6)</i>	(6)
03		<i>var var föddes? (2)</i>	where was born?
04		<i>[eh] pojken (1)</i>	[eh] the boy (1)
05	Rauni	<i>[(östr/)]</i>	[[east/)]
06	Clara	<i>eh eh i (.) östra sjukhus eller?</i>	eh eh in (.) eastern hospital or?
07	Rauni	<i>ja</i>	yes
08		<i>(6)</i>	(6)

In the example a new subtopic within the main topic 'baby' is again introduced with a question. The question by the non-native speaker Clara constitutes a prosodic whole but is grammatically incomplete as a Swedish utterance. The subject is added two seconds later preceded by a short vocalization which overlaps Rauni's answer. Clara does not react to the answer and makes the question more transparent by suggesting the name of a hospital. Rauni displays agreement with an acknowledgement token. There is no confirming third: on the contrary, there is a long pause before the next sequence. The topic is known to the speakers and thus the question is only a phatic check in order to keep the conversation going. Knowing where Rauni lives, Clara can easily infer in which hospital the baby was born.

The following example resembles the first instance in Example (40) in that that the first speaker's turn does not implicate a full turn reaction. The utterance has a statement form, which only projects a confirmation.

It could be confirmed by a minimal response or mirror utterance with prowords like *ja de gjorde ja*, 'yes I did'. The minimal responses given in the sequence are delayed, which is why the first speaker interprets the listener's behavior as lack of response and repeats the question.

(42)

Clara and Rauni have been discussing various details around the birth of the baby; the last episode before the following was about whether Rauni had had an anaesthetic during the caesarean section.

01	(4)	(4)
02	Clara	<i>och efter de så stannade du (.)</i>
03		<i>eh i sjukhuset (.) några dagar</i>
→		<i>[å] var du där (.)</i>
05	Rauni	<i>[mm]</i>
→	Clara	<i>[på] sjukhuset några dagar</i>
07	Rauni	<i>[mm]</i>
08	Rauni	<i>ja de (2) ja åtta dagar</i>
09	Clara	<i>åtta?</i>
10	Rauni	<i>jaa (.) åhm:: (.) efter (.) sen (.)</i>
11		<i>när han kom (.) ah (.)</i>
12		<i>fick (.) ja fick fiber</i>
13	Clara	<i>aha</i>

The first speaker's behavior in the example above indicates that she has interpreted the next speaker's behavior as failure to respond and thus as non-understanding, although there are no long pauses for switching. The absence of clear pauses is compensated by a very slow speech rate in this turn. It is so slow that the interlocutor has good opportunities to show willingness to take the turn or contribute with acknowledgement tokens. Yet, the fragmentary prosodic structure and the order of the constituents make the propositional content of the turn less clear, and Rauni does not give feedback or indicate understanding until right after the central part, the adverb of time, which comes after a short pause as the last component of the utterance. This behavior differs from the pattern of giving relatively frequent feedback generally exhibited by the two women in the conversation. Both the connector *och* and the paralinguistic qualities of the turn suggest that Clara is giving a formulation or prefacing something new rather than asking, which also explains the delay in the answer. There is nothing in Clara's first utterance that explicitly reveals that it is, in fact, a question that she wants to get confirmation on. It can also be interpreted as phatic talk in order to avoid silence, and represents a similar change in the participation framework as the one in the conversation between Leo and Staffan about employee investment funds (Ex. (19)) where one of the participants alone takes the responsibility for keeping the conversation going. The repetition, however, acquires the function of a remark and leads to an explicit answer (line 08) that is

followed by an elaboration of the topic (lines 10-12). The participant framework here has rapidly changed so that both women are active participants.

When the deviant character of an NS-NNS conversation is manifest in an accelerated rate of speech by the NS with very short pauses at transition-relevance points, the recipient's behavior cannot be seen as failure to respond although the repeats and reformulations done by the NS might suggest this. In the following example the transition time is very short. At the beginning of the conversation with Mari, Staffan apologizes for being late and explains that the tram broke down on the way to Mari's.

(43) [54]

The episode is the very beginning of the conversation between Mari, Staffan and Ville.

01	Staffan	<i>hej</i>	hello / hi
02	Mari	<i>hej</i>	hi
03	Staffan	[[#	[[#
04	Ville	[[<i>hej</i>	[[hi
05	Mari	<i>välkomna</i>	welcome
06	Ville	<i>a</i>	a
07	Mari	<i>oj</i>	oh
08	Staffan	<i>tack (.) förlåt vi e sena (1)</i>	thank you (.) sorry we are late (1)
09		<i>vi e:: d spårvagnen gick sönder</i>	we e:: d the tram broke down
10		(2)	(2)
→	Staffan	[[.hh	[[.hh
12	Mari	[[<i>jick ju (.) men</i>	[[went well (.) but
→	Staffan	<i>dörren på spårvagnen ramla av (1)</i>	the door of the tram dropped off (1)
14	Mari	<i>aha</i>	uhu
15	Staffan	<i>dörren gick sönder (.)</i>	the door was broken (.)
→		<i>så b spårvagnen kunde inte köra (1)</i>	so b the tram could not move (1)
→		<i>den stog stilla i::</i>	it just stopped in::
18	Ville	<i>men (.) vi vill trö[sta dej]</i>	but (.) we want to com[fort you]
19	Staffan	[(...)]	[(...)]

Staffan makes an effort to take the turn after a lapse of two seconds on line 10. His start, however, overlaps with Mari's and he yields to her, but she also interrupts her turn. Staffan's actual repair is on line 13. It is projected by the lapse and by Mari's incoherent response. The sequence on lines 09-13 displays clearly the problem the analyst always faces in dealing with NNS conversations: to what extent are the problems that emerge problems of understanding and not problems of production? The sequence contains several potential trouble sources. On the one hand, there are difficulties in the referent: Staffan's utterance begins with word search which may put an extra strain on the recipient, although the end of the utterance is very clear and should not contain any lexical difficulties. On the other hand, the sequential implication of assessments

is less strong than that of questions, but the ways of responding to an assessment vary and the conversations under study hint that the NNSs have difficulties in producing adequate responses to assessments. Mari's reaction here supports the interpretation that the problem may be that of production, or at least that problems of both production and understanding are intertwined.

On lines 15-17 Staffan continues describing the broken-down tram. His turn exhibits a prosodic structure that forms a very tight whole. The pause before the causal utterance is short but clear because the sentence ends in a fall. The speech rate within the sentences is not very high. It is the short pauses at transition-relevant points that give the impression of the speaker being nervous. Because the fragment is from the very beginning of the conversation, it is reasonable to assume that the speakers have not yet adjusted themselves to the collaboration process. For instance, even a pause of one second seems to be short for Mari. Similar conduct has been reported from conversations between equals. In these instances the speaker wants to keep the turn and rushes through the junctures in order to prevent transitions (Schegloff 1982). This cannot be the explanation for Staffan's short transition pauses. He rather wants to preclude awkward silences. Gaskill (1980), who studied repair in NS-NNS conversations found similar avoidance of pauses in NS behavior.

Mari's responses are uttered in a low voice which - together with other, non-verbal expressions of uncertainty and the incoherent response - contributes to the insecurity of the beginning phase of the conversation. The sequence occurs at the very beginning of the conversation immediately after the greeting sequence as shown by the transcript.

Example (44) illustrates how the NNS uses a paraphrase to secure confirmation of understanding. In fact, Mari uses the paraphrase in a way that is rather a repair of Staffan's expression than a manifestation of a lower command of Swedish and a request for help. The roles of the speakers are switched here: Mari is a professional seamstress and she is quite confident about the term in both the turns where she uses it. Her pronunciation, the stress placement, differs from standard Swedish, but that does not cause Staffan any problems. The repair that the NS starts on line 03 is completed by the NNS.

(44)

The guests are looking at an apron Mari has made. Before the episode Staffan has asked Mari if she has designed it by herself and she has answered that her husband designed it.

01	Staff	<i>jaha</i>	well
02		(2)	(2)
03		<i>men du har inte köpt en e</i> (.)	but you haven't bought a eh (.)
04		<i>du har inte köpt en beskrivning</i> (.)	you haven't bought a plan (.)
→		<i>du har inte köpt en:: mall?</i> (1)	you haven't bought a:: model? (1)
→	Mari	<i>'modell?</i>	<i>pattern</i>
07	Staff	<i>jaa=</i>	yes=

08	Mari	=ne:j. ja har inte (.)	=no:. I have not (.)
09		ingengting 'modell .h	nothing pattern .h
10		[tänklä bara:: att (1)	[think] only:: that (1)
11	Staff	[jaa]	[yes]
12	Mari	de e bra	it is good
13	Staffan	m	m

The example above is another example of an NNS's failure to respond. Staffan as NS manifests something similar to the uncertainty that the bilingual NNS Ville showed when he was searching for the word for 'announcement' in Swedish. The word search starts at the end of line 03. The difference between this and many other word searches in the data is that Staffan's conduct does not signal any difficulties before he has reached to the trouble word in his utterance. The word search turn constitutes a three-part list where only the last component, the object has been changed. Staffan uses words that a Swede would take as adequate in the situation but they are unknown to Mari. Mari does not respond at the first transition point offered so that Staffan has to make an attempt to find a synonym for the trouble word. The word *mall*, 'model' has great resemblance to the corresponding Finnish word *malli* which is also close to the intended meaning. The problem is jointly resolved through Staffan's self-repair and the other-repair done by Mari.

Most examples in the data demonstrate that the problem of understanding a turn often lies in the relationship between the actual turn and an earlier one. The earlier turn has shaped the context in a certain way, which is sometimes changed radically by another turn as is the case in the following example.

(45)

The participants have been talking for a while about some objects in the room after the arrival of the guests. This is the only time when an NNS initiates a new topic with a question.

01		(3)	(3)
02	Mari	vassogo sitta nu	please to sit now
03	Staffan	tack	thank you
04	Ville	[[tack	[[thank you
05	Mari	[[jä om e vill ni ha kaffe?	[[yes if eh do you want to have coffee?
06	Staffan	[ja jätte]gärna #	y[es we'd] love to
07	Mari	[(eller)]	[(or)]
08	Mari	ni: (.) dricker inte aldri (1)	you: (.) never not drink (1)
09		te ja tror	tea I believe
→		(2)	(2)
→	Staffan	jaa (.) vicket som för mej (1)	yes (.) anything for me (1)
12		d/ de e vicket som (1)	i/ it's anything (1)
13		te eller kaffe	tea or coffee
13	Ville	ja kaffe	yes coffee
14	Mari	m=	m=

15	Ville	=eller te	=or tea
16	Staffan	# ah	# ah
17	Mari	# ja menar bara de att e .h	# I just mean that eh .h
18		vi har inte (.) de (1)	we don't have (.) the (1)
→		kaffmaskin va heter den? (1)	coffee machine what is it called? (1)
→		kaff (1) de att	coff (1) it that
→		(2)	(2)
→	Ville	(vill du)	(if you want)
→		om de e enklare å laga te	if it's easier to make tea
24		så de passar jättebra	it suits very well
25	Staffan	ta va du själv tänkte ta	have just what you planned to have
26	Mari	tack	thank you

At the beginning of the excerpt above Mari asks her guests if they would like to have coffee (line 05). Staffan accepts the offer saying that he would be very delighted. However, making coffee is a problem for Mari, and she starts finding out if it would be possible to serve tea. The two-second lapse after her question indicates that Staffan and Ville are having a problem of understanding.

The participants have difficulties in negotiating for a shared understanding. On lines 17-20 Mari makes an effort to explain why she cannot make coffee. She has difficulties in finding the word for the coffee maker. The difficulty lies at the beginning of the turn when she progresses so slowly that the other speakers can only assume that there is a problem in making coffee. When she says *vi har inte*, 'we haven't got', the other two know that she cannot make the coffee, but they have already said that it can be coffee or tea. This means that they have completed their obligations and are now expecting Mari to give an explanation: she has first offered them coffee and then wanted to change over to tea. Mari's turn on lines 17-20 displays that there is both a practical problem in making coffee and a linguistic problem in describing the practical problem. The first longer pause (line 18) is not considered as a TRP by the other participants, because the most central part of the utterance, the object, is lacking. Mari makes a guess but wants to check if it is correct. Now she explicitly asks for help and considers that she has given sufficient information. Neither one of the other speakers react, and Mari makes two more starts to resolve the problem.

There are several face-threatening instances in the episode. Firstly, when Mari initially offers coffee, Staffan accepts the offer with a strong affirmative. Mari seems to have planned to have a longer turn, which can be seen in the overlapping *eller*, 'or', but Staffan reacts faster than he usually does in conversation with Mari and thus he interrupts her turn. In the fast reaction he is in his private role, which, in principle, could level out some of the asymmetries between the participants but which at the same time causes new ones because of the unmodified use of NS language.

The instances where the NS does not react at a TRP are more intricate and less transparent than the corresponding ones in NS talk, because the NNS's utterances often deviate from both the grammatical and prosodic structure of the NS's language. Thus the NS cannot rely on her/his knowledge about the normal cues that signal a TRP. On the other hand, the NS often allows the NNS very long pauses within turns when s/he expects the NNS to complete a turn. The NNS, however, may have a quite different idea of the turn: s/he is not able to express her/himself more accurately and expects the NS to understand and display that understanding as soon as possible during the attempt to accomplish the turn.

In the following example the problem turn is linked to earlier turns and assumes mutual inferencing similar to that in Example (36). Although there is no sudden change in the topic, there is a change of perspective which is signalled by the adversative connector *men*, 'but'. The speaker is counting on the recipient having done the same inferencing as he has. The adversative connector may, however, signal a change for Tarja and her inferencing is further impeded by the word search *om man va?*, 'if you what?' after the first completion.

(46)

The episode is preceded by a narrative episode, in which Olle has told a story about getting the almond in the Christmas porridge. He first asked Tarja if it also was a habit in Finland to put an almond in the Christmas porridge. He then related how in his family it was his grandfather who always got the almond. Olle also explained that getting the almond means that you will get married the following year and that was a silly idea because his grandfather was already married.

01	(3)	(3)
02	Olle <i>men vet du va de betyder då (.)</i>	but do you know what it means then (.)
03	<i>om man man va?</i>	if you you what?
04	<i>betyder de samma sak i finland</i>	does it mean the same in finland
05	(2)	(2)
→	Olle <i>om man får mandeln (1)</i>	if you get the almond (1)
07	<i>va händer då</i>	what happens then
08	Tarja <i>det vet ja inte</i>	that i don't know

Olle's questions refer to the narrative he related in the previous episode. Olle starts the repair after the first completion with a false start on line 03. This gives him time to make the question more transparent and specific, but is certainly confusing for Tarja. The repair utterance on line 04 is still only indexically connected to the previous narrative except for the new aspect and focus on Finland. The interaction breaks down into a lapse of two seconds. In his third attempt at repair Olle replaces all the indexical expressions and proverbs by semantically fuller words and displays his inferencing explicitly, which resolves the problem.

Negative minimal response is not used in as many contexts and is

thereby not ambiguous to the same extent as other acknowledgement tokens are. It is mostly interpreted at face value, as an unambiguous negative response (see Ch. 6). The following example, however, shows how even negative minimal response can be interpreted as non-understanding.

(47)

The episode is the last part of the discussion about Christmas customs in Tarja's childhood. Olle has been asking questions and Tarja has given short answers. The immediately preceding question was about lute fish and the answer was 'no'.

01	Olle	<i>hade ni grisfötter?</i>	did you have pig's feet?
02		(3)	(3)
03	Tarja	[[<i>nej</i>]]	[[no]]
04	Olle	[[<i>de åt ja mycket när ja va liten</i>]]	[[I had them a lot of that when I was little]]
05		(1)	(1)
→		<i>de de e själva foten av grisen</i>	it it's just the foot of the pig
07		<i>som (.)</i>	that (.)
08		<i>de e hemst gott (.)</i>	it's terribly good (.)
09		<i>[som en gele då]</i>	[like a jelly]
10	Anna	[[.....]] (.) <i>de hade vi nu de va</i>	[[.....]] (.) we had it now it was
11		<i>första gången ja smaka på dom</i>	the first time i tasted them

Olle allows Tarja time to answer the question but after the lack of response he continues with a spontaneously expressed memory. Tarja starts her response at the same time. Olle is not interrupted in his utterance about eating pig's feet when he was little, although Tarja's negated answer overlaps with the beginning of the utterance. It is in the second utterance that Olle first displays his interpretation of Tarja's action, the lapse followed by *nej*, as non-understanding. The interpretation must primarily be based on the long delay of the response and secondarily on the insecurity in her voice because the overlap made it difficult for Olle to capture all the qualities of Tarja's utterance. The second lapse (line 04) also supports and thereby affects Olle's interpretation of Tarja's response. Both Olle's and Tarja's conduct can also be analyzed to display partial understanding, namely, that Tarja does not know exactly what the word means but assumes that they did not have it.

5.6 Summary

Understanding is always related to the action of responding because it only can be displayed in a response. Therefore a lack of response can be interpreted as a problem of understanding. This is the fundamental

assumption in all conversations according to interactionalists (e.g. Sacks et al. 1974; Gumperz 1982a; Heritage 1984b; Volosinov 1986; Linell 1993). The interpretations of lapses, however, range from dispreferred seconds through non-understanding to inappropriate behaviors which surface as remarks or corrections. In the present data, the physical lengths of the lapses have no direct relation to the first speaker's reaction. The explanations for the different interpretations can rather be found in the preceding context and in the setting. Lapses are also interpreted differently according to who is the first speaker whose turn has been followed by a pause. If the NNS has failed to respond, the NS starts a repair, whereas the NNSs interpret NS or BS lapses as an opportunity for slow production and continue and develop their turns by presenting more information.

According to Schegloff et al. (1977) self-initiated and other-initiated repairs are mutually exclusive types of repair initiation. The pauses in the present data suggest, however, that the distinction is not quite clear. The question of the repair type problematizes the concept of turn in the NNS data. The differences in the reactions to lapses may also suggest that the participants have different interpretations of turn constructional units and transition-relevance points, and, furthermore, that they can react differently in similar situations (cf. Ex. (17) & (18)).

The repairs after a lack of response display various breaches of intersubjectivity. First, the repair may be unnecessary because the recipient may have been silent because of problems of production rather than those of interpretation. Secondly, the first speaker's interpretation of the trouble source may be wrong. Thirdly, the overall insecurity of a situation with an apparent breach of intersubjectivity but no information about the trouble source hinders both production and interpretation in the attempt at repair. Fourthly, the problem becomes more intricate if the participants interpret the problem to be something other than a problem of understanding. One or more of these breaches may occur in a negotiation for understanding that follows a lapse. This leads to great difficulties in interpretation of the participants' actions both for them and the analyst.

The most frequently used repair strategy after lapses in the present data is reformulation, mainly through expansion. The reformulations in the data are not framed with utterances such as 'I mean' that have been found to be frequent in other data (Schegloff 1992: 1310). This again displays the parsimonious use of linguistic means in the conversations. The NNSs lack linguistic means of expressing discourse functions, and the NSs do not display mastery of them in the way they do in conversations with equals. The analysis of the trouble sequences shows that all expansions have a dual effect: they both add information and data to be interpreted and through the additional strain increase the insecurity of the NNSs. They have to make new interpretations of the earlier utterances

that they only fragmentarily understood at the time.

The trouble source turns are mostly B-event questions that introduce new topics or subtopics. In a similar way, statements with B-event content are used in introducing new topics or subtopics. Both these types project responses about the NNS's (BS's) life and emotions. The asymmetry of the participants is displayed in the distribution of the initiation turns. In conversations C2, C3, and C4 the topics are mainly introduced by an NS or a BS. The NNSs initiate less and if they do, they do not use questions. The only exception is Mari who does this once when she asks whether the guests would like to have coffee or tea.

The literature about interaction strategies in NS-NNS discourse presents evidence that NSs take more responsibility for anticipating and repairing communicative problems by using strategies such as elaboration, reformulation and confirmation checks (e.g. Gass & Varonis 1985). There has also been discussion of the functions that accommodation serves. In most discussions, accommodation has been seen as facilitating the interaction by providing speech that is easier to comprehend (e.g. Gass & Varonis 1985, Long 1983, Snow et al. 1981, Hatch 1983 & 1992). In addition, some studies have suggested that accommodations used by NSs or teachers may facilitate the of second language acquisition by providing input that is easier to process (e.g. Hatch 1983, Heredia 1986, Long 1981). The negative impact of accommodation has also received attention in some studies that have focussed on ways in which it may limit access to the language and culture of the NS (Valdman 1981) and lead to the fossilization of the language development of immigrants (e.g. Dittmar & Stutterheim 1985, Klein 1986). In my data, Rauni displays examples of fossilization which can partially be related to the strongly modified Swedish used by her husband with her (cf. p. 22).

At the same time as the NSs act as a resource for the NNSs, they display many NNS features in their linguistic behavior. They are frequently forced to do word search, they need time for both production and interpretation, and their interpretations are often uncertain and inaccurate. The language they share with their interlocutor is not their native language. Thus the NSs lose some of their nativeness although neither their proficiency nor their conduct is identical with that of the NNSs. They still have more means for expressing themselves and more linguistic knowledge for accomplishing interpretations.

The problem of intersubjectivity and membership knowledge that is central in all intercultural interaction is accentuated in instances where the recipient reacts with silence. The conversations studied offer data about silence as both an accepted part of a communication process where production and interpretation is done slowly and as a form of disfluency or malfunction (cf. Scollon 1985). In the case of the latter type the topic ceases to advance and a repair is initiated. The first speaker tries to identify the trouble source through guesses. S/he never initiates the

repair by asking directly what the trouble source was. Instead, s/he starts the repair with tentative changes and concentrates mostly on lexical items. Such guesses exhibit the insecurity of the conversations, but they are also an element in the collaborative construction of turns. By doing this in an NS-NNS conversation, the NS is also offering the NNS linguistic assistance for forming turns.

6 NEGOTIATING FOR UNDERSTANDING: AMBIGUOUS AND VAGUE UTTERANCES AS REPAIR INITIATIONS

6.1 Minimal response

Minimal responses such as *m*, *mm*, *aha*, *jaa*, *jasså*, *nåhå*, and to certain extent *ja* and *nej* are very multifunctional. In other words, they are used in a variety of contexts: they are seldom totally inappropriate although they can be difficult to interpret and their meaning is difficult to explicate. According to Schegloff (1982) utterances such as *uh-huh* are used to exhibit interest, attention, understanding, and agreement. This view is shared by other researchers of communication. Allwood (1988), for instance, argues that the basic communicative functions of minimal feedback are maintenance of contact and interaction, and indicating perception, understanding, and attitudinal reactions. Minimal responses are mostly produced by other parties than the main speaker, and therefore they have often been called "back channels" (Duncan, 1973), "continuers" (Schegloff 1982) and "narrow feedback" (Allwood 1988). Allwood (1988) distinguishes between feedback and back-channelling by stating that "back-channelling is giving feedback when out of turn". Within CA the question is not considered to be relevant and there is no clear agreement about this: Schegloff (1982) does not consider continuers to constitute turns, whereas Goodwin (1981: 19) claims that turns are not static units but time-bound processes and that turn boundaries are mutable. Likewise, Hakulinen and Sorjonen (1986b) consider it irrelevant to make a distinction between turn and minimal responses. In the present study the function of the minimal response cannot be taken as a criterion for drawing a line between turn and non-turn. For one thing, this function

is not easy to identify in many instances, and there is often a great discrepancy between the intended and interpreted function, which often surfaces later in the conversation. As mentioned before, speech rate and intonation are sometimes so highly deviant that there are no uniform criteria for turn boundaries that would allow an interpretation of out-of-turn expressions. In the present study all instances of vocal response that are located in clear slots and do not overlap the interlocutor's talk in the middle of a continuous turn are considered as turns.

The participants use a variety of acknowledgement tokens. Many of them, such as the monosyllabic *m* and the two-syllabic *mm* and *mhm*, are common to all speakers. The NNSs use certain utterances that differ clearly from the native use. The most frequent of these is the Finnish equivalent *jå* (Swedish orthography) for the Swedish *ja* and *jo*⁴. *ja* is used as a response that expresses agreement with an affirmative statement or follows a yes/no question if the question does not contain a negation. After a negated question the answer is *jo*. In Finnish no such differentiation is made. One of the most frequent acknowledgement tokens in Finnish is *joo* (Finnish orthography). All the Finns in the data use this acknowledgement token and it is transcribed *jå* when it occurs in conversations in Swedish. Its status as code-switching or not is complicated. The Finnish speaker may use it as a result of phonetic contamination between the Finnish and (West) Swedish utterances, and the Swedish recipient identifies it as a fairly common variant that is used by people from northern Sweden or by both Finnish- and Swedish-speaking people that come from Finland. For these reasons *jå* has not been noted as Finnish element in the transcripts.

The following table gives the acknowledgement tokens and their distribution in the conversations:

TABLE 5 The acknowledgement tokens used by the NNSs and NSs in the data.

NNS & NS	NNS	NS
<i>m</i>	<i>mm just</i>	<i>mhm jaa</i>
<i>mm</i>	<i>just</i>	<i>asså</i>
<i>mhm</i>	<i>.å</i>	<i>jo</i>
<i>ja</i>	<i>åhm</i>	<i>javisst</i>
<i>jaa</i>	<i>aj</i>	<i>nehej</i>
<i>jaha</i>	<i>jå</i>	<i>ja just de</i>
<i>aha</i>	<i>jåå</i>	<i>nej just de</i>
<i>.ja</i>	<i>åå</i>	

4 The vowel qualities in the utterances are clearly different: Finnish [jɔ:], Swedish [ja:] and [ju:]. The western Swedish [ɑ:], however, is very rounded and therefore often perceived as /o/ especially by Finns. This is displayed in the production of the Finnish NNSs in the data.

NNS & NS	NNS	NS
.a	jo [ju:] ⁵	
.aa	joo [ju:u]	
.h	äj	
nej	mm jo	
nä	mjo	
	å jo	
	aj ja	
	aj jå	

The table exhibits the great variety of the acknowledgement tokens used by the NNSs in the data. Many of them show transfer from Finnish, for instance the use of *aj ja* and *aj jå* that are sometimes used as agreement responses after a repair. The token *jo* is placed both in the NNS column and in the NS column because the uses differ so widely.

The following example illustrates the frequent use of response tokens in the data. The example also displays the asymmetric distribution of the particle turns. The episode is a narrative in which the NNS gives the NS minimal responses which function as back-channelling. The pauses before and after the feedback utterances are clear, which reflects the slow pace of the speech. The NNS gives adequate continuers to the NS thus contributing to the construction of the narrative. In instances where the NNS presents a narrative there is an instability in the NS's interpretations of NNS turns: the recipient sometimes expects grammatical and/or prosodic completeness but sometimes bases his interpretations on pause only (see Ex. (13) & (14)).

(48)

In the previous episode the participants have been discussing furniture bought in a popular furniture market. The topic 'preparations for Christmas' has been taken up in a couple of earlier sequences. Lucia is a holiday in Sweden on 13 December. There have been pauses of 5-11 seconds between the prior episodes about Christmas.

01	Leo	oj(1)	oh (1)
02		ja de e hhh (.) 'lucia i (.) morron	yeah it is hhh (.) 'lucia to (.) morrow
03	Staffan	jaa	yes
04		(2)	(2)
05		då ska man va uppe hela natten	then you'll have to stay awake all night
06		i natt egentlien	tonight actually
→	Leo	#	#
07		(3)	[3]
08	Staffan	dricka glögg å annat	to drink glögg and so forth
09		(2)	(2)
10		när ja va/ gick i skolan då	when I was/ went to school then we were
11		skulle vi	supposed to

5 In order to clarify the pronunciation, the symbols of the International Phonetic Association (IPA) have been used. These are shown in brackets.

