

University of Groningen

The interactional accomplishment of action

Seuren, Lucas

IMPORTANT NOTE: You are advised to consult the publisher's version (publisher's PDF) if you wish to cite from it. Please check the document version below.

Document Version

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

Publication date:

2018

[Link to publication in University of Groningen/UMCG research database](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

Seuren, L. (2018). The interactional accomplishment of action. Utrecht: LOT/Netherlands Graduate School of Linguistics.

Copyright

Other than for strictly personal use, it is not permitted to download or to forward/distribute the text or part of it without the consent of the author(s) and/or copyright holder(s), unless the work is under an open content license (like Creative Commons).

Take-down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

Downloaded from the University of Groningen/UMCG research database (Pure): <http://www.rug.nl/research/portal>. For technical reasons the number of authors shown on this cover page is limited to 10 maximum.

CHAPTER 5

Resolving knowledge-discrepancies in informing sequences¹

Abstract

This paper investigates a specific practice recipients in Dutch talk-in-interaction use when responding to turns that have as one of their main jobs to inform. By responding to an informing turn with an *oh*-prefaced non-repeating response that has yes/no-type interrogative word order, recipients treat that turn as counter to expectation and request both confirmation of the inference formulated in their response, as well as reconciliatory information for the two discrepant states of affairs. This practice is compared to similar cases where the non-repeating response is not *oh*-prefaced to show that such turns implement different actions. Data are in Dutch with English translations.

Keywords: Counterexpectations; Change-of-state; yes/no-type interrogatives; action formation; practions.

5.1 Receipting information

When dealing with actions that are done to inform, such as news, reportings and answers to questions, recipients have a whole array of verbal responsive prac-

¹This paper has been accepted for publication and will appear in a slightly modified version as Seuren, L.M., Huiskes, M. & Koole, T. (in press). Resolving knowledge-discrepancies in informing sequences. *Language in Society*,47(2).

tices at their disposal that they can provide upon completion of that informing action, each showing a different orientation to that informing action and varying in agency (Thompson, Fox, & Couper-Kuhlen, 2015). The projected response to an informing is a move that signals that the recipient has been informed, but there is more than one way in which recipients can do being informed.

One family of practices that accomplishes this is news receipts (Couper-Kuhlen, 2012; Heritage, 1984a; Maynard, 2003). The simplest, least agentive practice recipients have for receipting information is what Heritage (1984) calls a change-of-state token (see also Golato, 2010; Heinemann, 2017; Hilmisdóttir, 2016; Kasterpalu & Hennoste, 2016; Koivisto, 2015a; Local, 1996; Persson, 2015; Weidner, 2016). With interjections like *oh* speakers claim that they now know, after which the sequence reaches possible completion (Heritage, 1984a; Schegloff, 2007). A slightly more expanded sequence arises when recipients use minimal clausal responses (Thompson et al., 2015) to request reconfirmation, treating the information as news, without encouraging further talk on the topic (Couper-Kuhlen, 2012; Maynard, 2003; Schegloff, 1984).

In contrast with these relatively minimal forms of uptake, recipients have practices to encourage further talk on the news. Many of these practices fall into a family of newsmarks (Couper-Kuhlen, 2012; Heritage, 1984a; Jefferson, 1981; Maynard, 2003; Robinson, 2009). These newsmarks often come in the form of a lexical or phrasal response with rising intonation such as *really*, suggesting that “the veracity of the news is not a foregone conclusion” (Couper-Kuhlen, 2012, p. 141), and they are often used to solicit some form of an account (Thompson et al., 2015).

Even more agentive forms of uptake are expanded clausal responses, such as clausal repetitions (Thompson et al., 2015). These can be used to treat the informing turn as counter-to-expectations or as counterinformings: the recipient claims to have had prior beliefs on the issue addressed by the speaker (Heritage, 1984a; Persson, 2015; Robinson, 2009). These practices are strongly expansion-implicative and solicit some form of an account for the discrepancy.

This paper is concerned with the fourth and most agentive type of response, what Thompson et al. (2015) call *Unrelated Clausal Responses*. With these responses recipients do not deal with the information as put by the speaker, but retrieve information that was embedded or presupposed in prior talk; either the immediately prior informing turn or a larger discourse unit in which that turn is contained. By formulating an inference or understanding² of that turn

²Thompson et al. (2015) distinguish between candidate understandings and inferences. This distinction, however, is not treated as relevant by the participants in our data