12		<i>allti:: (1) som vi sa lussa (1)</i>	always:: (1) as we said to "lussa" (1)
13		<i>på lärare</i>	the teachers
→	Leo	<i>mhm</i>	mhm
14	Staffan	<i>gjorde ni de också?</i>	did you do that too?
15	Leo	<i>näj aldrig i #finland#</i>	no never in #finland#
16		(3)	(3)
17	Staffan	<i>d då (.) då gick vi (.)</i>	th then (.) then we went (.)
18		<i>då klädde vi ut oss på olika sätt va</i>	then we disguised ourselves you know
19		(1)	(1)
20		<i>i lakan å annat sånt</i>	in sheets and so forth
→	Leo	<i>.jä</i>	.yeah
22	Staffan	<i>å så gick vi hem till vår lärare å</i>	an so we went to our teacher's home and
23		<i>väckte honom så där klockan tre</i>	woke him up about three o'clock
24		<i>[på] (.) morronen</i>	[in] (.) the morning
→	Leo	<i>[jä]</i>	[yeah]
25		(2)	(2)
26	Staffan	<i>stod å gapa utanför fönstret (2)</i>	standing and screaming outside the window
27		<i>så blev vi inläppta då (2)</i>	so we were invited in then
28		<i>av hans fru å så fick vi kaffe</i>	by his wife an so we got coffee
29		<i>å sånt där</i>	and so forth
→	Leo	<i>mhm</i>	mhm
31		(4)	(4)
32	Leo	<i>näj vi firar <u>inte</u> lucia i finland</i>	no we do <u>not</u> celebrate lucia in finland
33	Staffan	<i>nej nej just [de de e]</i>	no no exactly [it it's]
34	Leo	<i>[bara] några (2)</i>	[only] some (2)
35		<i>finska: svenskar</i>	finni:sh swedish
36	Staffan	<i>ja ja (1)</i>	yes yes (1)
37		<i>nej ni firar inte lucia alls nej</i>	no you don't celebrate lucia at all no
38	Leo	<i>.nä</i>	.no
39		(3)	(3)

The first minimal response Leo gives to Staffan during the narrative is a short laugh (line 07), which resembles other vocalized minimal responses. It comes here as a relevant consequential next action to Staffan's commencement of a narrative (Jefferson 1979). Leo here displays his understanding of shared assumptions about staying awake all night when on holiday and thus creates a sense of affiliation (Jefferson et al. 1987). Staffan's pace is very slow during the narrative, thus allowing Leo time for responses and thus active participation in the episode. Slowing down the pace is a common means in NS talk to NNS (see e.g. Ferguson 1971; Long 1983; Chaudron 1988; Ellis 1994), but, alternatively, the slow pace may also express low involvement in the topic *per se*: the narrative may have the function of filling out the time assigned for the encounter.

All the subsequent minimal responses in the sequence above are also interpreted as encouragers (lines 14, 21, 25 & 30). Although there is a long chain of minimal responses, the first speaker continues the narrative without understanding checks. In this episode, in contrast to most other episodes analyzed in the present study, the speaker and the recipient, by both their vocal and non-vocal actions, constitute a participation framework with shared assumptions about the special

character of the conversation (Goffman 1981; Goodwin & Goodwin 1987; Kendon 1991). The NNS participates here more actively but the asymmetry of the proficiencies is exhibited in the length of the turns. This is done in a similar way to that in Example (19) where the participants seem to have accepted the asymmetry in the structure of their roles. This suggests that cooperation between the participants works well when the institutional roles are made relevant, whereas the instability of the participation framework becomes visible when the speakers switch between their institutional and private roles and become insecure in their interpretations of ambiguous elements. In the following, I will analyze cases where the ambiguity of the response leads to problems of interpretation. In addition to instances of ambiguous responses, sequences with vague responses are also analyzed.

6.2 Minimal response as repair initiation

Long chains of minimal response in everyday conversations can be interpreted as impolite behavior, or at least as non-involvement (Green-Vänttinen 1993), unless the first speaker has reserved a longer turn, for instance a narrative. In conversations with an NNS the interpretation of a long chain is non-understanding if there are no explicit cues enabling another interpretation (see e.g. Allwood 1988; Bremer et al. 1988; Kalin 1988, 1989 & 1992). In the conversations with Leo, Mari, Rauni, and Tarja which were recorded at an earlier stage of their language acquisition the NNSs use minimal response as a compensatory strategy more than in the present data, and the NSs often interpret it as non-understanding (see Kalin 1988, 1989 & 1992).

In the following example Leo refers back to an earlier turn by Staffan and asks him where Mora is. Staffan's answer *i dalarna*, 'in Dalarna', implies that he assumes that Leo knows the locations of the Swedish provinces. Leo answers with a seemingly adequate third turn ratification *mhm*, but does not continue. The silence after the ratification, however, makes the understanding unclear. If this, for instance, had been within a narrative, the response would have been adequate as ratification of an answer to a check. Here the question is a genuine request for information and not a teacher question which is often followed by a short ratification structure like this (see e.g. Leiwo et al. 1981 and Håkansson & Lindberg 1988; Juvonen 1989). Therefore the hearer could expect the poser of the question to display a higher involvement in the topic than Leo does with the plain *mhm*. He could have said something that would give a clearer interpretation of the value of Staffan's answer to him or something that would give a reason for why he asked.

(49)

The participants have been looking at a book about sports and are having coffee. Staffan has made a local reference to a special Swedish knife that Leo has by saying "have you bought a Mora knife?" which has been followed by an inhaled acknowledgement token and a pause of 14 seconds. After this, Staffan has commented on the knife in two short turns in Finnish and Swedish and there have again been long pauses between the utterances.

01	(5)	(5)
02	Staffan <i>min farfar (.) var från mora</i>	my grandfather (.) came from mora
03	Leo <i>var på mora (1) eh [jobbade?]</i>	was at mora (1) eh [had a job?]
04	Staffan <i>[från från] mora</i>	[from from] mora
05	Leo <i>aha::</i>	uh <u>u</u>
06	(9)	(9)
07	Leo <i>var ligger de (.) nånstans?</i>	where is it?
08	Staffan <i>i dalarna</i>	in dalarna
→	Leo <i>mhm</i>	mhm
10	(4)	(4)

Leo's confining himself to a minimal response is a part of his language learner identity in which the use of short multifunctional expressions constitute a central part of the proficiency. In Finnish and Swedish minimal response tokens have many similarities, which leads the learner to be relatively confident in using them. On the other hand, as the present data frequently testifies, the special character of the conversations between researchers and informants also gives a partial explanation for the frequent use of minimal responses.

The following quizz-like sequence of questions and answers shows that the speakers have different assumptions as to sufficient understanding and the level of the goal of understanding. Leo, obviously aided by the contextual information, understands the meaning of the utterance, that Dalarna is an area in Sweden, but does not go into a negotiation of where exactly it is. Staffan, in his turn, both interprets that there is only a partial understanding of his answer and sees here a new chance to find a topic that could be used to prevent the conversation from ebbing away.

(50)

The sequence is the immediate continuation of (49).

11	Staffan <i>vet du var dalarna e?</i>	do you know where dalarna is?
12	(2)	(2)
13	Leo <i>vänta li/</i>	wait a li/
14	(4)	(4)
15	Leo <i>◦dala◦ ((whispers))</i>	◦dala◦ ((whispers))
16	Staffan <i>lek[sand]</i>	lek[sand]
17	Leo <i>[vid] (.) västkust eller (.)</i>	[at] (.) west coast or (.)
18	<i>*ei* ne (.) östkust</i>	*no* no (.) east coast
19	Staffan <i>nej</i>	no

20	Leo	<i>näj de e inte dalar</i>	no it's not dalar
21		(4)	(4)
22	Staffan	<i>eh (.) dalarna gränsar mot norge</i>	eh (.) dalarna borders on norway
23		(4)	(4)
24	Staffan	<i>du (.) du (.)</i>	you (.) you(.)
25		<i>vet du de här ishockilaget</i>	do you know this ice hockey team
26		<i>i leksand?</i>	in leksand?
→	Leo	<i>mm ((clear voice))</i>	mm ((clear voice))
28	Staffan	<i>dom e från dalarna</i>	they are from dalarna
→	Leo	<i>aha (.) de e där</i>	uhu (.) that one
30	Staffan	<i>gustav vasa kom från dalarna</i>	gustav vasa came from dalarna
→	Leo	<i>aha #</i>	uhu #
32	Staffan	<i>vet du vem gustav vasa va?</i>	do you know who gustav vasa was?
33		(3)	(3)
34	Leo	<i>han var (.) sveriges #kong#</i>	he was (.) #king# of sweden
35	Staffan	<i>jaa (2) just</i>	yes (2) exactly
36	Leo	<i>de va</i>	it was
37		(3)	(3)
38		<i>*okustaa vaasa^o* (1)</i>	<i>*ogustav vasa^o* (1)</i>
39		<i>sjuttonhudratalet eller (.) arton</i>	seventeen hundred or (.) eighteen
40	Staffan	<i>gustav vasa (.) inte adolf</i>	gustav vasa (.) not adolf
41		(2)	(2)
42	Staffan	<i>gustav adolf de va (.) sjutton</i>	gustav adolf that was (.) seventeen eighteen
43		<i>artonhudratalet men (.)</i>	hundred but (.)
44		<i>gustav vasa va (2)</i>	gustav vasa was (2)
45		<i>femtonhudratalet (.) i början</i>	sixteenth century (.) in the beginning
46		(8)	(8)

The minimal responses in the above sequence (lines 27, 29 & 31) are all uttered in a clear voice which suggests that Leo has reached a partial understanding. The development of the topic is not disturbed and Staffan presents examples that contribute to giving information about the geographical area under discussion. The third acknowledgement token is followed by a laugh which makes the interpretation of understanding insecure and Staffan checks Leo's knowledge about the facts, not the linguistic structure. This leads to a long episode with the historical facts around King Gustav Vasa where the turn-taking structure is less asymmetrical than in the episodes above.

There is an interesting behavior in the sequence that sheds light on the special nature of the data. In an earlier stage of learning the metalinguistic insertions of all the NNSs in the data were marked by prosody, paralinguistic means, gaze, and sometimes codeswitching (see Kalin 1988). Mari, Rauni and Tarja still, at the time of the recordings of the present data, carry out metalinguistic negotiations in this way. Leo's behavior, however, exhibits fewer NNS features than that of Mari, Rauni and Tarja, but in this sequence Leo performs some of his inferencing aloud. He first whispers (line 15) and later merely lowers his voice and codeswitches (line 38). Thereby he moves out of the role of an active interactant in the participation framework that has been defined

collaboratively. This part of his talk is not produced to be understood by the interlocutor. This is, in fact, a breach against the conversational rule "no talking to oneself in public" (Goffman 1981: 88) and would in another context threaten both his own face and that of his interlocutor. Leo, however, has the role of learner in the conversation, which allows him to use compensatory strategies when he does not have access to the knowledge he needs in the context. The asymmetry of the encounters is highlighted when we compare Leo's turning away from his interlocutor with episodes in which the speakers with a higher language proficiency, i.e. Staffan and Ville or Olle and Anna, start talking to each other and ignore the NNS. In the latter cases the ignored interlocutors have inferior status in the encounter and no chance of following the conversation between the more knowing participants, whereas the NSs are by and large able to follow the metalinguistic negotiations of the NNSs. The BS and the bilingual analyst have free access to them, which means that there is a clear-cut difference in the membership-knowledge between the participants on the one hand and between the participants and the analyst on the other hand.

(51)

The negotiation about the identity of the Swedish king Gustav Vasa is continued.

47	Staffan	<i>de va han som:: (1)</i>	it wz he tha:t (1)
48		<i>gjorde slut på katolicismen</i>	put an end to catholicism
49		<i>(1)</i>	(1)
→	Leo	<i>aha</i>	i see
51	Staffan	<i>alla katoliker fick (.) sluta</i>	all catholics had to (.) stop
52		<i>(9) ((coffee drinking))</i>	(9) ((coffee drinking))
53	Staffan	<i>bli protestanter i stället</i>	become protestants instead
→	Leo	<i>#</i>	#
55		<i>(3)</i>	(3)

Leo's response on line 50 is delayed, which, together with the paralinguistically expressed insecurity of the utterance, leads to a reformulation by Staffan. He interprets that both the abstract noun *katolicismen* and the syntactic structure of the utterance were too difficult for Leo, so he replaces the abstract word *katolicismen*, 'Catholicism', with a personal subject. Although Leo has exhibited a fairly wide knowledge of the world, it is reasonable to assume that he is not well acquainted with religious terminology in Swedish. The topics in the conversations he has had have often been chosen by him and they have concerned sports, cars and work in a car factory. It is, therefore, evident that all three nouns are unknown to him, even *protestanter*, although he is able to identify the meaning of the stem of the word. With a short laugh (line 54) in response to Staffan's second reformulation he fulfills his obligation to react to the completed previous turn but leaves the question of understanding

unsolved. After a long pause the speakers continue talking about King Gustav Vasa.

Because the participants are occupied with coffee drinking while they talk, the breaches are not as face-threatening as they would be if there was no other activity going on. The speakers can consciously or unconsciously be engaged in something in the local context that takes their attention and functions as an acceptable excuse for not attending to the conversation.

The following example is the only one in C1, the conversation with Leo, where the problems of understanding clearly affect the structure of the conversation and no outcome is reached. Leo makes an effort to describe and comment on the interior of a luxurious car he had mentioned in his previous turn. He does a word search and asks Staffan for help. Leo talks with high involvement in his voice and, contrary to some other fragments where his involvement is connected with a higher speech rate and fluency, his talk here regresses to one-word utterances.

(52)

The three men have been talking about a very expensive car Leo has seen in a dealer's showroom. At the end of the previous episode Leo also mentioned another very fine car he had seen there, a new Citroën. In the English translation below the English counterparts for Swedish words that are pronounced in a very deviant way are in italics. The standard Swedish equivalents of the words in the first turn would be *tuffa*, *stol* and *färg*. Also the grammar deviates greatly. If the turn was produced by an NS, it might for instance be: *å vilka tuffa färger på bilsätena*, 'what fantastic colors the seats are'.

01	(4)	(4)
02	Leo <i>vilka toffa (1) stål (1) värg</i>	which <i>fantastic</i> (1) <i>chair</i> (1) <i>color</i>
03	Staffan <i>va då för nåt?</i>	which one then?
04	Leo (...) <i>m *tuoli (.) väri# (1) penkki*</i>	(...) m * <i>chair</i> (.) <i>color#</i> (1) <i>bench*</i>
05	(2)	(2)
06	Leo <i>jå va e de e de bänke (1)</i>	yeah what is it is it <i>bench</i> (1)
07	<i>på svenska?</i>	in swedish?
08	Staffan <i>bänkar?</i>	benches?
→	Leo <i>jää</i>	yes
11	Staffan <i>stolar (.) sitsar?</i>	<i>chairs</i> (.) <i>seats?</i>
12	Leo <i>toffa</i>	<i>fantastic</i>
13	Staffan <i>[[tuffa)</i>	[[<i>(fantastic)</i>
14	Leo <i>[[en: soff</i>	[[a: <i>sofa</i>
→	Staffan <i>aha:</i>	<i>uhu</i>
15	(3)	(3)

There are two problematic minimal responses in the episode. Firstly, Staffan responds to Leo's request for help by suggesting the Swedish word that Leo made an approximation of in his request. Staffan makes an understanding check that is then ratified by Leo (line 09). Staffan, however, relies on his own linguistic knowledge and knowledge about cars and is not satisfied by Leo's confirmation, but continues to suggest

better words for the seat in a car. Now Leo fails to display his confirmation of the new suggestions and goes back to the adjective he had used in the first turn (line 12). A third turn confirmation is not necessarily a direct comment on the previous turn (see Ch. 3.2.2), but it should advance the topic in an adequate way. Leo's one-word utterance leads to a clear breach in the intersubjectivity, because there is no apparent way Staffan can think that it was projected by his turn. Staffan now displays his hypothetical understanding of Leo's turn, but Leo, instead of confirming it, produces another utterance which again lacks both grammatical and local context (line 14). Staffan gives up negotiating for understanding and closes the sequence with a minimal response, thereby leaving the understanding unsettled.

The following example also illustrates how the NS settles for non-understanding by using minimal responses in a similar way to that frequently used by the NNSs.

(53)

The episode is immediate continuation after the previous example in which Leo has described the seats in a luxurious car.

16	Leo	<i>kostar över ett tusen</i>	costs more than a thousand
→	Staffan	<i>aha</i>	uhu
18	Leo	<i>ett <u>hundra</u> tusen</i>	a <u>hundred</u> thousand
19	Staffan	<i>de e skojit me bilar faktist</i>	it is fun with cars really
20	Leo	<i>ode eo</i>	oit iso
21		(5)	(5)

The problematic negotiation that did not reach an outcome in Example (52) also affects the sequence that follows. After a pause Leo self-selects and starts to tell about the price of the luxurious car (line 16). The point, of course, is that the car is very expensive. Leo says that it costs more than a thousand crowns, which is an obvious mistake. Staffan responds with *aha* which here is a change-of-state token similar to the English equivalent *oh* (Heritage 1984a). The particle is used to propose that the producer has undergone some kind of change in her/his current state of knowledge or orientation. In this situation this could be interpreted as applying the Gricean maxim of relevance before that of quality and having politeness as the first filter (Grice 1975). Staffan wants to save both his own and Leo's face and ignore the mistake. His response can, however, exhibit his understanding of one aspect of the content in Leo's turn. With the contextual information he can interpret Leo's turn as 'it is very expensive' without information as to the exact price.

The initiation of the repair seems to be located in the third turn (line 18). Leo does not take Staffan's response as a confirmation and a closing of the topic but initiates the repair by himself in the third turn.

Staffan continues to ignore the mistake and ratifies the sequence indirectly by a general statement about cars. Another interpretation could be that Staffan's change-of-state token *aha* (line 17) is interpreted as a normal acknowledgement token and consequently functions as NTRI because it does not contain the involvement or astonishment that Leo obviously expects. This leads to Leo's initiating of the repair. He does not succeed here either: instead of tying his turn clearly to Leo's turns Staffan closes the topic by a general statement. This changes Leo's paralinguistic expressions and he joins in closing the topic in a very low voice.

In the following example, minimal response is interpreted as non-understanding, but it is a part of a longer problem sequence that starts with a lack of response.

(54) [43]

The episode is the very beginning of the conversation between Mari, Staffan and Ville.

01	Staffan	<i>hej</i>	hello / hi
02	Mari	<i>hej</i>	hi
03	Staffan	[[#	[[#
04	Ville	[[<i>hej</i>	[[hi
05	Mari	<i>välkomna</i>	welcome
06	Ville	<i>a</i>	a
07	Mari	<i>oj</i>	oh
08	Staffan	<i>tack (.) förlåt vi e sena (1)</i>	thank you (.) sorry we are late (1)
09		<i>vi e:: d spårvagnen gick sönder</i>	we e:: d the tram was broken
10		(2)	(2)
→	Staffan	[[.hh	[[.hh
12	Mari	[[<i>jick ju (.) men</i>	[[went well (.) but
→	Staffan	<i>dörren på spårvagnen ramla av (1)</i>	the door of the tram dropped off (1)
14	Mari	<i>aha</i>	uhu
15	Staffan	<i>dörren gick sönder (.)</i>	the door was broken (.)
→		<i>så b spårvagnen kunde inte köra (1)</i>	so b the tram could not move (1)
→		<i>den stog stilla i::</i>	it just stopped in::
18	Ville	<i>men (.) vi vill trö[sta dej]</i>	but (.) we want to com[fort you]
19	Staffan	[[...]	[[...]

In his first turn in the fragment above Staffan apologizes and gives an account for arriving late at Mari's. Although Mari first fails to respond and finally says something seemingly incoherent with high insecurity in her voice, Staffan's next turn on line 13 is a continuation of the first one: an explanation as to what was wrong with the tram without any marking which would connect it to Mari's turn. There are, however, two things in his second turn that show that it is a repair. Firstly, the very distinct pronunciation and, secondly, the repeat of the word *spårvagnen* 'the tram'. Avoiding pronouns and deictic expressions is a feature in accommodated talk to language learners (e.g Chaudron 1988, Ellis 1994). A natural continuation would have been *dörren ramla av*, where the definite form of

dörren implies the tram. Mari's response *aha* to this is again delayed and uttered with insecurity in her voice, which elicits new repairs formulated as reformulations.

Staffan's turn on line 15 displays his interpretation of Mari's minimal response. He first reformulates his previous turn and continues to explain the consequences of the broken tram door. When he does not get a response at the completion of the utterance, he expands with a causal utterance *så b/ spårvagnen kunde inte köra*, 'so the tram could not move'. The prosody being identical to the first utterance in the turn, however, suggests that it is a new reformulation. The prosody of the turn makes it into a three-part list, where the three utterances are linked to each other by a repeated prosody. Staffan becomes insecure towards the end of the list: he slows down and does not complete the last part of it, and the negotiation ends here. Ville self-selects and ties his talk to Staffan's first turn in the episode, the apology for being late, when he gives Mari flowers as "comfort" as he says. The speakers do not take up the topic 'broken tram' again during the conversation.

In the following example the roles of the speakers are switched when the repair is initiated after a short response. In most instances, it is the NNS's minimal reaction that is interpreted by the NS as non-understanding and the latter initiates a repair, whereas the NNS usually settles for the non-explicit confirming turns produced by the NS (cf. Ex. (52) & (53), Leo & Staffan). In the following episode, however, Mari realizes that Staffan misunderstands her turn on lines 10-17.

(55)

Before this episode, the participants have briefly been discussing the size of the Finnish Pentecostal congregation in Gothenburg and some of the social activities at the church Mari has been engaged in.

01	(4) ((clatter of dishes))	(4) ((clatter of dishes))
02	Staffan <i>e</i> (1) ((clatter))	eh (1) ((clatter))
03	Ville <i>hela</i>	whole
04	Staffan <i>e pingstvännerna ä ju jättestora</i>	eh pentecostals are very big
05	<i>i sverige</i>	in sweden aren't they
06	Mari <i>jå mycke</i>	yes very
07	Staffan <i>jaa (.) e e dom de i Finland också?</i>	well (.) are are they also in finland?
08	Mari <i>jå ja tror att där e också</i>	yes I think that there are also
09	(6)	(6)
10	Mari <i>de e</i> (2)	it is (2)
11	<i>.h ja bodde (.) i finland e::</i>	.h I was living (.) in finland e::
12	<i>ja tvo/ tror att ganska .h</i> (1)	I tvi/ think that pretty .h (1)
13	<i>lite (.) staden (.)</i>	small (.) the town (.)
14	<i>men där e också ungefär tre</i>	but there are also about three
15	<i>hundra (.)</i>	hundred (.)
16	<i>människor där i o^osvinland^o</i> (1)	people there in o ^o svinland ^o (1)
17	<i>finska kyrkan</i>	the finnish church
18	(2)	(2)
→	Staffan <i>hä här ja</i>	he here yes

20	Mari	<i>här e[::]</i>	here a[::re]
21	Staffan	<i>[i] göteborg</i>	[in] gothenburg
22	Mari	<i>'göteborg också (1) trehundra</i>	gothenburg also (1) three hundred
→	Staffan	<i>jaa</i>	yes
24	Mari	<i>men</i>	but
25	Staffan	<i>men i hela (.) i hela finland (1)</i>	but in the (.) the whole of finland (1)
26		<i>hur många tror du de e?</i>	how many do you think there are?
27	Mari	<i>vet int</i>	don't know

In her turn on lines 10-17, Mari tries to produce evidence for her earlier turn where she gave affirmative confirmation to Staffan's question about whether Pentecostals were equally numerous in Finland. She is talking about the situation in Finland, but because the number she mentions happens to be the same as the number of members in the Finnish Pentecostal congregation in Gothenburg, Staffan misunderstands and assumes that she is talking about Sweden.

Mari initiates her repair on line 20. Her speech rate is always slow, but now she has difficulties in finding the way to do the repair. When she slowly starts searching for words, Staffan self-selects and makes the repair that he thinks is needed here. The negotiation is done jointly so that the speakers repeat words from each other's turns. Mari takes the word *göteborg* from Staffan's turn and makes an effort to make her point explicit. The only means she uses for making the repair is the use of *också*, 'also' which she uses as a deictic element with an expanded meaning and linking function. There is no change in her voice or speech rate as there is when Leo, Rauni and Clara do repairs to misunderstandings (cf. Ex. (1), (27), (84)) so the information about the contents of the turn and about the type of action is insufficient. Staffan does not notice even here that a repair is going on. He takes the turn at the TRP and gives a minimal response, although the relevance of Mari's turn could be questioned in his context. Mari now interprets his minimal response as non-understanding and makes a new attempt to start the repair (line 24). The relevance and the meaning of the repair sequence are unclear to Staffan and this affects his interpretation of the earlier exchange that the example started with. Staffan interrupts Mari (line 25), uses again the strategy of resuming her word for starting a repair, and starts a repair of his own. This is a repair of the prior sequence that Mari had closed on line 08, and the repair of the misunderstanding that Mari initiated remains unfinished.

In the following example the BS, Ville, exhibits similar behavior to that of the NS, Staffan, when he was discussing the fancy car with Leo, and there is no attempt at repair in spite of problems of understanding. When the chances to reach a conversational outcome are small, the speakers choose to be satisfied with partial or non-understanding. In the following Mari describes the tea room at her church.

There have been long negotiations about the number of Pentecostals in Sweden and Finland. The participants are looking at photos and Mari has shown a photo of a church tea room where she has been responsible for serving tea on Saturday nights and which has been mentioned earlier in the conversation. Ville has referred to this by a B-event statement just before the lapse that initiates the episode.

01		(5)	(5)
02	Ville	<i>va gör du där (1)</i>	what do you do there (1)
03		<i>på testugan?</i>	in the tea room?
04	Mari	<i>först ja måste (.)</i>	first i must (.)
05		<i>måst inte måste .h ja (.) köpte (1)</i>	must not must .h i (.) bought (1)
06		<i>freda eller lörd</i>	friday or saturday
07		(3)	(3)
08		<i>handla (.) många olika (1) saker å</i>	buy (.) many different (1) things and
09		(2)	(2)
10		<i>i:: (1) 'affären</i>	i::n (1) the shop
11		(2)	(2)
12		<i>(bö) bröd och (1)</i>	(be) bread and (1)
13		<i>mjölken och grädda och (1)</i>	the milk and cream and (1)
14		<i>'tomater å kurka och (1)</i>	tomatoes and cucumber and (1)
15		<i>många olika (1) vi gjorde .h där</i>	many different (1) we did .h there
16		(2)	(2)
17		<i>smörgås och</i>	sandwiches and
→	Ville	<i>mm</i>	mm
19	Mari	<i>koka kaffe och (1) koka te och</i>	to make coffee and (1) to make tea and
20		(7) ((drinking tea))	(7) ((drinking tea))
→	Ville	<i>mm</i>	mm
22	Mari	<i>och sen vi gör de (.)</i>	and then we do it (.)
23		<i>dom man (.) där</i>	them you (.) there
24		(6)	(6)
25	Mari	<i>mycke:: många</i>	mu::ch many
26		(2)	(2)
27		<i>m:: (1) mycke (.) jobba (1)</i>	m:: (1) much (.) to work (1)
28		<i>men där e också (1) många olika</i>	but there are also (1) many different
29		(3)	(3)
30		<i>att e (.) mycke folk</i>	that are (.) much people
31		(7)	(7)
32	Mari	<i>h. ja ha nästan glömt att .h (.)</i>	h. I have almost forgotten that .h (.)
33		<i>va hitta (1) dä:: (1)</i>	what find (1) the::r (1)
34		<i>de e små spana bord</i>	it is small spana tables
→	Ville	<i>mhm</i>	mhm
36		(3)	(3)

The episode contains several NNS utterances that would be difficult to understand without the contextual information. Most of the words, although very deviant in form and pronunciation, can be identified as Swedish words in the context created by Ville's question which contains knowledge he has about preparing and serving tea for groups of people. However, Ville has no chance to understand exactly what Mari says on line 34 after *va hitta (1) dä::*, 'what find (1) the::r'. He settles with knowing

that there are small tables because of the evident difficulties and because one of the overall goals of the occasion has been reached: Mari is talking.

The first two acknowledgement tokens take a form different from the last one and their positions in the discourse are also clearly different. The first one, on line 18, is a continuer that is uttered in a slot within a narrative and does not imply any effort to take the turn (Schegloff 1982). When looking at Mari's narrative, her description of the tasks in the church tea room, the second one can be interpreted as a similar continuer, because Mari's narrative constitutes a whole in spite of the long pauses and having coffee. She finishes her turn on line 19 with *och*, 'and', and after a pause of seven seconds and Ville's acknowledgement token she starts the turn with *och*, as if nothing had occurred in between. This interpretation is reinforced by her paralinguistic behavior: her voice quality does not change and the prosody is even. Ville's back-channeling role is natural because here Mari has the role of the main speaker and Ville has asked her to describe her tasks. However, a pause of seven seconds is so long that a change in the role structure for the episode could be expected. Consequently, Ville's acknowledgement token could be interpreted as an effort to take the turn. The token takes the same form as the earlier one, but the context is new: the long silence must be terminated in order to fulfil the obligations the participants have in a conversation. An acknowledgement token could be used to display speakership incipency, as Jefferson (1993) argues about the English *yeah*. Her argument has been supported by an investigation made by Drummond and Hopper (1993). They found that *uh huh* and *mm hm* seldom initiate further speakership, whereas *yeah* does in almost half of its uses.

The following episode contains complicated propositions that the NS tries to deliver in small portions in order to make the talk more comprehensible. This is one method of modifying the language NSs commonly use (cf. e.g Long 1983; Gass & Varonis 1985; Chaudron 1988). The interpretation of Mari's minimal responses is not unproblematic. Both of the speakers are aware of the difficulty of the topic and they advance together slowly. The institutional roles are forgotten and the speakers make efforts to reach a shared understanding.

(57)

01	Staffan	<i>aha::</i> (.) (ö::)	<i>uhu::</i> (.) (ö::)
02		<i>ja tycker de e spännande den här</i>	I think it is exciting this
03		(2)	(2)
04		<i>du vet när (1) e (1)</i>	you know when (1) eh (1) in the
05		<i>i svenska kyrkan #</i>	church of Sweden #
→	Mari	<i>mm</i>	<i>mm</i>
07	Staffan	<i>då e de så att e (1)</i>	then it is so that eh (1)
08		<i>om ett barn har fötts (1)</i>	if a child has been born (1)
09		<i>och e e väldigt <u>sjukt</u></i>	and is is very <u>ill</u>

10	(2)	(2)
11	<i>om man tror att de ska dö (1)</i>	if you think that it will die (1)
12	<i>då har man <u>nöd dop</u></i>	then we have an <u>emergency baptism</u>
13	(1)	(1)
14	<i>så då skyndar man sej (1)</i>	so then we hurry (1)
15	<i>å å å::e ringer eller kallar på en präst (.)</i>	to to to::e call to or call for a priest (.)
16	<i>som döper barnet</i>	who will baptize the child
→ Mari	<i>jå::</i>	yes
18 Staffan	<i>för om man e troende (.)</i>	because if you are religious (.)
19	<i>då tror man att (.)</i>	then you believe that (.)
20	<i>barnet kommer inte till (1)</i>	the child will not enter (1)
21	<i>e:: guds rike om de inte e döpt (1)</i>	e:: the kingdom of heaven if it is not baptized
22	<i>barn måste va döpt va</i>	a child has to be baptized, hasn't it
→ Mari	<i>mm</i>	mm
24	(1)	(1)
25 Staffan	<i>hu/ hur går de för ping/ i</i>	ho/ how is it in pen/ in the
26	<i>pingstkyrkan?</i>	pentecostal church?
→ Mari	<i>eh (1)</i>	eh (1)
28 Staffan	<i>om man om man blir</i>	if you if you become
29	<i>d du förstår hu förstår du de</i>	y you understand how do you understand
30	<i>o ja tänkero]</i>	oI am thin[kingo]
31 Mari	<i>[jå ja] föstår</i>	[yes I] understand
32 Staffan	<i>om man inte blir döpt</i>	if you are not baptized
33	<i>förran man e arton år va</i>	before you are eighteen
34	<i>då blir de väldigt farlit</i>	then it becomes very dangerous
35	<i>å va under arton år va</i>	to be under eighteen doesn't it
→ Mari	<i>jåå</i>	yes
→ Staffan	<i>[#]</i>	[#]
38 Mari	<i>[o ja föståo] va menar du men .h (.)</i>	[oI understando] what you mean .h (.)
39	<i>de e svår (1) pt.</i>	it is difficult (1) pt.
40	<i>berätta så svenska</i>	to tell so swedish
41	(4)	(4)

The two first minimal responses, on lines 06 and 17, do not disturb the advance of the conversation. They are interpreted as normal encouragers. Although *jå::*, 'yes', is more articulated than e.g. *mm* and normally expresses agreement, it here is uttered with a voice that softens during the lengthening of the vowel. Staffan's turns before the acknowledgement tokens do not project any specific action by the recipient. In the first instance, there is no syntactic completion in Staffan's turn, whereas there is one before Mari's second response, which motivates the use of an agreement token.

On line 22, however, Staffan closes his turn with a formulation that has a tag at the end. The Swedish tag *va* is used in conversations as an elicitor of confirmation (Hellberg 1985: 57; Nordenstam 1989: 31). Mari reacts without delay to Staffan's request for a response. Her reaction follows the normal structure of conversation. There is, however, a short lapse after her minimal response before Staffan starts advancing the topic.

He has produced a lengthy preface for his question and the word search in his turn on lines 25-26 displays his additional need for preparation time. When the question is finished, there is again no delay before Mari's response vocalization: she starts her answer immediately and thereby shows that she has understood the sequential implication of the utterance. There is a lapse after her vocalization on line 27 which Staffan interprets as an attempt at a request for clarification. He makes an effort to clarify the question but when he does not succeed in his word search, he puts a direct metalinguistic question (lines 29-30).

Mari's affirmative answer on line 31 releases Staffan from his word search and the tentative accommodation of his language, and he is finally able to pose the question which he has been prefacing since he started the sequence by suggesting that 'it is exciting'. The question is posed in the form of a formulation on lines 32-35. The utterances it is composed of again end with the conversational tag *va* which traditionally has been a common feature in conversations within the family and between close friends, but which is also becoming more common in other everyday conversations (Nordenstam 1989: 46). This is further evidence of the fact that the speakers' institutional roles have been forgotten in the episode.

The last minimal response by Mari is more articulated than the pure continuers, both segmentally and prosodically. It also displays qualities of speakership incipency: after Staffan's short laughter she continues and gives an explanation for her difficulties in participating in the discussion.

The following example is long, but it sheds light on the unstable status of the minimal response. Mari talks about her communication with her fellow workers, although Ville does not ask about this. He has, however, implicitly introduced the aspect by mentioning that she has Finnish fellow workers. The other elicitor of the topic is the context: the recurring topic in all the encounters Mari has with the researchers is communication and especially her use of Swedish.

(58)

In the following sequence the topic is radically changed from religious questions to the circumstances at Mari's working place. Ville performs the change and Mari starts a short narrative about the people she works with.

01	(32)	(32)
02	Staffan <i>jaa</i>	well
03	Ville <i>du har berätta du har (1) ä: (1)</i>	you have told you have (1) a:h (1)
04	<i>finska arbetskompisar</i>	finnish fellow workers
05	Mari <i>jå: där e två stycken men .h (.)</i>	ye:s there are two persons but .h (.)
06	<i>en (.) kvinna nu (.) sjuk</i>	a (.) woman now (.) ill
07	(3)	(3)
08	Mari <i>vet inte hur lång de (1)</i>	don't know how long it (1)
09	<i>och e (1) den (.) annan (.)</i>	and is (1) the (.) other (.)
10	<i>andra kvinna säga att (1)</i>	other woman to say that (1)

11		<i>vi måste prata svenska (.)</i>	we must speak swedish (.)
12		<i>därför att (1)</i>	because (1)
13		<i>de eh den jugoslavis (1)</i>	it eh the <i>yugoslav</i> (1)
14		<i>'förstår va (.) vi prata</i>	<i>understand</i> what (.) we talk
15		<i>(3)</i>	(3)
→	Ville	<i>mm (1)</i>	mm (1)
17		<i>alltså även om jugoslav e inte</i>	you mean although the yugoslavian isn't present (.)
18		<i>närvarande så (.)</i>	
19		<i>pratar ni svenska?</i>	you talk swedish
→	Mari	<i>mm</i>	mm
21	Ville	<i>er emellan?</i>	with each other?
22		<i>(2)</i>	(2)
23	Staffan	<i>fast ni kan finska båda?</i>	although you both know finnish?
24		<i>(1)</i>	(1)
→	Mari	<i>nej</i>	no
→	Staffan	<i>nää</i>	no
27	Mari	<i>han säg- hon säge till mej</i>	he say- she say to me
28		<i>att .h (.) han kan inte (.)</i>	that .h (.) he cannot (.)
29		<i>läsa och skriva (1)</i>	read and write (1)
30		<i>heller (1)</i>	either
31		<i>jugoslavs</i>	yugoslav
→	Staffan	<i>aha</i>	uhu
33		<i>(1)</i>	(1)
34	Mari	<i>ja förstår de att e de e svår (1)</i>	i understand that it is difficult (1)
35		<i>prata på svenska (1)</i>	speak in swedish (1)
36		<i>ti den (1)</i>	to it (1)
37		<i>om han kan inte: (1)</i>	if he cannot: (1)
38		<i>skriva nån</i>	write some
→	Ville	<i>mm</i>	mm
40		<i>(4)</i>	(4)
→	Staffan	<i>mm</i>	mm
42	Mari	<i>men i alla fall vi prata: (.)</i>	but anyway we talk (.)
43		<i>förstår varandra</i>	understand each other
44		<i>(8)</i>	(8)

The speakers perform turn-by-turn negotiations of meanings but they do not reach unambiguous shared understanding. Since the topic has not become excessively complicated at the point when the first minimal response is given on line 16, so that is not problematic in the same way as the others.

On line 20 is Mari's response to Ville's question. She exhibits understanding of the sequential implicativeness of Ville's turn but gives the unexpected response *mm* that normally is either a pure continuer or can also contain an agreement. Mari's response triggers a repair sequence initiated by Ville and continued by Staffan. There are long lapses after both repair questions, which supports an interpretation that Mari has not understood Ville's question on lines 17-19.

The minimal responses on lines 25 and 26 display the cooperative ending of the repair sequence. Mari obviously has misunderstood

Staffan's question *fast ni kan finska båda?*, 'although you both know finnish?' which is displayed in her turn after Staffan's joining in the closing of the turn. She uses the same strategy as Leo did in the introductory example: she continues the turn and displays her understanding of the earlier questions by describing the Yugoslavian woman although the questions were about her Finnish fellow workers. In a similar way, Leo added the word *skiva*, 'record' to his response to the question about the stereo equipment. This reveals the misunderstanding and Staffan responds with a change-of-state token but does not comment on the misunderstanding or advance the topic.

This also resolves the problem of interpreting Mari's earlier minimal responses. Mari neither displays any reaction to a revealed misunderstanding nor she does give any explanation. The Yugoslavian woman is so strongly present in her context that she interprets Staffan's question to include the Yugoslavian woman and her knowledge of Finnish. Staffan's confirmation of Mari's *nej* displays the automatic behavior of the NS in following the NS norms and orderliness of conversations. On the other hand, Staffan obviously interprets Mari's negated response as a repair of the earlier affirmative one. The fact, too, that no one points at the misunderstanding is again due to the face-saving cooperation principle that is salient in all the conversations in the data and that consequently implies a remarkably low goal for understanding.

Mari's context is her communication with her fellow workers and the Yugoslavian woman's role in this. When we look at her turns only, this is evident. The two men have a side sequence which does not disturb Mari in advancing her topic, but, together with the grammatical weaknesses in Mari's utterances, it impedes the men's participation in the negotiation of shared understanding.

In the following example a short laugh plays a similar role in the interaction as a minimal vocalization. It is an active recipient reaction, but it is very ambiguous and does not advance the topic. Here the speaker does not rely on shared understanding but makes a repair.

(59)

The episode is from the end of the conversation. The guests are about to leave. Mari has mentioned that her husband Jari had also wished them welcome.

01	Staffan	<i>jaha #jaa# (.) just de (1)</i>	mhm #well# (.) exactly (1)
02		<i>bor han (1)</i>	does he live
03		<i>hinner ni ses nån gång nu då</i>	do you have time to see each other now
04		<i>när han bor i svalby</i>	that he lives in svalby
→	Mari	<i>#</i>	<i>#</i>
06	Staffan	<i>åker du dit ibland (1)</i>	do you go there sometimes (1)
07		<i>eller kommer han hit [eller]?</i>	or does he come here [or]
08	Mari	<i>[nej] inte bo</i>	[no] not live
09		<i>.h äh nästa och denna veckan (1)</i>	.h ah next and this the week (1)

10	<i>där e de (1)</i>	there is it (1)
11	<i>e de bibel (1)</i>	is <i>the</i> bible (1)
12	<i>skolan och (1)</i>	school and (1)
13	<i>också (.) veckoslut (1)</i>	also (.) weekend (1)
14	<i>han (1)</i>	he (1)
15	<i>har kommit hit</i>	has come here
→ Staffan	<i>jaha</i>	uhu
17 Mari	<i>och nu (1)</i>	and now (1)
18	<i>på freda han kommer he hem å</i>	on friday he comes ho home and
19 Staffan	<i>jaha #(...)#</i>	jaha #(...)#

Staffan makes the repair of the less transparent utterance *hinner ni ses nån gång nu när han bor i svalby*, 'do you have time enough to see each other now that he lives in svalby', by reformulating and splitting the proposition in the main clause into two components, lines 06 and 07. Mari in her following turn displays some of the trouble-source. She says *nej inte bo*, 'no not live', which shows that she understands that the question was about where her husband is living while attending the Bible school. She has combined the latter clauses in both of Staffan's turns into the proposition 'does he live here?'. The answer is very difficult to interpret, but with the help of other sequences in the conversation it can be interpreted as 'no, he will not be living here for two more weeks because of the Bible school, but he has come home for week ends'. Staffan, however, does not have all this information to make the correct inferences in the situation and the change-of-state token *jaha*, 'uhu', which he produces at the end of the sequence fulfills his conversational obligations, but leaves understanding vaguely displayed.

In the following example laughter together with minimal response is interpreted as non-understanding, but the first speaker, instead of initiating a repair, abandons the topic. Negative minimal responses are not as multifunctional as affirmative ones (see e.g. Allwood et al. 1991). The conversations with an NNS both in the present data and in other conversations which I have analyzed suggest that the NNS use of negative feedback words is also interpreted by the NS as non-understanding. In the following example, Olle has asked Tarja about New Year's customs in Finland and they are talking about casting tin. Olle wants to check if Tarja knows the word for tin and so the episode resembles school discourse (see e.g. Leiwo et al. 1981; Anward 1983; Gustavsson 1988; Juvonen 1989). This is perhaps why the sequence ends without a ratification by Olle. An explicit negotiation would have been too face-threatening, because Tarja has displayed that she does not have the lexical knowledge Olle is asking about. It also is useless in a conversation in which Tarja does not need the word and Olle does not need information about the limits of Tarja's knowledge.

(60)

The episode is preceded by listening to a recording Tarja has made of a conversation between her and a fellow worker. There has been a word that Tarja has not understood and Olle initiates a discussion around the word.

01	Olle	<i>e de en s�n h�r v�ldit tung metall?</i>	is it such a very <u>heavy</u> metal?
02	Tarja	<i>nej</i>	no
03	Olle	<i>de e inte bly? (1)</i>	it is not lead? (1)
04		<i>bly?</i>	lead ?
→	Tarja	<i># ne</i>	# no
06		<i>(2)</i>	(2)

One of the minimal responses in the following episode elicits a negotiation about a word in Swedish. Olle and Rauni are discussing the time when Rauni's parents are going to come and visit her and her baby. On line 11 Olle comments on the information that Rauni's mother is coming to visit in the summer. Rauni answers with an inhaled *.ja*, which is not unusual for her. There is a long lapse after the response.

(61) [105]

The episode is from the middle of conversation C5. After discussing Rauni's contacts with Finnish women in Gothenburg Olle has asked if Rauni's parents are coming to see the baby. She has answered that her mother will be coming in the summer.

01	Olle	<i>d� kommer dom � (1)</i>	then they come and (1)
02		<i>ti dej?</i>	to you
03	Rauni	<i>joo (.) [min mamma] (1)</i>	yes (.) [my mother] (1)
04	Olle	<i>[va rolit]</i>	[how nice]
05	Rauni	<i>inte: ja tror inte att min pappa</i>	no: I don't think that my father
06	Olle	<i>n�j</i>	no
07	Rauni	<i>komma</i>	to come
08	Olle	<i>men mamma tycker de blir rolit</i>	but mother thinks it will be nice
09	Rauni	<i>mm</i>	mm
10		<i>(2)</i>	(2)
11	Olle	<i>d� blir hon mormor</i>	then she will become a grandmother
→	Rauni	<i>.j�</i>	.yes
13		<i>(3)</i>	(3)
14	Olle	<i>har du h�rt de ordet p� svenska</i>	have you heard this word in Swedish
15		<i>(1)</i>	(1)
16		<i>mormor?</i>	grandmother?
17		<i>(2)</i>	(2)
18	Rauni	<i>�m (1)</i>	ohm (1)
19		<i>att va e detta finska? (1)</i>	that what is this finnish? (1)
20		<i>[[va va du menar?]</i>	[[what what do you mean?]
21	Olle	<i>[[mm me/ me/ men] men du vet</i>	[[mm bu/ bu/ but] but you know
22		<i>va det svenska [ordet (...)? jaa]</i>	what the swedish [word (...)? yes]
23	Rauni	<i>[jo ja vet] j�</i>	[yes i know] yes
24	Olle	<i>mm</i>	mm
25		<i>(11) ((coffee drinking, phone rings))</i>	(11) ((coffee drinking, phone rings))

Olle exhibits high involvement in the very fluent beginning of the episode. The fluency fades away after Rauni's minimal response (line 09) which does not advance the conversation and there is a considerable lapse. Olle's following turns display the strain of keeping a conversation going with an NNS. He first comments on the content of the earlier turns in a way which contradicts the chronological reality about becoming a grandmother. However, Rauni's response does not display any insecurity. It can be assumed on the basis of the proficiency she exhibits in other instances that she misses the tense that makes the utterance rather odd. The interactional strain is again displayed in the long lapse after Rauni's response. This leads Olle to slip back to his researcher role of investigating Rauni's language proficiency, which amounts to a rapid change in the context and setting. It leads first to another lapse (line 16) and then to an explicit request for clarification by Rauni (lines 19-20). Direct metalinguistic negotiations in the present data are usually initiated by the NNS in instances where she has problems of understanding or production. Olle has interpreted the minimal response and the lapse as a sign of insecurity and tries to check her understanding. But, as Rauni interprets the situation, he starts the negotiation without an immediate context for the communication problem and thus offers Rauni a difficult task of inferencing. - The end of the negotiation is dealt with in the following chapter.

6.3 Non-focused metacommunicative requests

6.3.1 *va* and *va sa du*

Non-focused metalinguistic requests such as *va*, 'what', and *va sa du*, 'what did you say', constitute a borderline case in analyzing problems of understanding (Schegloff 1982; Drew *forthc.*). They can be used in various contexts in a way that in certain aspects resembles minimal feedback. The utterances have the grammatical form of a question, which is realized by using an indefinite question word or minimal feedback vocalizations with a question intonation. The function of the utterance is either a question, a request or a combination of these. The request, however, is the commonest. The request function is displayed explicitly when the recipient says *säj de en gång till*, 'say it once more', which Mari often does. Yet, this utterance, although explicit in the request function, does not focus on any particular part of the previous turn and does not specify whether the problem is that of non-hearing, astonishment or non-understanding. Therefore it provides the speaker of the previous turn with the same difficulties as the less explicit utterances *va*, *va sa du* and

acknowledgement tokens with question intonation.

The interpretations of these requests vary between non-hearing and non-understanding. The function of astonishment is normally excluded, since it is generally expressed using clear paralinguistic and non-verbal means, and the contextual cues steer the interpretation to it. When the request is interpreted as an indication of non-hearing, the second speaker repeats her/his utterance, and the conversation goes on without any further impediment. The following two examples show how both speakers agree on the interpretation as one of non-hearing.

(62)

Before the episode, Staffan and Leo have been discussing the term 'employee investment fund' and attitudes to the funds.

01		(8)		(8)
02	Staffan	<i>mm</i>		<i>mm</i>
03	Leo	<i>men (.)</i>		<i>but (.)</i>
04		<i>dom på volvo har sagt att (1)</i>		<i>those at volvo have said that (1)</i>
05		<i>om de kommer den: nya systemet (.)</i>		<i>if it comes the: new system (.)</i>
06		<i>dom slutar den ga(mmal)</i>		<i>they will stop the old</i>
07	Staffan	<i>jaha (1)</i>		<i>uhu (1)</i>
08		<i>vilka har sagt de?</i>		<i>who have said it?</i>
→	Leo	<i>va?</i>		<i>what</i>
10	Staffan	<i>vilka har sagt de?</i>		<i>who have said it?</i>
11	Leo	<i>å gyllenhammar</i>		<i>and gyllenhammar</i>
12	Staffan	<i>jaha</i>		<i>uhu</i>
13		(4)		(4)

(63)

Before the episode Rauni has been taking care of the baby who has been a little restless. She has commented that it is hard sometimes.

01		(8)		(8)
02	Olle	<i>sover han bra?</i>		<i>does he sleep well?</i>
→	Rauni	<i>a?</i>		<i>ah?</i>
04	Olle	<i>sover han bra?</i>		<i>does he sleep well?</i>
05	Rauni	<i>åm iblant (1) han sove mycke bra</i>		<i>ohm sometimes (1) he sleep very well</i>
		<i>iblann s- mh inte</i>		<i>sometimes s- mh not</i>
06	Olle	<i>mm</i>		<i>mm</i>
07		(3)		(3)

It is worth noticing that there is a considerable difference in the L2 proficiency of the NNSs in Examples (62) and (63), but both the NSs react in the same way in the two examples. Staffan's interpretation of Leo's question is natural after forty minutes of a conversation with hardly any problems of understanding, whereas the conversation between Olle and

Rauni advances with considerable difficulties. Although in the Example (63) Rauni's request is made in a less distinct way, with only a short vocalization and a rising tone, Olle does not interpret her conduct as non-understanding. His first question is preceded by a long pause, so it is reasonable to assume that Rauni has not had time and context enough to capture what he says. Before and during the pause Rauni has been taking care of the baby and she has commented that it is hard work. Rauni's response to the repeated question confirms that Olle's interpretation about non-hearing was right, as was also the case in Example (62).

In the conversations studied the ramifications and redundancy of communication are minimized, which means, among other things, that the amount of repeats is low both in responses and other turns. They seem to occur mostly as a means of indicating problems and requesting clarification. The data contains very few exact repetitions that are used as a means for implementing a repair. The speakers mostly reformulate their utterances in instances where the lack of response has not been interpreted as non-hearing (see 5.3.2). The following is another example which shows that the speaker reacts to non-hearing by an exact repetition.

(64) [27, 81]

The episode is from the beginning of the conversation between Clara, Rauni and Ville. It is preceded by one in which both Finnish and Swedish have been used in discussing how long the guests will stay, whether there is enough time for Rauni to serve tea, and whether the baby lets Rauni sleep at nights. So the topic 'baby' has already been introduced when the sequence starts. The immediately preceding turns have been in Finnish.

01	(4)	(4)
02	Ville	[[* <i>tunnet sä</i> /*
03	Clara	[[<i>när föddes flickan</i> ?
04	Rauni	<i>ah?</i>
05	Clara	<i>när föddes flickan.</i>
06	Rauni	<i>ah m december ofemte</i>

The sequence follows the bilingual opening phase of the encounter, where Ville, the BS, alternates in speaking Finnish to Rauni and Swedish to Clara, the NNS researcher. He also acts as interpreter between Rauni and Clara. Thus Rauni has not been in direct speaking contact with Clara during the opening before Clara now directs the question on line 02 to her. Ville and Clara start simultaneously, which, in addition to the language change, impairs Rauni's chances of catching it. Clara's interpretation of Rauni's vocalization is exhibited in her new start which is an exact repetition of her question. Rauni replies with an answer that adequately advances the topic, although there is some insecurity both at the beginning and at the end. Clara's behavior later in the episode displays that she has doubts about the nature of the problem here (see Ex. (26)).

(65)

Before the episode Mari has gone to the kitchen and there has been a pause of six seconds. Hence Ville starts in a loud voice

01	Ville	E DE EN <u>STOR</u> FÖRSAMLING	IS IT A <u>BIG</u> CONGREGATION
02		HÄR (.)	HERE (.)
03		den här fi finska församlingen (.)	this fi finnish congregation
04		pingstväänner?	pentecostals?
→	Mari	ja hör inte	I don't hear
06	Ville	e de en <u>stor</u> ? (.) ö (.)	is it a <u>big</u> (.) eh (.)
07		församling den här finska	congregation this finnish
08		församlingen	congregation
09	Mari	jå: ja tycker att de e ganska sto (.)	ye:s I think that it is pretty big (.)
10		där e (1) trehundra, (4)	there are (1) <u>three</u> hundred, (4)
11		omänniskor (2)	people (2)
12		tillsammans	all together

In Example (65) the problem is not that of understanding but again that of inaudibility. However, the first speaker cannot know this before the second speaker's explicit indication. Ville starts speaking loudly to Mari who happens to be in the adjacent room at the moment. After the short pause that follows his loud question, Ville lowers his voice when Mari obviously enters the room. Ville does not repeat the question but expands it with a right dislocation using for the subject the noun that had been a pronoun in the original question. The semantic subject *den här finska församlingen*, 'this Finnish congregation', is further specified by adding the concept 'Pentecostals'. When Mari indicates that she did not hear, the utterance is repeated with the same right dislocation structure but without the last clarification with the word *pingstväänner*, 'Pentecostals'. This time (line 07-08) the lexical NP is added without a pause, but the beginning of the utterance has a disrupted prosody (line 06). The question function is expressed in the very beginning with a rising intonation on the emphatic word *stor*, 'large', which is followed by short word-searching pauses. Right dislocations are common in everyday conversations, also in Swedish (Jørgensen & Svensson 1987: 151). In the present data, however, they are very infrequent. This may be due to the use of the canonical word order that has been found to be common in NS talk to NNS and in teacher talk (Håkansson, 1987: 40).

In conversation C3 between Tarja and Olle all the non-focused metacommunicative requests are made by Olle, and they are simple requests in the form *va*. Tarja's reactions show that she often interprets her own utterance as syntactically repairable. In one case, however, she sees the problem as that of non-hearing and she repeats the kernel part of her previous turn with emphasis:

(66)

Olle and Tarja have jointly closed a sequence that started with Olle's question about Tarja's interest in language studies and ended in Tarja and her boy friend's plans to move out of town, which would make her language studies impossible.

01		(4.5)	(4.5)
02	Olle	<i>du hade gjort (2)</i>	you had made (2)
03		<i>några intressanta inspelningar</i>	some interesting recordings
04		<i>tyckte ja (1.5)</i>	I thought (1.5)
05		<i>me <u>rut</u></i>	with <u>rut</u>
06	Tarja	<i>eh de va en bara #</i>	eh it was just one #
→	Olle	<i>va?</i>	what?
08	Tarja	<i>de v- <u>en</u></i>	it w- <u>one</u>
09	Olle	<i>ja ja [just] de va en ja (1)</i>	yes yes [exactly] it was one (1)
10	Tarja	<i>[.ja]</i>	[.yeah]
11	Olle	<i>å de de e väldigt bra tycker ja</i>	and it it is enormously good I think
12	Tarja	<i>aha #</i>	uhu #

In other instances the interpretation is not as clear as in the examples above, because the request is preceded by a lapse which indicates that there might be other problems besides that of non-hearing. In the following example Ville does the repair through an exact repetition of the trouble source and makes an effort to expand it, but he is interrupted by Mari's response which displays understanding. The answer is an elaborated account of her working situation, which once more sheds light on her way of making an active effort as a participant in spite of the linguistic problems she has.

(67) [11]

The episode is from the beginning part of the conversation after the guests have been looking at the wedding picture and announcement. In the immediately preceding turns Staffan has commented on the beautiful view they would have through Mari's window had it not been dark. The following comes without a pause after closing the prior topic.

01	Ville	<i>har du varit på arbete i da?</i>	have you been at work today?
02		(3)	(3)
→	Mari	<i>va säger du a-?</i>	what do you say th-?
04	Ville	<i>har du varit på arbete i da? (för)=</i>	have you been at work today? (cause)=
05	Mari	<i>=jå: varje da (1)</i>	=yes: every day (1)
06		<i>vet inte nu (.) men (.) kanske i (.)</i>	don't know now (.) but (.) perhaps in (.)
07		<i>nu e tisdag (.) kanske i morron</i>	now is tuesday (.) perhaps tomorrow
08		<i>ja vill ta att e kan ja .h</i>	I want to take that eh if I can .h
09		<i>o^ofortsätta^o där</i>	^o continue ^o there
10	Ville	<i>[[mm</i>	[[mm
11	Staffan	<i>[[mm</i>	[[mm
12	Mari	<i>när ja e 'vikariat</i>	when i am substitute
13		(2)	(2)

In the following example it is the NS who needs clarification. The trouble turn here is also the first turn after a long lapse. After the pause the NNS initiates a new sequence which is a continuation of the previous one. In spite of their clear inferiority in language proficiency, the NNSs, especially Leo, initiate sequences relatively often. In four of the five conversations, the NNSs are host and hostess when visited by the researchers and this seems to give them a more equal role in the conversation.

(68)

The immediately preceding context for this episode is in Ex. (1) and (86, 87), in which Staffan asked whether the stereo equipment was new.

01	(14)	(14)
02	Leo <i>dom e inte bra</i>	those are not good
03	(3)	(3)
→	Staffan <i>va sa du?</i>	what did you say?
05	Leo <i>dom e inte bra</i>	those are not good
06	Staffan <i>va e de för fel på dom då?</i>	what's wrong with them then?
07	Leo <i>näj dom e inte (1)</i>	no they are not (1)
08	<i>bra (.) kvalitet #</i>	good (.) quality #
09	Staffan <i>mhm</i>	mhm
10	(9)	(9)

The lapse of three seconds before Staffan's request indicates that there is a problem, although Leo's conduct looks identical with that of the NS in Examples (62) and (63) on the transcript. The lack of response that Staffan exhibits during the long pause suggests that nevertheless there is a problem of understanding: Staffan either did not capture what Leo said or misunderstood it as a delayed closing turn to the previous sequence which does not place him under any obligation. However, he makes a new analysis and requests repetition. Leo repeats his utterance in a very distinct way, which also makes the sequential implication clear to Staffan who then develops the topic with a new question and gives Leo a chance to elaborate his utterance.

It also happens that an NS as first speaker interprets a request by an NNS as an indication of non-hearing and repeats the trouble utterance, but this does not lead to a smooth continuation of the conversation as in the examples above. Instead of advancing the topic adequately the NNS indicates non-understanding by various other means after the repeat by the first speaker: lapse, repeat, incoherent response, or some other means.

Lapses occur in combination with most of the other indicators of problems of interaction, good evidence of which is provided by the examples in the present study. The following example is less obvious, but the lapse together with paralinguistic and non-verbal behavior indicates that there is a problem, although it is solved towards the end of the

sequence without explicit negotiation.

(69)

The episode is from the beginning of C1. Leo and Staffan have been discussing the stereo equipment, and after the episode given in Ex. (68) there has been a short episode about writing Christmas cards.

01	(9)	(9)
02	Staffan <i>den här (.) den här (.) kassett: (.)</i>	this (.) this (.) cassette (.)
03	<i>de här kassettdäcket ä ju bra (1)</i>	this cassette player is good isn't it (1)
04	<i>de ser ganska s- stort ut</i>	it looks pretty b- big
05	(4)	(4)
06	Staffan <i>brukar du spela in?</i>	do you tape?
→	Leo <i>[[va?</i>	[[what?
08	Staffan <i>[[bru brukar du spela in skivor å så?</i>	[[do you tape records and so on?
→	(1)	(1)
→	Leo <i>ah hhh näj</i>	ah hhh no
11	Staffan <i># inte så mycke?</i>	# not so much?
→	Leo <i>nej</i>	no
→	(4)	(4)
14	Leo <i>ja brukar (.)</i>	I usually (.)
15	<i>köpa så mycke skivor själv</i>	buy so many records myself
16	Staffan <i>ja ja</i>	yes yes
17	(11)	(11)

There is no long lapse after Staffan's first question, but he notices that Leo has problems, so he starts the repeat. Leo's overlapping request forces him to be more distinct both phonetically and syntactically, and he adds the object that was not displayed in the first question. This does not give Leo immediate help in his interpretation of the question. The insecurity that is exhibited by the lapse on line 05 is also expressed by the sighing and groaning and the insecure *näj*, 'no'. There is evidence in other NS-NNS conversations that the NNSs seem to have a habit of saying 'no' in instances where they are not sure if they have understood the utterance. This is especially obvious in situations where there is a risk that the first speaker's utterance may impose a strong or concrete obligation on the recipient (Kalin 1988; Kalin & Leiwo 1990). By saying 'no' the recipient exhibits partial understanding: s/he has understood that the previous turn contained an obligation for her/him, but fails to comprehend the exact meaning. Such a means of coping with the problem is strongly face-saving. Various factors in the situation impede the NNS from indicating a problem of understanding, but, on the other hand, it is equally threatening to accept an obligation the content of which she does not precisely know. The most likely way to succeed in avoiding more problems in such a situation seems to be to say 'no'.

Staffan notices Leo's uneasiness and insecurity: the laughter at the beginning of his turn prolongs the uneasiness rather than creates a feeling

of solidarity (Jefferson et al. 1987). However, he relies on a literal interpretation of Leo's response and continues the turn with a confirmation check (line 11). Leo confirms his interpretation now without any hesitation or insecurity. After another lapse - which can be seen as part of the slow pace of the conversation - he gives an account that confirms and explains the negated answer.

There are two lapses in the following example that are very different, but they both contribute to the insecurity of the interpretations.

(70)

The episode is from the beginning part of C1. After addressing the topic 'Christmas party' Ville asks what Leo has been doing since. Leo ends his long response by mentioning that he is going to take the driving test next Friday.

01	Staffan	<i>ja ja blir du nervös nu då? #</i>	yes yes won't you feel nervous then? #
02		<i>(5)</i>	<i>(5)</i>
03	Ville	<i>du ska göra de ensam?</i>	you will do it alone?
→	Leo	<i>vå?</i>	what?
05	Ville	<i>du ska göra de <u>ensam</u>?</i>	you will do it <u>alone</u> ?
06		<i>(1)</i>	<i>(1)</i>
07	Leo	<i>vet inte (2)</i>	don't know (2)
08		<i>tror att ja 'pehöver nån tolk</i>	think att i need an interpreter
09	Ville	<i>aha</i>	uhu
10	Leo	<i>o*viitiksä*o</i>	o*would you*o
11	Ville	<i>jå (.) varför inte</i>	yes (.) why not

There is no response to Staffan's question about getting nervous before the driving test. The lapse is long, but we do not know if there is a non-verbal response like shrugging the shoulders or a gesture. The way Ville develops the topic can imply either a response or a lack of it. He chooses another perspective and asks about the practical implementation of the test. In his utterance he uses prowords for the central concept *uppkörning*, 'driving test', which has been mentioned several turns and pauses ago thereby relying on a mutual chain of inferencing. Leo fails to do the expected inferences and to capture it, but he does understand the sequential implication of the utterance and requests repetition without any delay (line 04). Ville's previous turn has been distinct and slow in pace, but in the repeat the pace is even slower and the last word receives strong emphasis. There is a clear delay before Leo's response, but the reason for this is displayed in the response. Ville's question suggests an affirmative answer: that Leo is able to do the test without the help of an interpreter. The answer, however, is dispreferred and therefore delayed. There is a face-threatening new topic in progress, which is displayed in delays and paralinguistic changes. The end of the turn is a preparation for asking for help in the driving test. The request is presented later in the sequence in Finnish in a very low voice (line 10).

The following is an example of a situation where the NNS has an unambiguous problem of understanding, but the NS handles it as a hearing problem. As opposed to many other episodes in the data where the NSs seem to interpret all delays and other deviant behavior as problems of understanding, the NS in the sequence below refuses to interpret the NNS's requests as indications of a comprehension problem. This shows that Staffan here is acting in his role as an NS in conversation with another NS.

(71) [88]

Leo and Staffan are looking at pictures in a book about a sports event in Finland. The previous episode was about beautiful girls and some politicians. There was a pause of 12 seconds between the episodes.

01	Staffan	<i>vem e de?</i>	who is this?
02	Leo	<i>martti vainio</i>	martti vainio
03		(2)	(2)
04	Staffan	<i>va e de för distans?</i>	what distance is it?
→	Leo	<i>va</i>	what
06	Staffan	<i>va e de för distans?</i>	what distance is it?
07	Leo	<i>distans?</i>	distance?
08	Staffan	<i>jaa</i>	yes
09	Leo	<i>va e de (.) oför nånting^o</i>	what is it (.) ^o something ^o
10	Staffan	<i>hur långt springer han?</i>	how far does he run?
11	Leo	<i>aha å fem tusen å tie tusen</i>	uhu and five thousand and ten thousand
12	Staffan	<i>mhm</i>	mhm
13		(2)	(2)

The background for the episode is that Leo and Staffan have been looking at a picture book about sports events and talking around it for a while without any problems of understanding. In the episode, however, there is a misunderstanding about the function of Leo's requests, which forces Leo to make his requests more and more explicit: first *va*, then *distans?* and finally *va e de för nånting*. In conversation C1 irrespective of who the speaker or the recipient is, *va* is in the first place interpreted as indication of non-hearing.

Mari uses a longer variant for *va*: she expands it to *va säger du*, 'what are you saying'. It is a fossilized phrase that she uses unanalyzed for all tenses. There is another variant, *va säger du att*, 'what do you say that' that is not easy to analyze if it is semantically the same as *va säger du*. The interlocutors interpret *va säger du* as a request for repetition in the same way as *va*. The following repetition in Example (72) leads to a misunderstanding, which complicates the structure, but we can see that the first speaker's first reaction is to repeat his original question in the same way as in instances with *va*. After a short pause he makes an effort to start a reformulation, but it remains incomplete and is followed by a

pause.

(72)

The episode is from the beginning of C2. Ville and Staffan are looking at Mari's wedding picture and the announcement that has appeared in a newspaper. Immediately before the episode Staffan has asked if they had got married in Finland or in Sweden.

01		(5)		(5)
02	Ville	<i>när va de? (.)</i>		when was it? (.)
03		<i>ja har (.) o_glömt^o</i>		I have (.) ^o forgot ^o
→	Mari	<i>va säger du?</i>		what are you saying?
05	Ville	<i>när va de? (.) va de (1)</i>		when was it? (.) was it (1)
06	Mari	<i>de [e] (.) i småland</i>		it [is] (.) in småland
07	Ville	<i>[eh]</i>		[eh]
08		<i>jå</i>		.jå
09	Mari	<i>där i svalby</i>		there in svalby
10	Ville	<i>men (.) när?</i>		but (.) <u>when?</u>
11	Mari	<i>när (.) ja (1) e de (4)</i>		when (.) yes (1) is it (4)
12		<i>e de (2) tjugufjärje</i>		is it (2) twentyfourth
13		<i>(3)</i>		(3)
14	Ville	<i>mm</i>		mm
15		<i>(3)</i>		(3)
16	Ville	<i>hhh (1) tjugfjärde i (.)</i>		hhh (1) twentyfourth in (.)
17		<i>september mm</i>		september mm
18		<i>(2)</i>		(2)
19		<i>titta</i>		look

The following two Examples (73, 74) show how both the NS and the BS interpret Mari's request *va säger du att* as indications of non-understanding. They do not repeat but reformulate their previous utterances. The structure of the repair is more complicated than after the plain *va säger du*.

(73)

The episode is from the mid-part of the conversation between Mari, Staffan and Ville. The participants are looking at photos about Mari's social life which is connected to the local Pentecostal congregation and visits to other Pentecostals in Sweden.

01	Mari	<i>de e (1) eh lea (1)</i>		it is (1) eh lea (1)
02		<i>de e (.) [(s...)]</i>		it is (.) [(s...)]
03	Staffan	<i>[aha:]</i>		[u ^h u]
04	Mari	<i>och de annan (1)</i>		and it other (1)
05		<i>bilden e: (.)</i>		the picture is:
06		<i>gamla kyrkan där i: linnenkatan</i>		the old church there i:n <i>linnenstreet</i>
07	Staffan	<i>jaså dom där på linnégatan</i>		uhu those in <i>linnéstreet</i>
08	Mari	<i>jå:</i>		ye:s
09		<i>(3)</i>		(3)
10	Mari	<i>dom e: (.) [(...)]</i>		they a:r (.) [(...)]
11	Staffan	<i>[va de]</i>		[was it]
12	Staffan	<i>dä^fö den hette [linné's]</i>		because of that it was called [linné's]

13	Mari	[(målas)]	[(are painting)]
14	Staffan	linnekyrkan (.) linnekyrkan? (1)	linnéchurch (.) linnechurch (1)
→	Mari	va säger du att?	what do you say that?
16	Staffan	vicken kyrka va = va heter	which church was it = what is it
17		den (1)	called (1)
18		va de den som heter	was it that that was called
19		linnekyrkan eller nåt=	linnechurch or something=
20	Mari	=de e 'linne:syrkan (2)	=it is the linnechurch (2)
21		där samma s (.) syrkan (.) vi (.)	there the same ch (.) church (.) we (.)
22		också den (.) testugan (.)	also the (.) the tea room (.)
23		där 'linnesyrkan	there the linnechurch
24	Staffan	aha	uhu
25	Mari	när h	when h
26	Staffan	när flyttade ni dit	when did you move there

In the episode the participants' private roles are made relevant. The NS gets involved in discussing a certain church and its name to the extent that he abandons the rule of letting the NNS speak as much as possible. The NS ignores the NNS' previous turn about the renovation of the church and begins a new episode by a word search (lines 11-12 & 14), which leads to a request for clarification by the NNS. The trouble source turn is a reaction to Staffan's own turn at the end of the preceding sequence (line 07). Staffan responds to the request by twice reformulating his earlier question without a pause in-between. He latches the second reformulation onto the first one, thus displaying that he anticipates problems of understanding. The reformulations contain slight changes of perspective which, however, do not clarify the connection to the earlier turn that Staffan refers to, and Mari does not react. When Staffan realizes that the reformulations have increased the difficulty of interpreting, he makes a third reformulation using a slower rate of speech and more distinct pronunciation (lines 18-19). This example is also dealt with in Chapter 6.

Staffan does a word search in his turn when he asks Mari about the name of the church. Mari has mentioned the name of the street, *Linnégatan* (line 06), where the church they are talking about is located, and from that Staffan infers the possible name of the church. He starts his turn as a question to Mari, but in the word search he begins a metalinguistic negotiation that constitutes another whole. The speakers are looking at photos and Mari has started a turn that is interrupted by Staffan's question. This and the discontinuity of the utterance confuse Mari, and she reacts with a lapse. Staffan, however, does not continue but gives her this long switching time. Mari takes the turn and requests a clarification, which indicates that she has achieved partial understanding: she understands the interactional obligation that Staffan's turn implies for her. Staffan's reaction to Mari's *va säger du att*, 'what do you say that', exhibits clearly that he interprets Mari's conduct as non-understanding. He reformulates his question twice (line 16-17) without the salient word

from his original utterance, and Mari fails to react. After a lapse Staffan continues with a third attempt and gets a reaction from Mari.

Mari's whole-phrase question word *va säger du att* contains an element of repeat: *att*, 'that' is a beginning of an utterance. Consequently, the intonation contour is that of an elliptic repeat in the function of a request and not that of a wh-question. Although the conversation with Mari contains numerous factual and anticipated problems of understanding which could lead the interlocutors to interpret various features as indications of non-understanding, it may also be this prosodic structure that has become an indication of non-understanding for Mari and her interlocutors.

The problem is that of understanding as we can see in Examples (72) and (73). After Mari's request in Example (73), Staffan gives three paraphrases punctuated with lapses before Mari responds. In example (72) the negotiation with Ville is even longer. In both examples it is impossible to point out where exactly the difficulty lies. In Example (73) the propositional content of the utterance is changed and simplified in the paraphrases, but this may be the confusing factor for Mari. The contextual connection to the earlier utterance disappears and there is no new context immediately available for the paraphrases. The problem is similar in the following extract from a long chain of reformulations which already have been dealt with (see Ex. (8), (20) & (34)).

(74) [8, 20, 34, 97]

The episode is preceded by a negotiation about serving tea or coffee (see Ex. (45)) and a 12 seconds' pause that is noted in the beginning of the transcript. Mari is preparing tea in the kitchen when Ville starts the following episode about the music in the background.

01	(12)((Mari goes to the kitchen))	(12) ((Mari goes to the kitchen))
02	Ville <i>va e den där musiken som (1) hörs?</i>	what is this music that (1) sounds
03	Mari <i>aha (.) de e (4) de e kristen musik</i>	uhu (.) it is (4) it is christian music
04	Ville <i>aha</i>	uhu
05	(4)	(4)
06	Ville <i>e de nån (.) känd sångare</i>	is it a (.) well-known singer
07	(3)	(3)
08	Mari <i>va säger du att?</i>	what do you say that?
→	Ville <i>e de nån (.) sångare som ja (.)</i>	is it a (.) singer that I (.)
10	<i>själv borde (1) känna till.</i>	myself should (1) know about.
11	(4)	(4)

Here Ville only repeats the initial frame of the question which is the trouble source before the pause and the request for clarification. After the partial repeat he reformulates the kernel part of the utterance. This does not resolve the problem and the negotiation is continued.

In the following example Mari's request *kan du säga en gång till*, 'please say once more', is interpreted as a request for clarification,

although it could have the same function of indicating inaudibility as *va*, 'what', and *va säger du*, 'what do you say'. The example illustrates how understanding and non-understanding is collectively constructed.

The speakers are having tea, which partly explains the long pauses. Ville's question is discontinuous (lines 02-05). In fact, he resumes the topic Staffan and Mari were discussing a moment ago and asks the same question Staffan did. Mari does not start an answer during the slow progress of the turn. The lapse after the word 'Pentecostals' is short, but Ville's pace in general is slow, which would allow Mari to take the turn. She displays that she is not prepared to do this and Ville makes a repair (line 06), which is obviously needed because of the unclear motivation for resuming the topic. He repairs only one word in the proposition and thereby confuses the context furthermore, because Mari has not had any difficulties with the Swedish word for Pentecostals. The discontinuity is continued through the short pause between the translation and the prepositional phrase at the end of the utterance (line 07). After he has completed the turn there are actions around having tea and a long lapse. When Mari does not take the speakership, Ville continues by suggesting two regions in Finland (lines 10-12), which is again followed by a long lapse.

(75)

Staffan and Mari have had a long negotiation about the number and distribution of Pentecostals in Finland and Sweden. It has been closed by both participants agreeing that the Pentecostals also form the biggest non-conformist church in Finland.

01		(15) ((first only background music, at the end of the pause also pouring of tea))	(15) ((first only background music, at the end of the pause also the pouring of tea))
02	Ville	<i>finns de nära</i> (.)	are there any (.)
03		<i>byar eller städer</i> (1)	villages or towns (1)
04		<i>där de finns</i> (.) <i>många</i> (.)	where there are (.) many (.)
05		<i>pingstväänner</i> (1)	pentecostals (1)
06		<i>*helluntailaiset*</i> (1)	*pentecostals* (1)
07		<i>i finland?</i>	in finland?
08	Staffan	<i>tack h.</i>	thank you h.
09		(5)	(5)
10	Ville	<i>e de</i> (1)	is it (1)
11		<i>i österbotten eller</i>	in north western coast or
12		<i>e e de i lappland?</i>	is is it in lapland?
13		(3)	(3)
→	Mari	<i>kan du [säga en gång till?]</i>	can you [say once more?]
14	Ville	[<i>du</i> (.) <i>du</i> <i>du</i>] <i>du bor i</i> (.)	[you (.) you you] live in (.)
15		<i>i du bodde i Lojo</i>	in you used to live in Lojo
16	Mari	<i>jå:</i>	yes
17	Ville	<i>.jå va de många</i>	.yeah were there many
18		<i>pingstväänner där?</i>	pentecostals there
19		(2)	(2)
20	Mari	<i>att hur många?</i>	that how many?
22	Ville	<i>jaa</i>	yes

23	Mari	<i>ja (1) tycker att också de (.)</i>	I (1) think that also it (.)
24		<i>trehundra</i>	three hundred
25	Ville	<i>jaja</i>	yesyes
26	Mari	<i>samma</i>	same
27	Ville	<i>.jå m:</i>	.yeah m:

When Mari finally takes the turn after the lapse (line 13), she explicitly requests a repeat. What is remarkable here is that Ville does not repeat or reformulate what he said earlier. Instead, he starts with something that seemingly has nothing to do with his previous turns. His second turn (lines 17-18 after Mari's request hints a connection, but Mari is still insecure in her interpretation and delays giving her checking response. In this episode, too, there is a slight change of topic and perspective during the negotiation, which naturally makes inferencing more difficult.

In conversation C3, the person who requests clarification is the NS, which results in a different behavior by the first speaker who in this case is an NNS. When Olle uses a non-focused metacommunicative request, Tarja takes the chance to expand or specify the trouble utterances. She displays her interpretation of Olle's request by repairing the syntactic structure and completing the semantic content of the utterance after the request.

In the following example Tarja reformulates her utterance by expanding the subject. Her answer to Olle's first question about Christmas customs is unexpected. Olle expresses astonishment using the immediate question *va*. In other episodes where he has asked Tarja about something he has given her generous preparational pauses. Tarja also indicates clearly that this is only a beginning both by paralinguistic means and using the connector *å* with a subsequent laugh at the end of the turn (line 04). Olle's remark pushes Tarja to explain, which she does in the form of a wider description: it was not only her boyfriend who was drinking at Christmas Eve.

(76)

The episode is from the beginning of C3. Tarja has recently come back from her Christmas trip to Finland. Immediately before the episode the guests, Anna and Olle, have commented on Tarja's canaries.

01	Olle	<i>hur fi/ hur firar ni jul</i>	how d/ how do you celebrate christmas
02		<i>(1.5)</i>	(1.5)
03		<i>va gjorde ni?</i>	what did you do
04	Tarja	<i>min kille: druckit sprit å#</i>	my boyfriend drunk spirits and #
→	Olle	<i>va?</i>	what?
06	Tarja	<i>eh min kille å mamma å pappa (1)</i>	eh my boyfriend and mum and dad (1)
07		<i>eh druckit eh sprit (1)</i>	eh drunk eh spirits (1)
08		<i>[[bara=</i>	[[only=

09	Olle	<i>[[jasså</i>	<i>[[oh uhu</i>
10	Tarja	<i>=å inget (...)</i>	<i>=and nothing (...)</i>
11	Olle	<i>du gillar inte (...)?</i>	<i>you don't like (...)?</i>
12	Tarja	<i>#nej#</i>	<i>#no#</i>

The negotiation after the repair is short. Now Olle is more prepared and able to give more neutral feedback. Tarja expresses her attitude in the description by adding *bara*, 'only', and *å inget*, 'and nothing'. This then gives Olle the chance of producing the formulation *du gillar inte*, 'you don't like', which Tarja confirms and thereby closes the sequence.

In the following example Tarja completes the syntactic structure in her utterance in a way that changes the perspective. By so doing she closes the subtopic about her mother's doings at Christmas, and in the next turn she goes over to what her father used to do. She has, however, created expectations about a continuation by her intonation and the connector *å* with laughter in her voice, as she often does. She uses the connector and the laughter as a compensatory means replacing active word searching. Similar NNS behavior is found in other conversations: some NNSs start an utterance, but when they find that they lack means of expressing themselves adequately, they end the turn with a semantically vague phrase or word (Kalin & Leiwo 1990).

(77) [17]

The conversation began with a brief discussion of Christmas and Tarja's trip to Finland. The immediately preceding topic was going to church at Christmas and Tarja's attitudes to the church. The previous sequence was clearly closed by a formulation by Tarja and a minimal response by Olle that also initiates the first turn in the following sequence.

01		(2)	(2)
02	Olle	<i>gjorde mamma nåt speciellt?</i>	<i>did mum do something special</i>
03	Tarja	<i>maten å #</i>	<i>the food and #</i>
	→ Olle	<i>va?</i>	<i>what?</i>
05	Tarja	<i>vi hade julmaten</i>	<i>we had the christmas food</i>
06		(3)	(3)

Another syntactic completion is done in the following sequence, where the problem seems to be that Olle does not hear part of the turn. Part of Tarja's first turn is inaudible, but the inaudible part is not as long as the corresponding part in the second turn. Tarja also changes her utterance into indirect speech by starting with a subjunctive. The utterance exhibits further elaboration with *då*, 'then', at the end (line 05). The interpretation of this *då* is interesting: Tarja has obviously used it as a temporal adverb, but it resembles the pragmatic particle *då*, which is used in similar contexts in spoken Swedish (Saari 1991). Tarja's proficiency in Swedish, however, does not support this interpretation.

(78)

Olle has asked Tarja to tell about the car accident on the way home from Finland. Tarja has related that they had driven into a tree and the sequence has been closed by joint confirmation.

01	Tarja	<i>å (1) sen va vi eh eh (...)</i>	and (1) then we were eh eh (...)
02		<i>den natten</i>	that night
→	Olle	<i>va sa du?</i>	what did you say?
03	Tarja	<i>att vi va (2)</i>	that we were (2)
04		<i>eh in i hotellet# över den natten</i>	eh into the hotel# that night
05		<i>då</i>	then
06	Olle	<i>jaha men ((clears throat)) (1)</i>	uhu but ((clears throat)) (1)
07		<i>körde ni fort?</i>	did you drive fast?
08		<i>(2.5)</i>	(2.5)

Olle's seemingly incoherent response *jaha men*, 'uhu but', and continuation refers to the beginning of the episode where the participants were discussing the car accident Tarja had been in.

In the following example the conversation has turned from Tarja's personal everyday experiences into a metalinguistic discussion about certain qualities in Swedish that Tarja finds peculiar. The linguistic demands in such episodes are naturally considerably high, but the difficulty is levelled to certain extent by the fact that this type of interaction is the one the participants in the present data share.

Tarja's reaction to Olle's request for clarification in this episode is not a verbatim repeat but a repeat of the main clause which contains the sequential implication of the turn. She formulates the object *om katten (.) går under bordet å s- eller springer*, 'if the cat (.) goes under the table and r-or runs', in a way that causes Olle difficulties of interpretation. When he requests help using a response token combined with a rising intonation, Tarja merely repeats the main clause question, which displays the sequential implication.

(79)

In this episode Tarja tries to ask what happens to the Finnish illative, directional case, when it is neutralized with the inessive, locative case, as in Swedish.

01		(8)	(8)
02	Tarja	<i>eh hur du säger (1) om katten (.)</i>	eh how do you say (1) if the cat (.)
03		<i>går under bordet å s-</i>	goes under the table and r-
04		<i>eller springer?</i>	or runs
→	Olle	<i>mm?</i>	mm?
06	Tarja	<i>hur du säger det?</i>	how do you say it?
→	Olle	<i>att den springer under bordet?</i>	that it runs under the table?
08	Tarja	<i>åå (1) men om ja översätter</i>	yeah (1) but if I translate
09		<i>om du säger att katten (.)</i>	if you say that the cat (.)
10		<i>springer <u>under</u> (1) bordet (1)</i>	runs <u>under</u> (1) the table (1)

11		<i>e de inte att katten (.)</i>	isn't it that the cat (.)
12		<i>sprang där i <u>under</u> bordet</i>	run there in <u>under</u> the table
13		<i>(2)</i>	(2)
14	Tarja	<i>#betyder de#?</i>	#does it mean#?
15	Olle	<i>jaha (1) eh de- den kan springa</i>	uhu (1) eh i- it can run
16		<i>men vara (.) kvar där</i>	but stay (.) there
17	Tarja	<i>aa</i>	yeah

First, after Olle's second, explicit request for clarification (line 07), which in fact is a comprehension check, Tarja makes an effort to reformulate the original question about the neutralization of cases in Swedish. The negotiation that follows is long and it is not clear if the participants reach shared understanding of the problem.

The interlocutor sometimes asks for a repair, but does not let the speaker do it. This seems to happen in instances when the conversations take on a more institutional character, and the speakers' roles in the project and the role of the conversation in it are foregrounded. In the following sequence Olle and Tarja discuss a recorded conversation that Tarja has had with a Swedish woman at work, and Olle focuses his questions on the turns Tarja did not understand in the conversation. The questions are therefore 'teacher questions' which check if she now afterwards, understands what the woman had said.

(80)

Olle has been asking Tarja "teacher questions" about the conversation between her and her fellow worker that Tarja recorded and they have now been listening to.

01	Tarja	<i>eh hon åker me (2)</i>	eh she goes with (2)
02		<i>in/ eh me (.) hennes syster (1)</i>	in/ eh with (.) her sister (1)
03		<i>till otlandet</i>	to abroad
04	Olle	<i>mm (.) men varför gör dom de?</i>	mm (.) but why do they do that?
05	Tarja	<i>dom vill inte #åka ensam#</i>	they don't want to #go alone#
	→ Olle	<i>va?</i>	what?
07	Tarja	<i>den e/</i>	it is/
08	Olle	<i>jo (.)</i>	well(.)
09		<i>de e nåt de e nånting</i>	it is something it is something
10		<i>speciellt</i>	special
11		<i>(2)</i>	(2)
12		<i>ska vi backa får du höra</i>	shall we play back so you can hear
13	Tarja	<i>de e att eh (.)</i>	it is that eh (.)
14		<i>hennes syster har (1)</i>	her sister has (1)
15		<i>eh fyller femti år</i>	eh is turning fifty
16	Olle	<i>ja just de</i>	yes exactly
17	Tarja	<i>å,</i>	yeah,

Olle's question *va* results in an incomplete attempt at a repair. Tarja shows with the intonation that she is going to continue, but Olle has

interpreted the first answer on line 03 as so incoherent that he wants to give Tarja extra hints and let her listen again to the tape. Tarja, however, ignores this, continues the answer she started and exhibits an understanding of the first question. This part of the conversation resembles school discourse. Olle interrupts Tarja's effort to do the repair and does the repair himself. He uses a turn initial particle *jo* that equals *well* in many contexts. The particle *jo* is used in Swedish in a similar way in repair turns as the particles *no*, *oh*, and *well* in English (Schegloff 1992).

The last part of the conversation between Olle and Tarja has a special value for the study: the participants discuss language learning and project activities, and thereby overtly interact in their institutional roles. The involvement the participants exhibit through their actions is high. They put effort into the negotiating and do not avoid approaching or confronting difficult issues. Some of the negotiations, however, go beyond the participants' linguistic proficiency and do not meet the goals the participants have set through their actions.

6.3.2 Non-focused explicit indications of non-understanding

Expressions like *I don't understand* are more explicit than the multifunctional and ambiguous requests I dealt with in the previous section. They explicate the fact that there is a problem of understanding, but they do not define or point out where the problem lies. In the present data only Rauni uses explicit indications of non-understanding in this non-focused form. The exact form she uses is a fossilization of 'now I don't understand'.

(81) [27, 64]

The episode is from the beginning of the conversation between Clara, Rauni and Ville. It is preceded by one in which both Finnish and Swedish have been used in discussing how long the guests will stay, whether there is enough time for Rauni to serve tea, and whether the baby lets Rauni sleep at nights. So the topic 'baby' has already been introduced when the sequence starts. The immediately preceding turns have been in Finnish.

01	(4)		(4)
02	Ville	[[* <i>tunnet sä</i> /*	[[*do you know/*
03	Clara	[[<i>när föddes flickan?</i>	[[when was the girl born?
04	Rauni	<i>ah?</i>	ah?
05	Clara	<i>när föddes flickan.</i>	when was the girl born.
06	Rauni	<i>ah m december ofemte</i> ^o	ah m december ^o the fifth ^o
07	Clara	<i>december (.) aha (1)</i>	december (.) uhu (1)
08		<i>slutet (.) av december? (1)</i>	the end (.) of december? (1)
09		<i>e eh:: i början av december</i>	e eh:: in the beginning of december
10		<i>eller i slutet (.)</i>	or at the end. (.)
11		<i>under jultid?</i>	during christmas time?
→	Rauni	<i>ah nu inte vösstå riktig åhm</i>	ah now not understand right ohm

13	(1)	(1)
14	<i>fli eh nej eh födda [när]</i>	gir eh no eh born [when]
15	Clara <i>[ja (.)] när</i>	[yes (.)] when
16	Rauni <i>e födda</i>	is born
17	Clara <i>ja</i>	yes
18	Rauni <i>ä:: (.) född den eh (2)</i>	o::h (.) born the eh (2)
19	<i>december femte</i>	fifth of december
20	Clara <i>femte=</i>	the fifth=
21	Rauni <i>=han e nu två månader</i>	=he is now two months
22	Clara <i>aha (.) två månader</i>	uhu (.) two months
23	Rauni <i>mm ja</i>	mm yeah

The problem of understanding that is indicated on line 12 by Rauni's request *ah nu inte vösstå riktig åhm*, 'ah now not understand right ohm', has only indirectly to do with Rauni's low proficiency in Swedish. In her earlier turn, on line 06, she softens her voice towards the end of the turn so much that Clara does not catch the date. The conversation in Swedish, however, puts a strain on Rauni and she is unable to find a connection between her own response and Clara's turn that follows. She does not realize that Clara did not hear the end of her turn and that Clara's turn still deals with the birth date of her baby.

Even here the misconception about the sex of the baby that is displayed in Clara's first question constitutes an extra strain as we can see on line 14. Rauni is confused by the question about the exact date and admits that she does not understand. The particle-like vocalization *åhm* in the end displays her effort to hold the floor. After the pause she shows that she has second thoughts about her interpretation of and response to the first question. Her fragmentary turn is very difficult to analyze, but it may indicate that she finds the topics 'girl' and 'birth' incompatible with the context she has been talking in. The problem is solved when Clara does a repair with a strongly emphasized temporal question word that pulls Rauni back to her first interpretation.

In the following sequence Rauni's direct manifestation of non-understanding follows after three attempts to start a response. The immediately preceding sequence dealt with the exact time of the baby's birth. Clara has a foreign accent but she speaks slowly and pronounces every word distinctly, which should make the talk comprehensible to Rauni. However, she seems to have great difficulties in following Clara's talk, although there are no other disturbing factors in the situation except the baby. The baby is quiet at the moment, and Rauni gives the impression of attending to what Clara says.

(82) [29]

The episode is direct continuation of Ex. 27.

01	Clara	<i>när åkte ni/ du till sjukhuset?</i>	when did you/ you go to the hospital
02		<i>(1)</i>	(1)
03		<i>när (.) vilken tid åkte du till</i>	when (.) what time did you go to
04		<i>sjukhuset?</i>	the hospital
05	Rauni	<i>åhm (2) ehm (2) två veckor (1)</i>	ohm (2) ehm (2) two weeks (1)
→		<i>nej (.) förstår (.) •nu förstå inte</i>	no (.) understand (.) •now not understand
07	Clara	<i>nejnej (.)</i>	nono (.)
08		<i>ja ja sa vilken tid (.)</i>	I I said what time (.)
09		<i>och startade du härifrån till</i>	and did you start from here to
10		<i>sjukhuset?</i>	the hospital
11		<i>(3)</i>	(3)
12	Clara	<i>du var <u>här</u> hemma</i>	you were <u>here</u> at home
13	Rauni	<i>mm ja</i>	mm yes
14	Clara	<i>å så du e::h (.) de:: (.)</i>	and so you e::h (.) i::t (.)
15		<i>du kände att de/ något hände</i>	you noticed that it/ something happened
16	Rauni	<i>.hah</i>	.hah
17	Clara	<i>så du / du skulle åka</i>	so you / you would leave for
18		<i>till sjukhuset m[m (.)]</i>	the hospital m[m (.)]
19	Rauni	<i>[mm ja]</i>	[mm yes]
20	Clara	<i>så vilken tid åkte du (.)</i>	so what time did you leave (.)
21		<i>till sjukhuset</i>	for the hospital
22	Rauni	<i>de e natten</i>	it is the night
23	Clara	<i>på natten?</i>	at night?
24	Rauni	<i>ja::</i>	ye::s
25	Clara	<i>aha</i>	uhu

Rauni's conduct is not as obvious and open to analysis as a conversation analyst might expect. She shows engagement by both paralinguistic means and by always responding immediately when her proficiency allows. She uses various vocalizations as a means for holding the floor and expressing willingness to cooperate. In the sequence before the beginning of the response, the vocalization on line 05 is uttered with confidence in the voice suggesting that she really has something to say. This, however, is followed by a lapse, another vocalization in a less clear voice, and finally another lapse of two seconds. Clara interprets these as attempts to respond and gives Rauni time to do so. After the second lapse Rauni produces a reaction that refers to the question about the time of the birth, but she gives length of time instead of points in time. After a short lapse, when Clara does not react, Rauni starts directly indicating the problem in understanding (line 06). The pace is so slow that Clara has a chance to start her repair, latching onto Rauni's turn.

The conversations in the present data do not exhibit many very complicated negotiations for understanding. The topics discussed are

relatively easy and they do not involve any conflicts. The speakers are all aware of the asymmetry in the access to knowledge of language that exists between the researchers and the immigrants, and mostly avoid actions that would highlight it. The other factor that keeps the conversations on a relatively superficial level is the fact that the speakers are not close friends and the encounters are part of a research program. Thus the conversations in the data are in "a continuing state of incipient talk" (Schegloff & Sacks 1973: 262). Some episodes, however, seem to elicit more elaborated negotiations, where the speakers do not settle for unclear understanding. The episodes concerning Pentecostals in the conversation with Mari, metalinguistic negotiations with Tarja, and the whole conversation between Clara and Rauni about the baby contain more complicated efforts to negotiate for understanding despite considerable linguistic difficulties. In this example on line 07, Clara, without any effort to mitigate, explicitly states that Rauni's interpretation cannot be right. With her firmly expressed *nejnej*, 'nono', Clara makes a very direct repair of the misunderstanding and indication of non-understanding displayed by Rauni. The two NNSs in the data, Staffan and Olle, never exhibit the same amount of directness when expressing that the interlocutor has misinterpreted something. The explanation for Clara's strong reaction may partly be the fact that she is not a native speaker and might have difficulties in finding a less direct way of expressing herself. NNSs have been found not to mitigate also in other studies of intercultural asymmetric interaction (e. g. Bardovi-Harlig 1987). Another explanation supported by the data is the character of the conversation between Clara and Rauni: the women are aware of the short time allotted to the conversation and the topic is of great interest to both of them; they do not drift to instances where they have to make efforts to find a topic.

The following sequence illustrates a situation where a repair leads to a problem of understanding. The NNS is slow in her reactions and consequently this shapes the context in such a way that the first speaker becomes aware of the risk of a comprehension problem.

(83)

The conversation takes place at a university department and follows a test-like activity in which Rauni has reported her previous communication tasks. After this Ville and Olle serve her coffee and the conversations starts. Rauni has the baby with her. The episode is the first one in the conversation.

01		(2)	(2)
02	Olle	<i>du nu rauni när (1)</i>	now rauni when (1)
03		<i>när mattias blir lite större</i>	when mattias grows little more
04	Rauni	<i>mm</i>	mm
05	Olle	<i>å ska börja (.) tala (1)</i>	and starts (.) to talk (1)
06		<i>ska han bara prata svenska?</i>	will he only speak swedish?
07		(2)	(2)
08	Rauni	<i>åj ja m:=</i>	oh yes m:=

09	Olle	=>eller ska han också lära sej =>or will he also learn	
10		finska?<	finnish?<
11	Rauni	ja tror (1)	I believe (1)
12		att han prata finska (1)	that he talk finnish (1)
13		[å: på] svenska	[and in] swedish
14	Olle	[>me dej?<]	[>with you?<]
15		mm (.) du vill att han ska lära sej	mm (.) you want that he will learn
16		<bägge språken? (.) både (.)	<both languages? (.) both (.)
17		både finska å svenska> (1)	both finnish and swedish> (1)
→	Rauni	nu inte vösstår	now not understand
19	Olle	du vill att han ska kunna (.)	you want that he will know (.)
20		svenska (.)	swedish (.)
21		å att han ska kunna finska?	and that he will know finnish?
22	Rauni	joo	yes
23	Olle	mm	mm
24		(3)	(3)

Olle presents his question in the beginning of the sequence in a clear way: he first addresses Rauni and by so doing prepares Rauni for an important question, focusing her attention on it. The question, however, is quite unexpected in Rauni's context: Rauni has a low proficiency in Swedish, and during the conversation she has always switched to Finnish when she has talked to the baby. After a lapse of two seconds she makes an attempt to start the turn in a clear voice that does not contain any signs of wanting to drop the turn but rather of holding the floor and gaining time for preparing the response. Olle, however, interrupts her attempt by a repair that he latches onto Rauni's vocalization (line 09). Rauni continues with her response with undisturbed prosody. She gives a verbal interpretation for the hesitation she exhibited in her previous turn: she starts her turn saying *ja tror*, 'I believe', which shows that she wants to point out that there are complicated factors in raising children in two languages. Olle completes Rauni's turn with an overlapping suggestion *me dej?*, 'with you?' and gives closing feedback after Rauni has completed her turn. For Rauni, the sequence is closed. Olle, however, makes a new start. His speech rate was slow during the first turn in the sequence, but much faster in the inserted completions (lines 09-10 & 14).

In the new start (line 15) Olle's speech rate is very slow and the words are pronounced very distinctly, almost phoneme for phoneme. In spite of this there is a manifest problem of understanding. Olle puts extra emphasis on *bägge*, a less frequent synonym of *båda*, 'both', which together with the new, seemingly unmotivated start confuses Rauni. After a short lapse she requests help by announcing that she does not understand. The difficulty has existed throughout the whole sequence, so Olle is prepared to do another repair, which here is a formulation of Rauni's earlier response. Rauni has no problems in responding now and the sequence closes with Olle's third turn ratification.

In the following example Olle starts a new sequence after a short

negotiation about the Swedish word for *grandmother*. There are things happening after the negotiation that draw the attention away from the concept 'grandmother', so Rauni is not able to follow and has no active means for handling the situation. The baby is babbling, but that does not seem to disturb the speakers. The babbling goes on during the whole sequence.

(84)

The episode is preceded by the negotiation episode about the word *mormor*, 'grandmother', Ex. (61/105). After a pause of 11 seconds Olle continues the topic.

01	(11) ((coffee drinking, phone rings))	(11) ((coffee drinking, phone rings))
02	Olle <i>de de finns ju</i> (1)	there there are (1)
03	<i>de finns ju inga som e så snälla</i> (.)	there are no people who are as kind (.)
04	<i>mot sina barn</i> (.)	to their children (.)
05	<i>som mormor å morfar</i>	as grandmother and grandfather
06	(3) ((baby is babbling))	(3) ((baby is babbling))
→	Rauni <i>nu inte försstår riktigt</i>	now not understand really
08	Olle <i>mm jo. man säger att</i> (1)	mm yeah. people say that (1)
09	<i>eh mamma å pappa brukar</i>	eh mother and father usually
10	<i>tycka om</i> (1)	love (1)
11	<i>ett barn förstås</i>	a child naturally
12	Rauni <i>mm</i>	mm
13	Olle <i>men mormor å morfar</i>	but grandmother and grandfather
14	<i>tycker ännu mera om</i> [(...)]	love even more [(...)]
15	Rauni <i>[jåå] mm</i>	[yes] mm
16	Olle <i>ja vet de för att</i> (.)	I know this because (.)
17	<i>ja bodde</i> (.)	I lived (.)
18	<i>hos min mormor å [morfar]</i>	with my grandmother and
19	<i>[morfar]</i>	[grandfather]
20	Rauni <i>[.mm] mm</i>	[.mm] mm
21	Olle <i>från de ja va liten</i>	from when I was little
22	Rauni <i>.ja</i>	.yeah
23	Olle <i>å dom va</i> (.) <i>hemska snälla</i>	an they were (.) very kind
24	Rauni <i>ja bodde</i> [också]	I lived [also]
25	Olle <i>[å s- så] e de alltid</i>	[and s- so] is it always
26	Rauni <i>mm</i> (.) <i>ja bodde också: min:</i> (3)	mm (.) I lived also: my: (3)
27	<i>farmor</i>	grandmother
28	Olle <i>jaha</i>	uhu

After Rauni's direct indication of non-understanding Olle makes a repair initiation that resembles the repair Clara does in Example (28). Clara starts with *näjnäj*, whereas Olle begins the turn with the affirmative minimal feedback *mm jo* that initiates something which contrasts with elements in the previous turn. This puts a clear stop to advancing the topic and starts a negotiation for understanding. Olle does not give a plain reformulation but performs a preface through an expansion stating how parents love a child, which Rauni meets with minimal response, thus

encouraging Olle to continue without any further comprehension checks. After the continuation about grandparents' love for a child Rauni emphatically expresses that she has understood. Olle is highly involved in the conversation and does not notice her first effort to take the turn for explicit indication that she has understood Olle's utterances.

The speech rate, which is normally slow, accelerates at the end of the sequence in the part where the participants are about to find a way of solving the problem in the same way as in Examples (1) and (27). Similarly, this part contains overlapping speech which otherwise seldom occurs in the data. The speakers' engagement in the conversation is higher when they are struggling with a specific problem. When they find the solution, they forget the cautiousness that they usually exhibit.

6.4 Summary

The problematic use of acknowledgement tokens occurs mostly in conversations C2 and C3. Both NSs, BSs and NNSs use acknowledgement tokens in situations in which understanding is not clear or the recipient considers the difficulties unsurmountable or face-threatening. The contextual information, together with the participants' actions before and after the problematic response, provide the evidence for dividing the occurrences of acknowledgement tokens into two groups: those that display factual non-understanding, and those that are interpreted as such. Seen from the producer's point of view, these minimal responses are reactions to the interactional demands of the situation and a way of maintaining the conversation.

How the repair is implemented depends on who initiates it and how the speaker of the trouble source turn interprets the language proficiency of the initiator. The vague utterances used as requests for clarification often occur in more fluent parts of the discourse and are therefore also interpreted as indications of non-hearing which are mostly repaired with a plain repeat by an NS. In discontinuous parts of conversations the NS may interpret ambiguous and vague utterances as non-understanding. If the repair is initiated by an NS, the NNS often finds her original turn repairable and changes or expands it in her repair turn. The repair sequences that are initiated by an articulated, although ambiguous, reaction are mostly shorter and less convoluted than after plain lack of response.

7 NEGOTIATING FOR UNDERSTANDING: EXPLICIT UTTERANCES OF NON-UNDERSTANDING AS REPAIR INITIATIONS

7.1 Repeats as a means of repair initiation

Repeats are commonly used in interaction, both by native speakers and language learners. It is considered as a kind of convergence behavior between the interactants. Repeats of children have been investigated by e.g. Keenan (1977) and the central role of repeats in second language learners' production and their language acquisition has been reported by e.g. Keller-Cohen (1979). In the following, repeats are used as a means of repair initiation and they are interpreted as requests.

7.1.1 Repetition of first speaker utterance up to the trouble source

The second speaker's reaction is often interpreted in connection with her/his status as speaker, whether s/he is an NS or an NNS. Although the NSs have problems of comprehending, the NNSs interpret their requests for clarification as indications of non-hearing rather than non-understanding. There are also differences between the NNSs in the data. For instance, Leo's requests are often interpreted as indications of non-hearing (cf. Ex. 79-81). In the following extract Tarja interprets Olle's behavior as non-hearing.

(85)

Before the sequence, Olle has asked whether Tarja is interested in continuing with her Swedish studies. She has said that she is not sure if she can.

01	Tarja	<i>nej (2)</i>	no (2)
02		<i>min kille tycker att vi måste</i>	my boyfriend says that we must
03		<i>flytta till:: (.) haparanda eller</i>	move to:: (.) haparanda or
04		<i>någonstans där</i>	somewhere there
→	Olle	<i>flytta till?</i>	move to?
05	Tarja	<i>haparanda #eller#</i>	haparanda #or#
07	Olle	<i>ska ni flytta dit?</i>	are you going to move there?

On lines 01-04 Tarja expands on her response to Olle's question. There is a lapse after the negation word. The question has evoked indications of problems: pauses, and a diffuse dispreferred turn start. After these disturbances in the conversation and the unexpected negated answer Tarja is obliged to present an account. She describes her life situation, saying that it may make it impossible as well as unnecessary to attend courses in Swedish. This would also mean an end to her participation in the project. Olle does not catch the end of the turn, although there is a short pause before the name of the town. He repeats the infinitive and preposition that immediately precede the trouble words. Tarja responds by repeating the end of the turn and the repair is done.

The only change in the repeated part is the laughter in Tarja's voice at the end. The laughter together with *eller*, 'or', and in some other cases with *ä*, 'and', displays insecurity in constructing the turn and substitutes for a more elaborated continuation of the utterance, for instance mentioning other towns in the area. This vague ending of the utterance does not produce new problems of understanding, as is often the case (see Ex. (17)). The insecurity can in this instance rather be interpreted as a mitigating and thereby a face-saving device. Olle abandons the topic 'language studies' and a longer sequence about possibly moving away from the city follows.

If the second speaker who initiates the repair through a repeat is an NNS with a fairly high language proficiency, the first speaker's first reaction is the same as in the previous example: he repeats the trouble words. In the following example there are factors before and after the repeat that steer the interpretation to non-understanding. The request is preceded by a relatively long lapse and there is no immediate reaction after the first speaker's repeat. After a short pause he makes a new repair by forming a compound with the trouble word by adding an easily interpretable first part, *musik*, to it.

The episode is from the beginning of C1. The previous episode was the one about the hangover (Ex. 40).

01	(7)	(7)
02	Staffan	oh is this new equipment
03	<i>oj e de nån ny anläggning</i>	this or?
04	<i>de här eller?</i>	(2)
05	Leo	new?
06	Staffan	is it <u>new</u> equipment (.)
07	<i>e de en ny anläggning (.)</i>	new music equipment?
08	<i>ny musikanläggning?</i>	(2)
09	Leo	well:: (.) i bought it (.)
10	<i>förra veckan (.) o siva o</i>	last week (.) o record o
11	(2)	(2)
12	Staffan	oh the ↑record?
13	<i>jasså ↑skivan?</i>	(2)

The use of more transparent compound, *musikanläggning* (line 07), does not resolve the problem nor does it allow the speakers to continue with the topic. Leo does not respond for two seconds. When he does, he makes a careful start with a particle which, however, at first sight is inappropriate in this context. It mostly occurs as a second that is projected by an assessment or request, and it expresses that the speaker only reluctantly agrees with the first speaker. It is also used as a common initiation of response to compliments in Finland. According to this culture, the recipient has to show modesty and undervalue the qualities s/he was complimented on. With this in mind, Leo's conduct could be interpreted as a conscious response to a compliment.

Another interpretation could be that the particle is diffuse enough to be used in order to gain time for the interpretation of the trouble utterance. After a short pause Leo displays his interpretation explicitly by saying that he bought it last week. The utterance is produced at a slow pace, which is further emphasised by a pause before the adverbial of time which constitutes the link to *ny*, 'new', in Staffan's question. After this Leo reassures himself and his interlocutor of their mutual understanding by adding his word for the concept he thinks they are discussing. This in its turn complicates Staffan's interpretation of the situation and there is a lapse of two seconds before he initiates a repair of the misunderstanding.

Staffan's short utterance *jasså skivan* expresses astonishment using a change-of-state token and prosodic and paralinguistic means. However, it does not work as an unambiguous repair initiation for Leo. There is still a problem, which is indicated by the lapses after Staffan's turn and after the inaudible beginning of Leo's own turn in Example (87) (line 14). Leo nevertheless solves the problem within the framework he has got, takes the risk and carries on discussing the record saying *de e:: ganska bra*, 'it's pretty good', as if there had not been any breach in intersubjectivity.

In order to create a smooth repair of problematic actions, both parties must cooperate. In this sequence, there are several breaches of intersubjectivity, which impede both advancing the topic and repairing the deficiencies. At the beginning of the sequence there is a breach in intersubjectivity, when Leo does not understand the key word and Staffan is not quite sure what the problem is. By the end Staffan is aware of the misunderstanding but his reactions are delayed. Leo's confident conduct in his own context of misunderstanding hinders Staffan in attempting to effect the repair, and so there is a three-second lapse (line 16) before Staffan's explicit repair of the misunderstanding. At this point Leo realises what the misunderstanding was and contributes to the repair. The pace of the conversation is dramatically changed when the speakers start the repair together. There is overlap and the pace of the utterances is accelerated as is often the case in such instances (cf. ex. (26) and (84)).

(87) [1]

Immediate continuation of Ex. 86.

14	Leo	(...)	(2)	(...)	(2)
15		<i>de e:: ganska bra</i>		it is:: pretty good	
16		(3)		(3)	
17	Staffan	<i>ja menar (.) hela (1) [musik]</i>		i mean (.) the whole (1) [thing]	
18	Leo	<i>[nä j de e]</i>		[no it is]	
19	Staffan	<i>musikanläggningen</i>		the music equipment	
20	Leo	<i>nä j [de e]</i>		no [it is]	
21	Staffan	<i>[den e] inte ny?</i>		[it is]n't new?	
22	Leo	<i>.nä::</i>		.no::	
23	Staffan	<i>den ser så ny ut #</i>		it looks so new #	
24		(14)		(14)	

Mari's way of using the phrase *va säger du att* in Examples (67), (73) and (74) resembles the repeats of utterances before the trouble source analysed in this section. There she combines a vague metalinguistic request and repeats part of the previous utterance. The repeat is minimal, *att*, 'that', but the intonation of the utterance is that of a partial repeat: there is no fall at the end. Another interpretation, however, is that she is using *va säger du att* as a lexicalized phrase equal to *va*. The interlocutor's interpretation is instable as can be seen in the analysis of the excerpts in Ch. 6.

7.1.2 Repetition of the trouble source

It is mostly the NNSs in the data that repeat or make an attempt to repeat the trouble source in order to initiate a repair when they do not

understand an utterance. Because, owing to their limited linguistic proficiency there is a problem of understanding, in most cases the repeat is incomplete or only an approximation of the trouble source. One of the few NSs repeats is Olle's action in a metalinguistic negotiation which was dealt with in Example (79).

The following example is one of the clearest in the data: the problem of understanding seems to be purely lexical, and the methods of coping with the problem do not bring new problems with them. The next speaker progresses from less explicit indications towards more specific ones, because the first speaker does not see the problem as one of understanding. The first speaker's interpretations reveal his view of the situation: he acts as if he were speaking with another NS who wants to check or specify the concepts under discussion. It is not until the third, the more explicit request for clarification that he interprets the problem as one of understanding.

(88) [71]

Leo and Staffan are looking at pictures in a book about a sports event in Finland. The previous episode has been about beautiful girls and some politicians. There was a pause of 12 seconds between the episodes.

01	Staffan	<i>vem e de?</i>	who is it?
02	Leo	<i>martti vainio</i>	martti vainio
03		<i>(2)</i>	<i>(2)</i>
04	Staffan	<i>va e de för distans</i>	what distance
05	Leo	<i>va?</i>	what?
06	Staffan	<i>va e de för distans</i>	what distance
→	Leo	<i>distans?</i>	distance?
08	Staffan	<i>jaa</i>	yes
09	Leo	<i>va e de (.) oför nånting?</i>	what is that (.)
10	Staffan	<i>hur långt springer han</i>	how far does he run
11	Leo	<i>aha å fem tusen å tie tusen</i>	uhu and five thousand and ten thousand
12	Staffan	<i>mhm</i>	mhm
13		<i>(2)</i>	<i>(2)</i>

The speakers progress within their own interpretational frameworks. Staffan's reactions (lines 06 & 08) are misunderstandings of the function of Leo's requests. When Leo repeats the word *distans*, Staffan interprets it as a request for confirmation or an understanding check and gives plain confirmation using an acknowledgement token.

In the following example the second speaker, who is again the NNS, does two repeats of the trouble source. Only the first of these is a request which is directed to the first speaker. The second one, as an indication, is more indirect.

(89)

The episode is preceded by episodes about Finnish and Swedish holidays in December: Lucia in Sweden and Christmas parties before Christmas in Finland. The conversation takes place six days after Finnish Independence Day.

01	(5)	(5)
02	Ville <i>firade du (.) självständighetsdan</i>	did you celebrate (.) the
03	<i>nå (.) på nåt sätt?</i>	independence day a (.) in any way?
→	Leo <i>tjäns?</i>	inde
05	Ville <i>självständighetsdan (1)</i>	the independence day (1)
06	<i>Finlands (.) självständighetsdan</i>	the finnish (.) independence day
07	(3)	(3)
08	Ville <i>#(>vet du inte att de</i>	<i>#(>don't you know that there</i>
09	<i>har varit en sån da<)# (.)</i>	<i>has been such a day<)# (.)</i>
10	<i>under (.) den här månaden</i>	during (.) this month
11	Leo <i>va e de för nåt?</i>	what is that?
12	Ville <i>självständighet</i>	independence
→	Leo <i>säll (.) otändi het^o ((whispers))</i>	<i>inde (.) open dence^o ((whispers))</i>
14	Ville <i>finland (.) firade sin</i>	finland (.) celebrated its
15	<i>självständighet</i>	independence
16	Leo <i>*itsenäisyys* (.) jä jä (.)</i>	<i>*independence* (.) yes yes (.)</i>
17	<i>jä de har (.) i finland</i>	yes it has (.) in finland
18	Ville <i>hur har du (.) firat den?</i>	how did you use to celebrate it?
19	Leo <i>#jä jä# (1) jä (3)</i>	<i>#yes yes# (1) yes (3)</i>
20	<i>varje år i skolan (.)</i>	every year at school (.)
21	<i>(de va) stor fest</i>	(it was) big celebration

Ville's turn on line 02 displays his concept of the knowledge shared between him and Leo. The noun *självständighetsdag*, 'independence day', is introduced as a known element. However, he uses the means NSs often use when talking to an NNS, which suggests that he is not quite sure if Leo knows the Swedish word for this day. He makes a short pause both before and after the salient word (Long 1983: 135). It also must be remembered that Ville's pace in general is slow.

Leo reacts to the question without delay and makes a request through repeating the beginning of the salient word in the form he perceived it. By so doing he exhibits in a similar way as in the previous example that, despite comprehension problems, he is able to manage the interaction and cope with his role as a fellow speaker. There is no lapse between the turns, so he is able to interpret the sequential implicativeness of the turn and knows what the problem is. His request results in a repeat that does not give the expected clarification, and he fails to respond and take the turn at a possible TRP. Ville continues and completes the noun with a genitive which he thinks gives the additional information that is needed in the situation. It does not, however, make the concept clearer to Leo, and when Leo again fails to respond, the development of the topic is definitely stopped.

The three-second lapse is awkward at least for the first speaker.

This is displayed by Ville's reaction, which is rather unusual in the data. He laughs and wonders if it is true that Leo does not know about the day. The talk during the laughter is face threatening both because of the propositional content and because Ville changes his speaking mode. Speech rate is often used as contextualization cue (Gumperz 1982; Uhmman 1990). Here Ville speaks considerably faster than he usually does when talking to Leo. This leads to a change in the participation framework which resembles the one in Example (9) p. 47 where Ville and Staffan were talking about picking blueberries. By changing the pace Ville is turning away from talking to Leo and making a comment about his knowledge. There is a contradiction between the content of his utterance and its pace: he is addressing Leo, but the pace signals that the comment is not a message to Leo but about him. Staffan is present but he does not participate audibly in this episode. When Ville stops laughing he slows down the pace and thereby turns back to Leo and completes the utterance. He does not do any hedging or give an account of his action.

Leo does not react directly to Ville's comment but uses his wholephrase question *va e de för nåt* as he also did as his last resort in the previous example. In both examples the question refers to the previous turn and thereby disambiguates the meaning. Ville responds by repeating the word again without any new information. Now Leo displays that he has no further means for asking for help and he makes an effort to analyse the word by himself. He makes a morpheme by morpheme analysis of the word as he perceived it, whispering to himself and turning away from the participation frame as he did in the episode dealt with in Examples (49), (50) and (51). Ville then offers help by completing the information he has given: 'the day of the independence of Finland during this month'. Leo displays the result of his inferring and gives the Finnish translation for the trouble word. He is so confident about the result that he goes on with his turn confirming the interpretation. After this Ville resumes the original question, but now with a change in the tense that moves the time from this year to the years Leo was in Finland.

In the present data, initiating repair by repeating the trouble source is mostly combined with other means of coping with problems. Lapses and a slowed pace are the commonest of those. The structure of such a conversation differs from episodes where there are no lapses before the repair-initiating repeat. The following example shows how the lapse prepares the first speaker for the repair and he starts a negotiation for understanding without delay after the repeat.

(90)

Before the episode, Leo and Staffan have been discussing the role of the car industry in Sweden and Staffan has closed the topic by saying that he would like a Volvo share for Christmas.

01	(7)	(7)
02	Staffan <i>diskuterar ni</i> (.)	do you discuss (.)
03	<i>eh löntagarfonder nånting</i> (1)	eh employee investment funds (1)
04	<i>på jobbet</i>	at work
05	(3)	(3)
→	Leo <i>lörda?</i>	saturday?
07	Staffan <i>lön tagar fonder</i>	employee invest ment funds
08	(3)	(3)

Staffan's conduct gives the impression that he is trying to make his talk comprehensible by the use of a short pause and hesitation vocalisation before the salient word. In fact, the hesitation may equally be due to word searching in a situation where the speaker is looking for a new topic to revive a conversation when it is about to fade. The end of the turn supports the first interpretation. Staffan, in fact, makes the first repair and, after a short lapse, starts the negotiation for understanding when he makes the context clearer by adding the adverbial of place.

There is a three-second delay in Leo's reaction (line 05). Finally he makes a request with a repeat that has some phonetic resemblance to the trouble word, but does not make any sense semantically in the actual context (*lörda*, 'Saturday'), a fact Leo is aware of as his paralinguistic expression indicates. Because of the lapses, Staffan is prepared for coping with the problem and repeats the trouble word slowly morpheme by morpheme. His experience of the conversation with Leo encourages him to think that Leo is familiar with the concept, because the conversation has revealed that he is an active communicator in his job and employee investment funds were an important issue in most jobs in Sweden at the time of the recordings. Leo's response is considerably delayed, which shows that he is making new attempts to infer something, but fails and requests clarification as shown in the following extract:

(91)

Immediate continuation of Ex. (90).

→	Leo	<i>va e de för nånting?</i>	what is that?
10	Staffan	<i>de e:: (1) en ide om att eh</i>	it i::s (1) an idea of that eh
11		<i>(1) #</i>	(1) #
12		<i>ja de e svårt å säga va</i>	yes it's difficult to say what
13		<i>de e faktist (.)</i>	it is really (.)
14		<i>ja vet inte riktigt å ja</i>	I don't quite know and I
15		<i>tror ingen</i>	think no one
16		<i>riktigt vet va de e men de e (.)</i>	really knows what it is but it is (.)
17		<i>iden e att man (1) eh</i>	the idea is that you (1) eh
18		<i>(5)</i>	(5)
19		<i>ja en del av ens lön (.)</i>	well <u>part</u> of your <u>pay</u> (.)
20		<i>ska ju gå till en [fond]</i>	will go to a [fund]
21	Leo	<i>[jä jä] (1)</i>	[yes yes] (1)
22		<i>ja har hört</i>	I have heard

23	Staffan	<i>och den fonden ska då (.)</i>	and this fund will then (.)
24		<i>köpa (1) eh (1)</i>	buy (1) eh (1)
25		<i>ska ä eh pengarna ska</i>	will o eh the money will
26		<i>användas</i>	be used
27		<i>ti ett (.) ägande (.)</i>	for a (.) ownership (.)
28		<i>äga en del av företaget</i>	to own part of the company
29	Leo	<i>.jå (2)</i>	.yeah (2)
30		<i>nåj diskuterar inte (3)</i>	no do not discuss (3)
31		<i>de spelar ingen roll</i>	it does not play any role
32	Staffan	<i># ne</i>	# no
33		<i>(8)</i>	(8)

Staffan responds to Leo's request without delay as he did in the beginning of the episode (Ex. (90)). The clarification in this case, however, is difficult to produce, so he does a rather long search and pauses before he finds a way of describing the trouble-concept. Obviously, *ja en del av ens lön*, 'well part of your pay', is sufficient for Leo: he starts his response overlapping with the end of Staffan's utterance. The following turns confirm the mutual understanding. Staffan elaborates the description and Leo gives an answer to the original question (lines 30-31).

In the previous examples the trouble source has been a word that is unfamiliar to the NNS. The unfamiliarity has been displayed by an incorrect or deficient repeat. In spite of the fact that the trouble source has been made explicitly observable, the interlocutors have had difficulties in accomplishing the repair. In most other cases it is not as easy to identify a specific part of the utterance as the trouble source even though the next speaker indicates the problem with a similar repeat.

The following example sheds light on the difficulty in precisely defining the problem in conversations with an NNS who has a low proficiency in the language used. In such conversations the fact that the NS is also language-handicapped, which is true to certain extent in all conversations with NNSs, becomes apparent. He cannot use his full command of the language; instead, he has to speak a language which he estimates he can share with the NNS. This means that on the one hand he has to create new ways to express himself and on the other hand his utterances acquire features of NNS talk. Examples (90) and (91) illustrates this.

(92)

The episode is preceded by the negotiation about baptismal age (Ex. (02/36), (93) and (102)). In the immediately preceding sequence Ville has asked if Mari's mother also belongs to the Pentecostal church (Ex. (93)).

01	Staffan	<i>va/ va händer då när man</i>	wh/ what happens when you
02		<i>döps (1)</i>	are baptized
03		<i>när man e så gammal</i>	when you are so old
→	Mari	<i>va händ?</i>	what happ?

05	Staffan	<i>va händer (1) va säger e (2)</i>	what happens (1) what does eh say (2)
06		<i>vem vem e:: (1) hur gör man (.)</i>	who who e::h (1) how do you do it (.)
07		<i>så att säga</i>	so to say
08		<i>(2)</i>	(2)
09	Staffan	<i>kan (.) kan vem som helst döpa</i>	can (.) can anybody baptize
10		<i>måste de va en präst eller?</i>	does it have to be a priest?
11	Mari	<i>jå:: präst</i>	ye::s priest
12	Staffan	<i>de måste va</i>	it must be mustn't it
13		<i>(3)</i>	(3)
14	Mari	<i>vet inte 'precis 'precis att måste</i>	don't know <i>exactly</i> that must
15		<i>men .h (1) de e (vanlit)</i>	but .h (1) it is (common)
16	Staffan	<i>mm</i>	mm
17		<i>(3)</i>	(3)

Mari's question *va händ* is difficult to interpret structurally. Staffan interprets it as a request for clarification of the word *händer*, because Mari fails in repeating the word. Another interpretation possible here is that Mari is repeating the previous turn up to the trouble-source, as in Examples (88) and (90). The verb *döpa* has been difficult for Mari and the propositional content of the utterance on lines 01 and 02 is vague. A third interpretation would be that even if the recipient has understood all the words, she cannot know if the question refers to what happens to you during or after the baptismal ceremony.

There is a lapse after Staffan's first attempt at repair in which he repeats the original question. The lapse gives Staffan cues as to the nature of the problem and he begins with a new repair method. He tries to split the proposition into smaller constituents in a way similar to that often used by Clara (see e.g. Ex. (28)), but meets difficulties. In a situation where the participants have shared knowledge and are able to make use of contextual cues his utterances on lines 04 and 05 would have been sufficient for understanding that he means what happens during the baptismal ceremony.

The following is another example where the NNS makes an incomplete repeat after a lapse. The first speaker interprets it right away as non-understanding and produces a repair through reformulation of the original utterance.

(93)

The episode is preceded by the long negotiation about baptismal age and Mari has said that her mother did not let her get baptized until she was eighteen.

01	Ville	<i>.h tillhör din (1)</i>	.h do your (1)
02		<i>e:: dina föräldrar också?</i>	e:: your parents also?
03		<i>(2)</i>	(2)
→	Mari	<i>förä/?</i>	pare/?
05	Ville	<i>d din din mamma (.)</i>	y your your mum (.)

06		<i>hon tillhör också</i>	she also belongs to the pentecostal
07		<i>pingstkyrkan?</i>	church?
08	Mari	<i>nej</i>	no
09	Ville	<i>.ja::</i>	.yea::h
10	Mari	<i>bara ensam</i>	only alone
11	Ville	<i>mm</i>	mm
12		<i>(3)</i>	(3)

Ville's question to Mari is syntactically elliptic but clear enough because of the context. The utterance is discontinuous and lacks the object, but the propositional content is not as complicated as that in the previous example. Mari's reaction resembles the previous one. Although the repeat is only an approximation of the intended word as was also the case in the previous example, the knowledge of Mari's conduct earlier in the conversation suggests that the difficulty is not lexical: she fails in repeating a word that she uses unproblematically elsewhere in the same conversation.

Ville, however, takes the request at its face value and does the repair through changing the subject, which is the trouble-word according to Mari's indication, and makes the propositional content clearer by a left-dislocation. The crucial change, however, is that he adds the object which, in addition to the subject, is the other salient word in the proposition.

Example (93) highlights the problem of shared knowledge and intersubjectivity. The deficient repeat looks similar to the repeat of *händer*, 'happens', in the previous extract. Here, however, Mari assumes that Ville and she have shared knowledge about her family. Her parents are divorced and she has lived with her mother only. Ville has access to ethnographic data about Mari and accomplished the repair by replacing 'parents' with 'mum'. If the analyst had not had this information, the analysis would have been more speculative.

When the NNS requests help by making repeats, the BS always has the possibility of taking a short cut and translating the trouble word or the whole utterance in Finnish. In my data the BSs only do this when explicitly asked to or when the NNS has made many fruitless efforts and the situation is desperate. In the following example Ville, after a short hesitation, solves the problem of understanding with a translation. The conversation has focused on monasteries for a while, and Ville has already earlier translated the word for Mari. Thus a part of the negotiation has already been done in the earlier sequence, although neither of the speakers makes an explicit tie to it.

(94)

The participants have been looking at pictures of a well-known Greek-Orthodox monastery which has resulted in an episode about monasteries in Finland and Sweden. There has been a short negotiation about the word 'monastery' and it has been translated into Finnish for Mari.

01	Ville	<i>jaha just .h</i>	uhu exactly .h
02		<i>pingstvännerna har inte kloster</i>	pentecostals don't have monasteries
03		<i>(2)</i>	(2)
→	Mari	<i>kloster?</i>	monasteries
05	Ville	<i>mm (.) *luostari*</i>	mm (.) *monastery*
06	Mari	<i>nej</i>	no
07	Ville	<i>m</i>	m
08		<i>(14)</i>	(14)

In the following example the trouble proposition is again discontinuous. This has a natural explanation in the fact that the speakers are having coffee. The pause, however, is located exactly as it usually is in NS talk to an NNS: immediately before the salient word. The length of the pause must depend on the fact that having coffee both physically impedes and mentally distracts so that the speaker needs time to word-search.

(95)

Staffan has stopped looking at the book about a sports event in Finland, and Leo has asked if the guests want to have milk in their coffee.

01	Staffan	<i>ja/ ja har aldrig sprungit eh (1)</i>	I/ I have never run eh (1)
02		<i>tretusen meter</i>	three thousand meters
03	Leo	<i>mhm</i>	mhm
04		<i>(7) ((coffee is poured into</i>	(7) ((coffee is poured into
05		<i>cups))</i>	cups))
06	Staffan	<i>men ja har sprungit eh (3)</i>	but I have run eh (3)
07		<i>te terränglöpning</i>	cr cross-country running
08		<i>((coffee is been poured))</i>	((coffee is been poured))
09		<i>(3)</i>	(3)
→	Leo	<i>◦tremo (1) *estejuoksu* eller</i>	◦cross◦ (1) *hurdling* or
11	Staffan	<i>eller man springer i skogen</i>	or you run in the woods
12	Leo	<i>aha::</i>	<u>uhu::</u>
13		<i>(10)</i>	(10)
14	Staffan	<i>å så (3)</i>	and so (3)
15		<i>långhoppat har ja gjort lite</i>	I have also done a little
16		<i>också</i>	long-jumping
17	Leo	<i>aha</i>	uhu
18		<i>(2)</i>	(2)
19		<i>jå du e så lång #att#</i>	yes you are so long #that#
20	Staffan	<i>#ja behöver bara ta ett steg</i>	#I need only to take one step
21		<i>framåt rättare sagt</i>	forward so to say

The status of the lapse after Staffan's turn is unclear because of the pouring of the coffee. After the lapse Leo explicitly indicates a problem of understanding, but starts to negotiate for understanding almost immediately after the insecure and incomplete repeat of the trouble word. Staffan cannot evaluate whether the Finnish guess is right, but he resumes the structure that Leo has used and continues the negotiation with *eller*,

'or', which does not have any literal function in the utterance. It, it however, functions here as a hedge: by using it Staffan ties his repair turn to Leo's turn and qualifies a part of his attempt as correct. Example (88/71) contained a similar case of explicit indication of the trouble source as in example (95), but the strategies of coping with the problem are different. In the latter case Leo codeswitches and thereby indicates explicitly that he has a problem of understanding a word. The action leads to a considerably shorter repair sequence than was the case in example 88/71).

7.2 Repair initiations using understanding checks

Repair initiations in the data that are done using understanding checks (Schegloff 1984) display the speaker's ability at metalinguistic negotiation. The repair sequence that follows displays the interlocutor's interpretation of the initiator's behavior as a more or less knowing participant.

The following sequence is an insertion with a local reference. Staffan comments on the cake and asks Mari what is in it. There is a short lapse after which she puts a hypothetical question with SV word order.

(96)

The episode follows the one in which Mari, Staffan and Ville have attempted to achieve understanding about communication at Mari's place of work (Ex. 58). The prior episode has been followed by a pause of 8 seconds after which Staffan has asked whether the cake they are having is home-made.

01	Staffan	<i>va e de i den? (1)</i>	what is there in it (1)
→	Mari	<i>de heter (1) eller?</i>	it is called (1) or?
03	Staffan	<i>va va jaa (.)</i>	what what well (.)
04		<i>va va het[er] #den# (eller)</i>	what ehat do you [call] #it# (eller)
05	Mari	<i>[#]</i>	[#]
06		<i>de e 'banankaka</i>	it is <i>banana</i> cake

Because there is a short lapse, Mari initiates a tentative repair and exhibits her doubts through a new question, *eller*, 'or'. The shared insecurity is also displayed in Staffan's repair when he does a word search. The turn ends in a joint expression of affiliation. Firstly, through the laughter that is attached to the pronoun and which Mari also joins in, and secondly, through two words in Staffan's turn: Staffan picks up the verb *heter*, 'is called', and the insecurity word *eller*, 'or', from Mari's previous turn and thus levels out the differences between being knowing or unknowing participants by displaying that they know different things and that they

both can nevertheless contribute to the conversation with similar items.

(97) [8, 20, 34, 74]

The episode is preceded by a negotiation about serving tea or coffee (see Ex. 45) and a pause of 12 seconds that is noted in the beginning of the transcript. Mari is preparing tea in the kitchen when Ville starts the following episode about the music in the background.

01	(12)	(12)
	((Mari goes to the kitchen))	((Mari goes to the kitchen))
02	Ville <i>va e den där musiken som</i> (1)	what's this music that (1)
03	<i>hörs?</i>	sounds
04	Mari <i>aha</i> (.) <i>de e</i> (4)	uhu (.) it is (4)
05	<i>de e kristen musik</i>	it is christian music
06	Ville <i>aha</i>	uhu
07	(4)	(4)
08	Ville <i>e de nån</i> (.) <i>känd sångare</i>	is it a (.) well-known singer
09	(3)	(3)
10	Mari <i>va säger du att?</i>	what do you say that?
11	Ville <i>e de nån</i> (.) <i>sångare som ja</i> (.)	is it a (.) singer that I (.)
12	<i>själv borde</i> (1) <i>känna till.</i>	myself should (1) know
13	(4)	(4)
14	Ville <i>ja känner int igen den där</i>	I don't recognize that
15	<i>rösten</i> (1)	voice (1)
16	<i>ja vet inte vem som</i> (1) <i>sjunger</i>	I don't know who (1) is singing
17	(4)	(4)
→	Mari <i>menar du att du känner inte:</i> ,	do you mean that you know not:
19	(1)	(1)
20	Ville (nä) <i>ja vet inte vem som</i>	(no) I don't know who
21	<i>sjunger.</i>	is singing.
22	(3)	(3)
23	Ville <i>e de nån</i> (.) <i>känd</i> (.) (s) <i>finsk?</i>	is it someone (.) well-known (.) (s) finnish
24	(1)	(1)
25	Mari <i>finsk</i> (.) <i>vet inte heller att</i>	finnish (.) don't know either that
26	<i>e vilken heter hon/ han</i>	e which is she/ he called
27	(4)	(4)
28	Mari <i>kanske 'sekera</i>	perhaps 'sekera
29	Ville <i>se kera aha::</i> (se)	se kera i see:: (se)
30	(7)	(7)
31	Ville <i>det e lu lugnande musik #</i>	it is pea peaceful music #
32	Mari <i>jå::</i>	yea::h
33	(8)	(8)

In the above example which has been dealt with in several sections, Mari twice explicitly indicates trouble with understanding. The fact that she explicitly indicates that there is a problem - although not exactly what the problem is - may be part of her general linguistic behavior: she very often makes metalinguistic comments, but the explanation may also be that the question contains a clear obligation. First she makes a request for repetition by asking *va säger du att*, 'what's that you are saying', which leads Ville to reformulate the question.

The second indication, *menar du att du känner inte*, 'do you mean that you don't know', is followed by a lapse that is also evidence of the interlocutor's problem in interpreting the turn. The form of the turn is that of an understanding check, but the other cues in the context suggest that the problem is that of non-understanding. In this insecure situation Ville answers the question very quietly, thus displaying that he does not interpret the question as an understanding check. The lapse after his repair utterance on line 21 confirms this interpretation and he has to continue the repair.

In the following example Mari again makes an understanding check that is interpreted as an indication of non-understanding. In this instance, however, it is not clear whether the problem is that of non-understanding or whether there is a difference in the participants' assumptions about each other as knowing or unknowing participants. Mari's turn at the end of the episode (line 45) reveals that at this point she mistrusts the information Staffan has. However, she yields to him later as the conversation progresses.

(98) [23, 24]

The lapse on line 06 in Ex. (22), has been followed by a long negotiation in which Mari has first taken the turn and stated the size of the congregation in her Finnish home town. Staffan has explicitly said that he is only interested in the total number of Pentecostals in Finland, and has tried to get an approximation from Mari. He has offered guesses, but Mari has not been able to tell if they are correct. After this, Staffan proceeds to ask if there are special areas with many Pentecostals, which starts the negotiating sequence on lines 07 and 09 in the following example

01	Staffan	= <i>nää</i> (.) <i>för att ja tror de e:</i>	=no (.) because I believe it is:
02		<i>nästan en halv miljon i sverige</i>	almost half a million in sweden
03		(3)	(3)
04	Mari	<i>.ja</i> (.) [<i>så</i>]	.yeah (.) [so]
05	Staffan	[<i>s</i>] (.)	[s] (.)
06	Mari	<i>mycke</i>	many
07	Staffan	<i>jaa</i> (.) <i>särskilt i småland</i> [#]	yes (.) especially in småland [#]
08	Mari	[#]	[#]
09	Staffan	<i>jönköping e ju den stora</i> (.)	jönköping is the great (.)
10		<i>pings pingststaden</i> (3)	pente pentecostal town isn't it (3)
11		<i>e de nåt sär- särskilt område</i>	is there any spe special area
12		<i>i finland också som</i> (.)	in finland also like (.)
13		<i>som småland här då</i> (1)	like småland here (1)
→		<i>i finland där de e mycke</i> (1)	in finland where there is a lot (1)
→		<i>där där de e</i> (1)	where where there is (1)
→		<i>där pingstkyrkan e</i>	where the pentecostal church is
→		<i>särskilt</i> (1) <i>stor</i>	especially (1) big
18		(3)	(3)
→	Staffan	<i>nåt nåt <u>distrikt</u> så där?</i> (1)	any any <u>district</u> or something (1)
20		<i>vet du de</i>	do you know
21		(2)	(2)
22	Mari	<i>ja förstår inte nu att e</i>	I don't understand now that e
23		<i>menar du att .h</i>	do you mean that .h

24	Staffan	<i>jo alltså i sverige så (2)</i>	yes you see in sweden so (2)
		<i>a de de:: (.) m:: just i småland va</i>	a it it: (.) m:: just in <u>småland</u> you know
25	Mari	<i>mm</i>	mm
26	Staffan	<i>så e de (.) de e de s starkaste området så att säga va de (.)</i>	so e it (.) it is the m most important area you could say couldn't you
27		<i>de- de e väldigt mycke pingstväänner just i småland (.)</i>	the- there are very many pentecostals particularly in småland (.)
28		<i>eh å så e de(n) (.)</i>	eh an so i(t) is (.)
29		<i>ganska många i göteborg men inte så många i stockholm å</i>	rather a lot in gothenburg but not so many in stockholm and
30		<i>inte så många i:: (.)</i>	not so many in:: (.)
31		<i>dalarna å inte så många i norra sverige (å)</i>	dalarna and not so many in northern sweden (and)
		<i>utan de e allt mest i småland</i>	but most of all in småland
32	Mari	<i>nej inte där (1)</i>	no not there (1)
33		<i>ehm va (.) menar du att .h småland e de mycke stor (.) plats</i>	ehm what (.) do you mean that .h småland is there very big (.) place
34	Staffan	<i>nää (.) men de e mycke:: många pingstväänner (.) där</i>	no (.) but there are a lo::t a lot of pentecostals (.) there
35	Mari	<i>aha ((insecure, questioning))</i>	aha ((insecure, questioning))
36	Staffan	<i>förstår du [då e då]</i>	do you understand [then is then]
37	Mari	<i>[om ja] vet å (.)</i>	[if I] know and (.)
		<i>va e de må småland (1)</i>	what is it må småland (1)
38		<i>att (.) ja förstår att inte där e inte så mycke</i>	that (.) I understand that not <u>there</u> , is not so much
39		<i>(2)</i>	(2)
40	Staffan	<i>joo (.) de e de .h (.) alltså=</i>	well (.) it is it .h (.) you see=
41	Mari	<i>=du vet?</i>	=you know?

The interpretation of non-understanding is confirmed by Mari's insecure response to Staffan's repair (lines 41-42). Staffan displays his interpretation of Mari's conduct and continues with a direct metacommunicative question. Mari's response does not, however, resolve the problem. The episode is dealt with in more detail in Chapter 5.

The following example illustrates instances where, although the understanding check is not interpreted as a problem of understanding, there nonetheless is a problem, and the NNS has to make a new attempt to check, which leads to misunderstanding and further problems in interpretation.

(99)

In the previous episode Staffan has told a short joke about an ice hockey team and the conversation is fading. There has first been a pause of eight seconds, then an acknowledgement token by Staffan, another pause of two seconds and an acknowledgement token by Ville.

01	Staffan	<i>åh hhh vem e de som har fått</i>	oh hhh who is that who has had
02		<i>sitt porträtt målat där?</i>	her portrait done there?
→	Leo	<i>vem?</i>	who?

04	Staffan	<i>jaa</i>	yes
05		(3)	(3)
→	Leo	<i>som har (.) mala målat den (.)</i>	who has (.) paint painted it (.)
07		<i>tavlan (.) menar du</i>	the painting (.) do you mean
08	Staffan	<i>jaa (.)</i>	yes (.)
09		<i>f f för de första vem e de (.)</i>	f f firstly who is it
10		<i>vem föreställer de</i>	who is portrayed in it
11	Leo	<i>#j ja (.) känner inte (.) henne</i>	# i i (.) don't know (.) her
12		(2)	(2)
13		<i>de e min kompis (.) kosin</i>	it is my friend's (.) cousin
14	Staffan	<i>aha::</i>	i see
15		(3)	(3)

Staffan interprets the request as a native-like understanding check and answers with a plain affirmative minimal response which does not help Leo to infer what the original question was about. There is a long lapse, which Leo needs for inferring and preparing the new understanding check, during which he displays his imperfect understanding of Staffan's question. Staffan's answer is a misleading affirmative response followed by a reformulation. Staffan also displays that he is aware of the contradiction between the beginning and the end of his turn: there are minor disturbances before he gives the reformulation. The subject-object relations in the word order in Staffan's original question and the reformulations confuse Leo, who is thinking in terms of the subject as the agent in a SVO sentence. The misunderstanding is revealed and resolved later in the episode about the painting: Leo is talking about the person who did the painting, whereas Staffan asks who has had her portrait painted.

In the following three examples the understanding check is done by the participant with the better command of Swedish, so the repair initiations can also be interpreted as corrections. Because of the nature of the settings, the fact that the language learners are 'guests of honor' at the encounters, the corrections are not face-threatening.

(100)

The episode comes after a sequence where the conversation is fading and the participants are having coffee. The previous sequence consisted of four turns: Staffan asked whether Leo has plans to find an apartment of his own, Leo responded 'no' in a very low voice, Staffan ratified this and Leo joined in closing the episode by repeating his response.

01		(11) ((having coffee))	(11) ((having coffee))
02	Ville	<i>mm hade du planerat nånting</i>	mm if you had planned something
03		<i>så hade ja (.) haft här en (1)</i>	so I would (.) have here a (1)
04		<i>katalog (1)</i>	catalog (1)
05		<i>över alla di (.) möbler vi kan</i>	of all the (.) furniture we can
06		(1)	(1)
07		<i>köpa</i>	buy
→	Leo	<i>möbel?</i>	furniture? ((singular))

→	Ville	<i>möbler</i>	furniture ((plural))
→	Leo	<i>möbler</i> (.) <i>ja behöver #inte#</i>	furniture I do #not# need
11	Ville	#	#
12	Leo	<i>ikea</i> (3) ◦ <i>möbel</i> ◦	<i>ikea</i> (3) ◦furniture◦
13		(5)	(5)

In the above example Leo makes a repeat of a word in Ville's turn. However, he uses the singular form of the word, which leads to a correction of the form and confirmation of the semantic content of the item by Ville. There is no clear evidence whether the request displays an understanding check or if it is an expression of astonishment. The latter interpretation receives some support from Leo's turn on lines 10 and 12 where he turns down the idea that he needs any furniture. The negotiation of the linguistic form and Leo's contribution to it is unique in the data. The speakers usually negotiate using gross categories and approximations that are not explicitly corrected if understanding has been achieved.

In the following example the NNS's pronunciation of a Swedish word is so strongly deviant that the the recipient needs time for an interpretation and then checks it through a repeat. The repeat is interpreted as an understanding check by both speakers and does not therefore lead to any further negotiation, although the lapse before Staffan's check is so long that it could signal more problems.

(101)

The episode is preceded by two long pauses (8 and 4 s) after the episode about the name of a singer (Ex. 8, 20, 34, 74 & 97). Jari is Mari's husband.

01		(4)	(4)
02	Ville	<i>å jari e ute å jobbar?</i>	and jari is out at work?
03	Mari	<i>nej inte ute (2) han e nu (2)</i>	no not out (2) he is now (2)
04		◦ <i>svalby</i> ◦ (.)	◦ <i>svalby</i> ◦ (.)
05		<i>i ◦svalby◦ där .h (1)</i>	in ◦ <i>svalby</i> ◦ there .h (1)
06		<i>e: (.) <u>pipleen</u> e skola</i>	<i>i:s</i> (.) <i>bible</i> eh school
07		(2)	(2)
→	Staffan	<i>bibelskolan?</i>	the bible school?
09	Mari	<i>jä:</i>	ye:s
10	Staffan	<i>m:</i>	m:

Both in Example (100) and (101) the NNS has problems in producing the trouble-word. There are both pauses and hesitation vocalizations before the word is produced. In Example (101) there is also a short pause and a new start after the word. Thus the recipient becomes gradually involved in the problem and needs to stop the advancing of the topic in order to do a check.

The sequence is between the episode about baptismal age (Ex. 02/36) and the one in which Ville asked Mari whether her parents are Pentecostals (Ex. 93).

01	Mari	<i>men min mamma säge att (.)</i>	but my mother say that (.)
02		<i>nej (1) sen du (.) e: (2)</i>	no (1) then you (.) e:h (2)
03		<i>åttonde (.) ått</i>	eighth (.) eigh
→	Staffan	<i>arton?</i>	eighteen?
05	Mari	<i>årton (.) sen du kan (2)</i>	eighteen (.) then you can (2)
06		<i>bestämma den (.) [selv]</i>	make up your mind (.) [yourself]
07	Staffan	<i>[aha] (1)</i>	[uhu] (1)
08		<i>aha # jaa</i>	uhu # yes

Mari's attempt to describe when her mother allowed her to get baptized is brought to a halt by the Swedish word for 'eighteen'. Staffan's contribution is both a comprehension check, because of the rising tone, and assistance to Mari in word searching. Mari's repeat of the word displays transfer from Finnish in the perception of vowel quality.

7.3 Explicit metalinguistic repair initiations

Explicit metalinguistic repair initiations often occur as a last resort after a longer negotiation for understanding. In the following sequence the negotiation is long compared to most negotiations in the data. Although there are many pauses, the speakers display involvement by both paralinguistic means and the fact that they continue the negotiation in spite of the great difficulties they meet.

The episode is preceded by several short sequences about differences in beliefs and baptismal ceremonies in the Pentecostal and Lutheran churches. The participants are looking at photos.

01		(3)	(3)
02	Mari	<i>de e också s/ nära (1)</i>	it is also s/ near (1)
03		<i>ze pa (.) svalby</i>	ze pa (.) svalby
04	Staffan	<i>mm</i>	mm
05		(10)	(10)
06	Staffan	<i>va händer då då (.)</i>	what happens then (.)
07		<i>man blir välsignad då eller?</i>	do you get a blessing then or?
08		(3)	(3)
09	Staffan	<i>välsignad (.)</i>	blessing (.)
10		<i>vet du? (.)</i>	do you know? (.)
11		<i>förstår du?</i>	do you understand?
12	Mari	<i>signad (1)</i>	bless

13	Staffan	<i>nää</i> (.) <i>man säger e</i> (.)	no (:): it is said eh (.)
14		<i>pt.</i> (.) <i>när e</i> (2)	<i>pt.</i> (.) when eh (2)
15		<i>när e</i> (1) <i>pt.</i>	when eh (1) <i>pt.</i>
16		<i>i svenska kyrkan</i> (1)	in the church of sweden
17		<i>när små barn döps va</i>	when small children are baptized
18	Mari	<i>mm</i>	<i>mm</i>
19	Staffan	<i>eh .h då ta</i> (.) <i>tar prästen</i>	eh .h then the priest sprinkle (.) sprinkles
20		<i>lite vatten på huvet på barnet</i>	a little water on the head of the child
21		<i>så va</i>	doesn't he
22	Mari	<i>m[m]</i>	<i>m[m]</i>
23	Staffan	<i>[å] säger e</i> (.)	[and] says eh (.)
24		<i>ja döper dej i faderns å sonens</i>	i baptize you in the name of the father
25		<i>å den helige andens namn va</i>	the son and the holy ghost
26		<i>.h å då blir man välsignad</i> (.)	.h and then you get a blessing (.)
27		<i>de vill säga man får</i> (.)	it means you get (.)
28		<i>man får e</i> (.)	you get eh (.)
29		<i># hur ska man säga?</i>	# how do you say?
30		(2)	(2)
31		<i>man får guds skydd va</i>	you get the protection of god, don't you
32		(3)	(3)
→	Mari	<i>föstår inte den sista:</i>	don't understand the la:st
34	Staffan	<i>jo man s- man e</i> (3)	yes you s/ you eh (3)
35		<i>pt. välsigna(d) va heter de</i> (.)	<i>pt.</i> blessing what do you call it
36		<i>Vill/ Vill[e]</i>	<i>vill/vill[e]</i>
37	Ville	<i>[*siu]nata*</i>	<i>[*ble]ssing*</i>
38	Staffan	<i>va sa du?</i>	what did you say?
39	Ville	<i>*siunata*</i>	<i>*blessing*</i>
40	Staffan	<i>*siunata*</i>	<i>*blessing*</i>
41	Mari	<i>mm</i>	<i>mm</i>
42	Staffan	<i>o*siunata*o</i>	<i>o*blessing*o</i>
43	Mari	<i>att e:</i>	that e:
44	Staffan	<i>e de också en del av de här?</i>	is it also a part of this?
45		(3)	(3)
46	Mari	<i>jää</i> (1) <i>dom också</i>	yes (1) they also
47		(2)	(2)
48	Staffan	<i>välsignas</i>	get a blessing
49	Mari	<i>välsignas</i>	get a blessing
50	Staffan	<i>ja ja</i> (.) <i>mm</i>	yes yes (.) <i>mm</i>

The metalinguistic negotiation is started by Staffan on line 09-11, when he makes his remark-like questions about Mari's knowledge. Staffan makes an effort to describe what the word *välsigna*, 'bless', means. When he does a break after a turn with the tag *va* (line 17) which normally projects an encourager or another response expressing agreement (Nordenstam 1989), Mari gives an adequate response *mm*. She does that both here and after the following turn which also ends with *va* (line 21). The next turn, Mari's acknowledgement token *mm*, displays her understanding of the previous utterances and the one on lines 19-21, so there is some fluency in the negotiation, although it progresses slowly with many checks. Staffan's following turn, which contains the main information of the sequence, is followed by a lapse (line 30), but Mari's explicit repair initiation on line 33

displays that the breakdown is not total. Her initiation points out the repairable part of the earlier turn, and Staffan starts the repair (line 34) by using the same distinct repair element as that used by Olle (cf. Ex. (84)): *jo*, 'well', which is used in Swedish as a signal for starting a focused repair. The repair turn has the same prosody as the similar but negated one starting with *nää*, 'no', that begins on line 13. However, Staffan fails to complete the repair and as the last resort asks Ville to translate the word into Finnish.

As we have seen in other repair sequences, the use of translation and help from the BS is very infrequent in the data. In the following sequence it is used after a shorter negotiation. Here again the NNS initiates the repair.

(104)

Before the sequence, Anna has talked about various ways of telling fortunes on New Year's Eve. There has been a ten-turn sequence between Anna and Olle.

01	(2)	(2)
02	Olle <i>på tal om de (.) eh vi- (.) har ni julgröt (1) på julafton?</i>	talking about this (.) eh we- (.) do you have christmas porridge (1) on christmas eve?
03	(2)	(2)
→	Tarja <i>va e de [o:gröto]?</i>	what is it [o:porridge]
05	Olle <i>[ris] risgrynsgröt</i>	[rice] rice porridge
06	(6)	(6)
→	Olle <i>ve- vet du va gröt ä?</i>	d- do you know what porridge is?
08	(2)	(2)
09	Tarja <i>ne::j</i>	no:
→	Olle <i>kan du säga på finska</i>	can you say it in finnish
11	Anna <i>*puuroo*</i>	*porridge*
12	Tarja <i>*ai #jaa*#</i>	*oh #that*#
13	Olle <i>har ni sånt?</i>	do you have such a thing?
14	Tarja <i>jå #</i>	yes #

The problem surfaces again by a lapse (line 03). Tarja follows the rules of the turn-taking system and takes the turn although she has not achieved any interpretation for the previous turn. She knows, however, what the problem is and puts an explicit question. Olle's response overlaps with the end of Tarja's question, which shows that he, too, is aware of the problem-word. He offers a more transparent, and more common, paraphrase for Christmas porridge, but Tarja fails to answer. A breakdown now occurs in the turn-taking: a six-second lapse after turns that explicitly project a response. Olle picks the same means as Tarja has used and puts a metalinguistic question that again is followed by a lapse. Olle hardly ever uses metalinguistic questions about the NNSs' understanding unless the NNS has explicitly invited it. Thus the NNSs mostly control the degree of explicitness of the negotiation. In the present

extract Olle's insecurity with the strategy is displayed by the false start (line 07).

Olle tolerates the long lapses and thus gives Tarja time to infer and prepare her responses, but he always takes the turn without a delay after each of Tarja's turns. When Tarja displays that she does not know the word, Olle asks Anna to help with a translation.

In the last example translation into Finnish is mentioned in the repair initiation. The difficulty in the following instance lies in the participants' conceptions of each other as knowing or unknowing participants.

(105) [61]

The episode is from the middle of conversation C5. After discussing Rauni's contacts with Finnish women in Gothenburg, Olle has asked if Rauni's parents are coming to see the baby. She has answered that her mother will be coming in the summer.

01	Olle	<i>då kommer dom å (1)</i>	then they come and (1)
02		<i>ti dej?</i>	to you
03	Rauni	<i>joo (.) [min mamma] (1)</i>	yes (.) [my mother] (1)
04	Olle	<i>[va rolit]</i>	[how nice]
05	Rauni	<i>inte: ja tror inte att min pappa</i>	no: I don't think that my father
06	Olle	<i>näj</i>	no
07	Rauni	<i>komma</i>	to come
08	Olle	<i>men mamma tycker de blir</i>	but mother thinks it will be
09		<i>rolit</i>	nice
10	Rauni	<i>mm</i>	mm
11		<i>(2)</i>	(2)
12	Olle	<i>då blir hon mormor</i>	then she will become a grandmother
13	Rauni	<i>.jä</i>	.yes
14		<i>(3)</i>	(3)
15	Olle	<i>har du hört de ordet på</i>	have you heard this word in
16		<i>svenska (1)</i>	swedish (1)
17		<i>mormor?</i>	grandmother?
18		<i>(2)</i>	(2)
19	Rauni	<i>åm (1)</i>	ohm (1)
→		<i>att va e detta finska? (1)</i>	that what is this finnish? (1)
→		<i>[[va va du menar?</i>	[[what what do you mean?
22	Olle	<i>[[mm me/ me/ men</i>	[[mm bu/ bu/ but
23		<i>men du vet</i>	but you know
24		<i>va det svenska</i>	what the swedish
25		<i>[ordet (...)? jaa]</i>	[word (...)? yes]
26	Rauni	<i>[jo ja vet] jä</i>	[yes i know] yes
27	Olle	<i>mm</i>	mm
28		<i>(11) ((coffee drinking,</i>	(11) ((coffee drinking,
29		<i>phone rings))</i>	phone rings))

Olle's question, which is a reaction to a lapse that he interprets as an indication of a problem of comprehension, is not tied to anything in the immediate context. For Olle this context, Rauni's learning of Swedish, is actually the background to the whole conversation. This only becomes

highlighted when it comes into conflict with the interlocutor's context. There is a similar situation at the beginning of the conversation, when Olle and Rauni discuss talking to the doctor in Example (21/32).

Considering the pace in C4 and C5, the lapse after Olle's question is not very long (line 18). Rauni displays understanding of the sequential implication of the turn by starting her turn with a vocalization followed by a paraphrase that checks understanding. When Olle does not respond, Rauni also puts a metalinguistic question in order to make her repair initiation more transparent. Rauni again accelerates her speech rate when the participants are about to solve the problem and finish the repair. The outcome of the repair is that the participants reach a shared understanding as to access to relevant knowledge.

As could be expected, explicit requests for clarification and other explicit indications of problems of understanding result in more direct and transparent repairs that are accomplished within fewer turns than repairs initiated by less accurate indications. In many instances, however, explicit requests for help are the last resort of the participants in a long chain of attempts at repair where they do not have shared knowledge about the trouble source.

7.4 Summary

Repeats used as repair initiations are interpreted as confirmation checks when the recipient has a good command of the language used, in other words, when the first speaker is an NS and exhibits normal NS behavior. This happens in the conversation with Leo. Incomplete and deviant repeats are interpreted as indications of a problem of understanding, and the first speaker modifies and simplifies his language when doing the repair. The repeats mostly concern key words and are requests for clarification of the word itself or the remaining part of the first speaker utterance.

Understanding checks or requests for confirmation are done through repeats and frames such as 'do you mean'. The implementing of the repair in these instances in the data is never easy. This also sheds light on the problems of NS language proficiency. The NS ends here as in most negotiations in complicated word searches which display the fact that the term native speaker is not quite adequate when dealing with intercultural conversations. NSs do not have the same mastery of the language as they would in conversations with equals.

8 DISCUSSION

The conversations analysed show how native speakers together with four non-native speakers with different living and learning experiences but about the same period of residence in Sweden cope with problems of understanding. The present data support the view that talk is intrinsically interactive, and thus shaped equally by recipients and by speakers, as well as by the activity within which the talk and its participants are embedded. The conversations exhibit how the members of a speech community produce talk to each other within the activities that constitute their culture.

8.1 Native or non-native: differences and similarities

Situations in which communication breaks down are intrinsically face-threatening, because the speakers have failed to achieve the most essential goal of a conversation, that of producing and interpreting turns in a way that creates an intersubjective world. It is therefore important that the participants have access to such means of repair as are not face-threatening. The repair sequences in the conversations studied exhibit a structure in which the participants proceed from the use of less explicit to more explicit means. The role structure in the repair sequences is face-supporting although it often leads to very long and complicated negotiations. New topics are mostly introduced by the NSs, who thus have most control over the topic development, whereas the NNSs are mainly in control of the explicitness of the negotiations for meaning. They do this through initiating metalinguistic insertions, and the NSs adjust their turns to the level of explicitness the NNS has chosen. The NSs very

seldom initiate the use of an explicit strategy. They only do so as a last resort in a difficult negotiation.

The NNSs use various means for indicating problems and thus initiate repairs. The present data suggest that use of less explicit strategies for resolving problems mainly occurs at lower levels of language acquisition. The speakers with a higher proficiency have fewer non-explicit and a higher frequency of explicit indications of problems of understanding. The present study is cross-sectional, but the differences in the NNSs' proficiency in Swedish together with the differences in their ways of coping with problems suggest that there are developmental factors in NNS behavior. There are also corresponding differences in NS behavior when communicating with NNSs who are on different developmental levels.

Another cooperative means used in the data is the active avoidance of potential problems, which is manifest in a variety of ways such as reformulating the problem utterance, slowing down the speech rate, and redefining the goals of understanding. The latter method implies a reinterpretation of Grice's maxim of quality: the speakers abandon exact truthfulness and instead assume face-supporting behavior with less explicit actions which can be interpreted in several ways. Thus the ambiguity of those expressions which in the present data often leads to problems can also be used as a resource. Similar reliance on the ambiguity of utterances is used in conversations between equals, especially in phatic talk. In phatic talk, truthfulness is not always required either and the goals of understanding are set lower than in other types of interaction (Malinowski 1923). In a similar way, communication between NS and NNS resembles a pidgin which lacks certain linguistic features but which is nevertheless used as efficient means of communication (e.g. Andersen 1983, Mühlhäusler & Harré 1990; Mühlhäusler 1993).

The contact between the researchers and the informants is friendly in all the conversations. The participants have assumed overall roles as more and less knowing participants, which also has linguistic justifications. The researchers are speakers of "academese" (Mey 1985: 71) although in the conversations investigated they are consciously trying to speak in a more general mode and even simplify their language. The use of "academese" does not surface so much in linguistic forms as in the way of introducing and interpreting topics. The data offers evidence for changes in this role structure in instances where the participants are discussing matters that the informant knows best, for example religious questions and conditions at the informant's place of work.

The analysis suggests that sequences containing a breakdown of communication nonetheless exhibit some orderliness in the participants' concept of turn, in the turn-taking system and in repair structures. The participants adjust their behavior to the special requirements of the situation, but the NSs switch back to their normal NS interpretations and

productions whenever there is a contextualization cue evoking such behavior. The NNSs very seldom exhibit native-like behavior because of their limited means of production, but they display orderliness in, for instance, turn-taking by compensatory means.

Although the concept of turn is the basic building block for all conversational activities, the participants in an NS-NNS conversation have different perspectives and therefore interpret turn boundaries in different ways. The conversationalist view as to the mutability of turn is supported to the extreme by the present data: participants in the same conversation rely on different criteria for turn boundaries but nonetheless manage to produce a conversation and thus maintain a shared world to an adequate degree. Questions for further studies would be to determine on the one hand how the NS makes inferences as to the sufficiency of information, pauses, and turn boundaries, and on the other hand the methods used by the NNS to continue a turn in spite of misinterpretation by the NS as to the length of the turn.

Notwithstanding the problems in defining exact boundaries, the turn-taking system seems to be very deeply rooted in the speakers. Most of the episodes analysed are dyads, and the speakers make substantial efforts to maintain the canonical structure *ababab* in spite of often considerable difficulties in interpreting each others turns. In a conversation between an NS and an NNS, the native-like orderliness, however, often results in a breach of the rules and expectations. The NSs, who do not lack the means of producing utterances, tend to take the turn after a pause even where there is no syntactic completion of the utterance preceding the pause. The NNSs, on the other hand, also use all the nonverbal means they have to take the turn and display their understanding of at least the sequential implication of the previous turn. These means are mostly particles and acknowledgement tokens which, however, are often ambiguous and do not advance the topic. Lack of agreement about the turn boundary occurs also in the opposite direction. The NNSs may present very elliptical and incomplete utterances and still expect a response.

Relying on the orderliness of everyday conversations also leads to other breaches. Both the NSs and the NNSs count on intersubjectivity in inferencing and therefore occasionally yield the turn at a point where there is not sufficient information for the recipient. The recipient fails to do the inferencing in the way the speaker expects. This is due to the discontinuous nature of the conversation, grammatical and pragmatic weaknesses, and lack of shared knowledge about the contextualization cues. The present study gives a description of the main methods used in repairs, but each episode offers data for a more detailed analysis in which both the interactional and syntactical features could further be analysed.

Breaches that occur in the data are negotiated without conflict. The participants accept the repairs initiated or done by the interlocutor. This

depends at least partially on the prevailing asymmetry in the access to knowledge which is salient in the linguistic competence but which also exists in other areas. Therefore most of the overt repair work is done by the NS, although the repairs are accomplished jointly. Orderliness can also be seen in the repair structures. Most repairs in the data are self-repairs, while other-repairs are frequent in some other types of asymmetric conversations, namely in conversations between parent and child or teacher and pupil (see e.g. Gustavsson 1988; Juvonen 1989; Norrick 1991). The speakers in the present data participate in various ways in making the repairs. The degree of collaboration varies between two extremes. Most repairs are initiated by silence, which means that there is interactants could be termed as a speaker and a non-speaker. Some repairs, however, are made through metalinguistic and metacommunicative negotiation by two speakers who are equally explicit in their utterances. In spite of variation in the rate of accomplishment and in the degree of participation, the present data supports the view that the organization of repair is universal, systematic, and independent of the type of conversation.

8.2 Asymmetry and nativeness

The present data exhibit patterns that in various respects differ from those found in interaction between equals. For instance, it has been argued (Bakhtin 1987; Vygotsky 1962) that formal and distant talk-in-interaction between speakers from the same speech community is characterized by full sentences, whereas ellipsis and high reliance on context is common under conditions of mutual understanding. Conversations between NS and NNS are paradoxical in this respect: the limited language proficiencies of both NS and NNS result in a high frequency of short and elliptical utterances due to a lack of mutual understanding between the participants. The NNSs in the data seem to rely on their interlocutors' ability to interpret even very fragmentary utterances. The NSs, on the other hand, present fragmentary acts of communication for interpretation when making efforts to repair utterances that have not been understood. At least in cooperative conversations, such as the conversations investigated here, the participants negotiate both the strategies for coping with the problems and the level of understanding required for continuing the conversation.

The silence after turns that project a reaction may change the power structure. Questions and other turns with strong sequential implicativeness signify power, but a non-reaction to these turns challenges the first speaker's action and shifts some power over to the recipient

(Burton 1981). In encounters where the second speaker's status is lower because of the structure of the encounter, this change is only temporary (Kurzon 1990). In the present data, silence is one of the means that levels the asymmetry between the participants. The NNSs do not use silence as active means of power, but interpretations of their conduct impose a lot of strain on the NS. Lack of response as a reaction is as difficult for the NSs to interpret as complicated native-like utterances for the NNSs.

Many previous studies have emphasized the differences in power and ability of the speakers in asymmetric talk-in-interaction. The term *foreigner talk* implies changes in NS talk but these are considered as deliberate actions. The fact that foreigner talk is a foreign language for the native speaker and puts the NS into a similar situation as the NNS has not been discussed in any depth. In the literature about NS-NNS interaction, the NNSs have been seen as deficient, whereas the NSs have been considered as the resource. They are persons with knowledge and power, they help the NNSs, and their contributions control the conversations. Naturally the NS has better means of both self-expression and interpreting the NNS utterances because of her/his wider vocabulary and structural knowledge of the language. However, a closer analysis reveals that the insecurity that is characteristic of NS-NNS conversations applies to both speakers, as the examples in the present data illustrate. Similarly, the positive contributions are interactively implemented. The NNSs have the power and means to control the situation both through avoidance and by active participation. The fact that the "weaker" participant may also be seen as a resource has been pointed out in studies of interaction between aphasics and between aphasics and therapists (Klippi 1992, Laakso 1992 and Silvast 1991).

It is often argued that NS-NNS conversations do not contain any features that do not exist in conversations between equal NSs. It is certainly true that both types of conversation show similar features, but there is nonetheless a great difference in the frequency and distribution of the features and, what is more important, in the way in which they affect the conversation. For instance, acknowledgement tokens are used in all conversations as expressions of attention, understanding, agreeing etc. According to Schegloff (1982: 79) we can question whether we need these issues to be addressed in studies of interaction, because attention and understanding are generically relevant in conversation. However, he also gives evidence for the fact that all minimal actions are needed and do not occur randomly in interaction. Rather, they are evoked by certain actions by the speaker and thus fulfill certain functions in advancing the topic. This is true to much greater extent in NS-NNS conversations because there is a real need to check and confirm understanding from time to time. This is necessary for both NS and NNS. In the same way as we can see NS-NNS conversations as points in a continuum of conversations in general, it can be said that in these conversations the NS, unable to use

his nativeness in the language, exhibits features and strategies normally associated with non-native behavior.

Conversations between NSs and NNSs differ in many respects so radically from conversations between equals that the question has been raised as to whether they can be classified as conversations at all (e.g. Haugen 1972) and what can be accomplished in such a talk-in-interaction. Some of the fundamental concepts and norms of conversations must be redefined in these conversations. For instance, the linguistic and non-linguistic items and structures used for conversational routines are different and more limited than in conversations between equals. This holds both for the NS and the NNS. The NS has all the resources of her/his native language for the production, but the interactional value of those resources depends on the interlocutor's proficiency, in other words on the shared proficiency of the participants.

Some features and strategies that are intentionally used in conversations between equals can constitute trouble sources in conversations where the resources are limited. For instance, differences in the participants' ideas of sufficient information surface in differences in defining turn constructional units, which lead to disturbances in turn-taking. In a conversation between equals, however, the withholding of information can be deliberately used as a means of inviting an other-initiation of repair, which then focusses the recipient's attention on certain parts of the first speaker's turn (Besnier 1989: 325).

As I have argued before, the present conversations are not as chaotic as they look. Despite the discontinuity both in topic structure and in prosody, the participants display through the orderliness of the conversations that they are accomplishing a real conversation. Börestam Uhlmann (1994) resumes Haugen's discussion of the concept of semicommunication. Haugen (1972: 216) pointed to the gap that exists in communication between Scandinavians. Börestam Uhlmann, in her study of Scandinavians in conversation, assesses the degree of comprehension in some of the conversations as semicommunication. However, if we look at the whole spectrum of conversations, including phatic talk, we see that conversations form a continuum in which talk-in-interaction is accomplished with enormously varying means and for equally varying purposes. It is difficult to find adequate criteria for semi- or non-communication. Understanding is a goal for all participants also in troublesome talk-in-interaction (Linell 1993), and both the level of the goal and the degree of success vary even in conversations between equals.

Although the labels native and non-native have been deemed adequate for the analytical purposes of the present study and thus used throughout, the native speakers exhibit non-native features to a degree that problematizes the term native speaker. The present data suggest that nativeness is a feature that exists in the full sense of the term only when native speakers interact with each other.

8.3 The problem of knowledge and intersubjectivity

The effort to apply a CA-influenced method in analysing asymmetric interactions has resulted in insights into both problems and resources. A very crucial problem is that of membership knowledge. According to Schegloff (1987: 202) "in so far as talk in interaction is built for understanding, and on the whole effortless understanding, it presumes co-membership". The participants in my data, however, lack shared knowledge and, what is even more problematic, they do not know what knowledge they share and what they do not. This problem surfaces in all the repair sequences in the data. The severity of the problem depends on the degree of explicitness in initiating the repair. Repairs initiated by a lack of response often exhibit a very intricate progress which is due to a lack of shared knowledge about the trouble source and about the limits of the knowledge of the participants. It must, however, be remembered that the discrepancy in membership knowledge does not always lead to an overt breakdown because the participants have developed strategies for keeping the conversation going in spite of problems. Such episodes challenge the analysis even more, because the level of understanding is continuously being redefined.

Another feature that has to do with knowledge in the present data is the participation framework. The speakers' roles and degree of participation fluctuate during a conversation, even during a single turn. In sequences with problems of understanding the speakers often become unsure about their own status as recipient or speaker, or they misinterpret the contextualization cues given by the interlocutor to orient the recipient to perceive both her/his own and the interlocutor's role in the participation framework.

A central problem for both the participants and the analyst is the discrepancy between the knowledge the speakers have access to and their shared metacommunicative knowledge. It is obvious that the NNS is often able to interpret utterances that s/he is not able to produce. This is compatible with the view on input and output within second language acquisition theories. It is claimed that a learner is able to comprehend more advanced language than s/he can produce (see e.g. McLaughlin 1988). The present data, however, provides evidence for the view that understanding utterances is not related to their production in any simple way. In several examples the NNSs have problems in understanding syntactically simple utterances constituted from words and phrases that they use in their own production. Gumperz' investigations of contextualization cues gives hints as to where the trouble source in many NS-NNS conversations lies (Gumperz 1982a, 1992abc). The sources of problems of understanding and speakers' communicative competence could be investigated by studying longer sequences of the interactional

behaviors of the participants and by investigating contextualization cues in Swedish and Finnish.

Although differences in the speakers' access to knowledge are exhibited in the analysis of the present data, it must be remembered that the analysis is only a description of the speakers' behavior in problem sequences and does not focus on the limits and manifestations of knowledge in the present data set as a whole. It would thus be important to investigate in more detail how the discrepancy in access to knowledge is displayed by speakers with different access to language. Another question that has risen as a by-product of the analysis but as an essential part of the negotiation of understanding is: What are the means the speakers use for negotiating the participation framework in an NS-NNS conversation?

8.4 CA and conversations with non-native speakers

The analysis of the present data sheds light on the problems and possibilities of applying CA to second language data. However, it must be borne in mind that the present data set is problematic, because it cannot be categorized as naturally occurring in the same sense as the everyday conversations analyzed by conversationalists. Nonetheless the present data represents naturally occurring communication between researchers and informants in a research context, and thus can also be labelled as institutional discourse. That the data have an elicited quality is visible in some parts of the conversations, but at the same time they are representative of researcher-informant communication, and contain valuable information about that particular interaction.

The speaker's conduct, and especially the non-native speaker's conduct, is not as obvious and open to analysis as a conversation analyst might expect. In this respect the data challenges CA, because there is a considerable discrepancy between the speakers' factual utterances and the actions they aim to perform. This holds primarily for the non-native speakers but also for the native speakers and the bilingual speakers, since they have to use a language that they assume is common to all the participants. One of the main questions the analysis raises is whether CA alone, in its classical version, is sufficient for analysing asymmetric conversations such as those in the present data, or if and how a synthesis of the methods needed could be achieved.

However, microanalysis opens new pathways for looking at NS-NNS interaction: through microanalysis it is possible to identify some of the features that are ignored in, for instance, speech act-based methods. Microanalysis is obviously a way to penetrate into the essentials of

spoken interaction, whether in high- or low-proficiency settings. Conversationists have focussed on investigating the orderliness of conversations by using analyses of subtle linguistic devices. When such orderliness is lacking as in the present data, another question emerges: what are the prerequisites for a conversation in a situation in which the participants lack the linguistic means to accomplish it?

CA seems to be a method through which the interactive character of understanding processes can be made visible. As mentioned in the introduction, there are long traditions in studying understanding as a process in the receiver. Moreover, studies that define understanding as an interactive process treat the interlocutors as separate subjects, as senders and receivers, who negotiate at certain points (see e.g. Chaudron 1983 & 1985, Gass & Varonis 1985, Hatch 1983, Long 1983ab & 1985, Pica et al. 1987). In these studies the role of the NS is seen as that of the competent speaker who accomodates his talk to the needs of the NNS and functions as a resource in the acquisition process of the NNS. Consequently, the NNS is the speaker with the problems. A modification of this view is expressed in the ESF project report by Bremer et al. (1993: 185) which focusses more on interaction and acknowledges that the NS, too, is helpless, although at the same time it is considered that the NNS "is dependent of the goodwill of the native speaker if she is to achieve what she wants from an interaction" (ibid.: 182).

The repair initiating behavior that is most interesting and most challenging in the present data is lack of response. As the analysis suggests, it is not always an indication of non-understanding, but paradoxically this is what it leads to because it disturbs the fluent advancing of the topic. The interactional impact can be seen in the first speaker's actions after a lapse: s/he does not explicitly display her/his inferencing and proceeds with equally nontransparent means. Naturally the analysis of audiorecorded data can be done in even more detail than is the case in the present investigation, but in order to achieve deeper analyses of lapses and the participant conduct around them, videorecordings of conversations are needed. Within recent years both the technology and the field methods have been developed considerably (see e.g. Goodwin 1993). Visual information does not, however, remove all the problems of analysis: one or two videocameras only give a limited perspective. Moreover, it must be borne in mind that the analyst's perspective on both the auditive and visual information is different from that of the participants. This is the analyst's paradox: according to CA the participants in a conversation display their actions to each other and to the analyst, but the context in which the analyst views the situation is not the same as that for the participants.

The microanalysis performed in this study cannot be developed much further without extending the transcription system. This, however, is accompanied by many problems. The deviations from the norm in NNS

talk - and to a lesser degree in NS talk - are not easy to describe visually by typographical means. In NS talk the deviations are mostly the prosodic and segmental consequences of word searches and a reduced speech rate. NNS talk contains various features that have different roles for perception and understanding and which together constitute a holistic impression of accent. For instance, the devoiced stops in the Finnish NNSs' Swedish are devoiced to varying degrees, sometimes for linguistic reasons and sometimes not. Because voiced stops in Swedish are not clearly voiced in many positions, these deviations do not often hamper understanding. Other features that are more important in interaction than segmental ones, such as prosody and paralinguistics, present far greater difficulties. They are either overlooked or only transcribed in gross categories even in more recent and more ambitious presentations (see e.g. Du Bois 1991; Linell 1994; O'Connell & Kowal 1994). Apart from the difficulties of transcription this is also due to the fact that the prosodic and paralinguistic features of speech do not have the same importance when transcribing "normal" conversations, because their use of them as contextualization cues is closely tied to the linguistic properties of the utterances.

The present analysis has presented information about the participants' ways of achieving mutual understanding. It has also pointed to some of the difficulties in analysing conversations that deviate from those between equals. In some cases, these difficulties can be overcome with a more detailed microanalysis, but, obviously, such conversations contain sequences that are not explicitly interpreted by the participants and likewise do not allow a reliable interpretation by the analyst either.

To dismiss the possibility of studying these conversations because they are too diffuse would be to dismiss the basic materials of interaction and language use of a considerable part of the world's population. Sequences where miscommunication occurs can be used to discover conversational mechanisms that go unnoticed when conversation proceeds smoothly. Furthermore, it must be borne in mind that incompleteness in verbal communication is a continuum. In non-problematic talk, which has been the main object of CA, the same or similar features and actions can be found as in very deviant conversations with linguistically handicapped participants: Markova (1989) compares conversations between equals with those between aphasics and therapists, and argues, with reference to Humboldt and Malinowski, that incompleteness is a natural characteristic of speech.

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Appendix 1

Transcript notation

[]	overlapping utterances
[[simultaneous start
=	contiguous utterances, turn latched onto the previous one
(.)	short pause, shorter than 1 sec
(1)	pause > 1 sec
(2)	pause > 2 sec, (3) > 3 sec etc.
:	extension of a phoneme
<u>jaha</u>	underlining: emphasis
VEM	capitals: loud voice
o	quiet talk
.ja	inhaled speech
#	laughter
#yes#	laughter in voice
hhh	out-breath, sighing
/	false start
-	interrupted word
> <	quicker pace
< >	slower pace
?	question intonation
↑	rising intonation within a word
.	stopping fall in tone
,	continuing intonation
()	unclear hearing, doubt
(())	transcriber's comments
* *	utterances in Finnish
pt.	smack
<i>sale</i>	Italics in English translations: deviant grammar or pronunciation of a word in the Swedish conversation

List of conversations**C1**

Duration: 67 min

Participants: Leo (NNS), Staffan (NS), and Ville (BS)

Place and purpose: Staffan and Ville are visiting Leo

Main topics: sports, December holidays in Finland and Sweden, cars

C2

Duration: 50 min

Participants: Mari (NNS), Staffan (NS), and Ville (BS)

Place and purpose: Staffan and Ville are visiting Mari

Main topics: Mari's wedding, the Pentecostal church, communication at Mari's work

C3

Duration: 35 min

Participants: Tarja (NNS), Olle (NS), and Anna (BS)

Place and purpose: Olle and Anna are visiting Tarja

Main topics: Tarja's Christmas trip to Finland, Christmas and New Year's customs in Finland and Sweden, Tarja's progress in learning Swedish

C4

Duration: 15 min

Participants: Rauni (NNS), Clara (NNS), Ville (BS), and Rauni's baby

Place and purpose: Clara and Ville are visiting Rauni

Main topics: the baby's birth

C5

Duration: 24 min

Participants: Rauni (NNS), Olle (NS), Ville (BS), and Rauni's baby

Place and purpose: The participants are at a university department waiting for a communication test to start.

Main topics: the baby's health, the Pentecostal church, Rauni's relatives

YHTEENVETO

Ymmärtämisen ongelma: korjausjaksoja äidinkielisten ja ei-äidinkielisten puhujien keskusteluissa

Tutkimuksessa käsitellään ymmärtämisen ongelmien ratkaisemisprosessia äidinkielisten ja ei-äidinkielisten puhujien keskusteluissa. Ymmärtämistä on kommunikaatiotutkimuksissa usein tutkittu erikseen puhujan ja kuulijan kannalta. Tässä tutkimuksessa ymmärtäminen määritellään puhetilanteessa keskustelijoiden yhteisesti luomaksi vuorovaikutukseksi, joka on jatkuva dynaaminen tapahtuma (ks. esim. Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson 1974; Goffman 1981; Gumperz 1982a; Heritage 1984b). Merkityksistä neuvotellaan keskustelun edetessä vuoro vuorolta. Jokainen osallistujien esittämä vuoro on sekä kontekstin muovaama että se muovaa osaltaan kontekstia uudeksi. Näin osallistujien toiminta ja merkityksistä neuvottelemineen on koko ajan sidoksissa kontekstiin. Ymmärtämiseen johtava merkityksistä neuvottelemineen etenee arkikeskusteluissa esteittä, kun puhujat tuntevat toisensa ja heillä on yhteinen kieli. Äidinkielisten ja ei-äidinkielisten puhujien keskusteluissa yhteisen kielen puuttuminen häiritsee ymmärtämisneuvottelujen sujuvaa etenemistä. Gumperz (1982 ab, 1992abc) on tutkinut kommunikaatiokatkoja kulttuurienvälisissä keskusteluissa ja tuonut esiin sen, miten kontekstivihjeiden puuttuminen johtaa ymmärtämisen ongelmiin. Kontekstivihjeet ovat erilaisin kielellisin ja ei-kielellisin keinoin annettuja vihjeitä, jotka helpottavat vastaanottajan päättelyä.

Tutkimusaineistona on viisi ruotsinkielistä keskustelua, joissa kussakin on kolme osallistujaa: ruotsalainen tutkija, kaksikielinen suomalainen tutkija sekä vasta Ruotsiin muuttanut suomalainen siirtolainen. Keskustelut ovat 15-67 minuutin pituisia. Niiden yhteenlaskettu kesto on

3 t 14 min. Keskusteluaineisto on elisitoidun ja spontaanin keskustelun välimaastoa, sillä osallistujat tapaavat toisiaan ennalta sovittuina aikoina ja tavoitteena on saada aineistoa siirtolaisen kielenoppimisesta. Tutkimukseen valitut keskustelut käydään muiden kielellisten tehtävien ohessa. Tästä syystä niitä voidaan pitää luonnollisina institutionaalisina keskusteluina tutkijan ja kielenoppaan välillä. Aineiston poikkeavuus arkikeskusteluihin verrattuna korostuu nimenomaan tutkituissa korjausjaksoissa.

Keskusteluista on tarkemman analyysin kohteeksi otettu ne jaksot, joissa puhujat käyttäytymisellään osoittavat joko sen, että eivät itse ymmärrä edellisen puhujan vuoroa tai sen, että tulkitsevat edellisellä puhujalla olevan ymmärtämisongelmia. Jaksoja analysoitaessa teoreettisena taustana on ollut Goffmanin (1967 & 1981) ja Gumperzin (1982a) vuorovaikutusanalyysit sekä etnometodologinen keskusteluanalyysi. Eklektinen analyysimalli on valittu aineiston luonteen vuoksi. Tutkittujen keskustelujen kieliopillisesti ja pragmaattisesti äidinkielen puhujan kielestä poikkeava kieli tekee puhtaasti keskusteluanalyysin käytön epämieliseksi. Yhtenä tavoitteena on kuitenkin ollut tutkia, miten keskusteluanalyysin keinoin voidaan saada uutta tietoa oppijan kielestä. Keskusteluanalyysin mukaan ihmiset luovat sosiaalisia tilanteita toimiessaan niissä sekä toimintojen tuottajina että tulkitsijoina. Tuottaminen ja tulkitseminen liittyvät yhteen niin että keskustelijoiden käyttäytymistä ei voi kuvata yksilötoimintana vaan vuorovaikutuksena. Keskusteluanalyysi on voimakkaasti aineistolähtöinen ja sen mukaan mitään toiminnan piirrettä ei voi sivuuttaa merkityksettömänä, vaan analyysissä kaikkia piirteitä on käsiteltävä ilman ennakkoon laadittua kategorisointia.

Ymmärtämisestä neuvoteltaessa korjauksilla on keskeinen osuus. Korjauksia tehdään, kun keskusteluun osallistujat huomaavat, että ymmärtämistä ei saavuteta tai että on vaara, että sitä ei saavuteta. Korjauksilla on todettu olevan universaali rakenne arkikeskusteluissa (Schegloff et al. 1977; Schegloff 1979 & 1992; Jefferson 1974 & 1987). Schegloff et al. (1977) jakaa korjauksen vaiheet aloitukseen ja suoritukseen ja esittää kaksi korjaustyyppiä: oma korjaus ja toisen tekemä korjaus. Se, mihin aloitus sijoittuu korjattavaan ongelmakohtaan nähden, riippuu korjaustyyppistä. Omassa korjauksessa aloitus voi olla ongelmavuorossa joko ennen siirron mahdollistavaa kohtaa tai siirron mahdollistavalla kohdalla. Kolmas vaihtoehto on vastaanottajan reaktion jälkeinen vuoro, kolmas vuoro. Toisen suorittama korjaus tehdään lähes aina ongelmavuoroa seuraavassa vuorossa.

Tutkitun aineiston korjausjaksot muodostavat kolme ryhmää sen mukaan, miten korjausaloitus suoritetaan. Ensimmäisenä ryhmänä on korjaukseen johtava vastaanottajan reaktion puuttuminen. Näissä tapauksissa korjausjaksot ovat usein pitkiä ja hapuilevia, koska osallistujilla ei ole yhteistä tietoa siitä, missä ongelma on. Toisena ryhmänä ovat monimerkityksiset ja epäselvät korjausaloitukset, joissa vastaanottaja käyttää joko minimipalautetta tai fokusoimattomia korjauspyyntöjä kuten *va,*

'mitä', *va sa du*, 'mitä sanoit' tai *förstår inte*, 'en ymmärrä'. Tällaisten korjauspyyntöjen tulkintaan vaikuttaa puhujan käsitys vastaanottajan kielitaidosta niin, että kieltä suhteellisen hyvin osaavan vastaanottajan pyyntö tulkitaan usein merkityksen tarkistukseksi eikä ymmärtämisen vaikeudeksi. Kolmas ryhmä sisältää yksiselitteisiä korjauspyyntöjä, joissa täsmällisesti osoitetaan ongelman sijainti, esimerkiksi *förstår inte de sista*, 'en ymmärrä viimeistä' tai *att va e detta på finska*, 'että mitä tämä on suomeksi'. Näissä tapauksissa osallistujilla on tarkka tieto siitä, mistä he ovat neuvottelemassa, ja neuvottelu sujuu nopeasti lukuunottamatta niitä tapauksia, joissa ongelma on kielellisesti tai kontekstuaalisesti puhujien yhteisten resurssien ulkopuolella.

Ymmärtämisen ongelmat uhkaavat voimakkaasti osallistujien kasvoja, koska osallistujat ovat epäonnistuneet keskustelun keskeisimmän tavoitteen saavuttamisessa: keskustelukumppanin puheen ymmärtämisessä. Tutkitussa aineistossa keskustelijat pyrkivät korjauksiinsa käyttämään keinoja, jotka vähentävät uhkaa. Koska ymmärtämisen ongelma on yhteinen, osallistujat käsittelevät sitä yhdessä. Sekä äidinkielisille että ei-äidinkielisille puhujille on ominaista, että ongelma osoitetaan ensin epäsuorasti joko tauolla tai monimerkityksisellä minimipalautteella. Tämä johtaa usein neuvotteluun, mutta voi toimia myös keinona, jolla keskustelijat voivat välttää ongelman käsittelyn.

Osallistujat osoittavat huomattavaa epävarmuutta erityisesti ongelmajaksoissa. He liikkuvat kahden normiston välimaastossa: sekä äidinkielisellä että ei-äidinkielisellä puhujalla on äidinkieliseen kommunikaatioon liittyvä normistonsa, johon he turvautuvat aina kun tilanne antaa siihen vihjeen. Tämä arkikeskustelun rakenteeseen turvautuminen aiheuttaa usein ongelmia keskusteluissa, joissa puhujien kielitaidoissa ja kulttuuritaustoissa on eroja. Vastaanottajan päättely poikkeaa puhujan olettamasta yhteisestä tiedosta ja siihen perustuvasta päättelystä.

Osallistujien kielitaito ja institutionaaliset roolit johtavat huomattavaan epäsymmetriaan. Epäsymmetria ei kuitenkaan ole yksinkertainen ja yksisuuntainen, vaan, samoin kuin muutkin keskustelun ominaisuudet, se vaihtelee keskustelun kuluessa, jopa yksittäisen vuoron sisällä. Äidinkielisellä puhujalla, tutkitussa aineistossa ruotsalaisella tutkijalla, on kielitaidon lisäksi myös muuta keskusteluissa relevanttia tietoa enemmän kuin hiljattain maahan muuttaneella siirtolaisella. Toisaalta ei-äidinkielisellä puhujalla on keskusteluissa enemmän tietoa joistakin keskustelunaiheista ja lisäksi heillä on erilaisia keinoja käyttää valtaa, esimerkiksi vastaamatta jättäminen.

Kirjallisuudessa on esitetty että äidinkielinen puhuja modifioi kieltään puhuessaan ei-äidinkielisten kanssa (*foreigner talk*, ks. esim. Ferguson 1971). Tämä näkemys implikoi, että modifiointi tapahtuu tietoisesti ja että äidinkielinen puhuja on kommunikaatiota ylläpitävä voimavara. Mikrotason analyysi osoittaa kuitenkin, että äidinkielisellä puhujalla ei ole käytettävissään äidinkielistä tietoa siitä kielestä ja niistä

kommunikaationormeista, jotka ovat käytettävissä kielellisesti epäsymmetrisissä keskusteluissa. Aineiston äidinkielisten puhujien käyttäytymisessä on piirteitä, jotka ovat yhteisiä ei-äidinkielisten kanssa. Tämä osoittaa, että termiä "äidinkielinen" voidaan käyttää sen varsinaisessa merkityksessä vain äidinkielisten välisen kommunikaation yhteydessä.

Keskusteluanalyysi on tasavertaisten osallistujien välisiä arkikeskusteluja varten kehitetty analyysi. Sen soveltaminen ei-äidinkielisiin keskusteluihin on paradoksaalista, koska keskusteluanalyysin lähtökohdanna on oletamus ymmärtämisen mahdollistavasta puhujien yhteisestä tiedosta ja kokemuksesta (*intersubjectivity*). Toisaalta ei-äidinkielisissä keskusteluissa on kuitenkin keskustelun ominaispiirteitä ja niiden tutkimisen voi olettaa johtavan löytämään niitä piirteitä, jotka ovat oleellisimpia ja välttämättömiä keskustelun edellytyksiä.

Keskeisenä ongelmana sekä kielellisesti epäsymmetrisessä puhetilanteessa että sen analyysissä on yhteisen tiedon puute (*membership knowledge*). Osallistujilla on keskenään erilaiset taidot ja taustat, jotka estävät yhteisen päättelyn, ja tutkijan edellytykset tulkita keskustelun kulkua poikkeavat huomattavasti kaikkien osallistujien edellytyksistä.

Vaikka kielellisesti epäsymmetrinen ja epätäydellinen keskustelu ei ole helposti tulkittavissa, keskusteluanalyysin keinoilla on mahdollista saada täsmällistä tietoa siitä, mitä keskustelussa todella tapahtuu. Korjausjaksojen mikroanalyysi tuo esiin sen, että ymmärtämisen ongelmat eivät liity yksinkertaisesti tiettyihin kielellisiin elementteihin, esimerkiksi sanoihin tai kieliopillisiin rakenteisiin, vaan ne ovat kompleksisesti yhteydessä koko puhetilanteeseen.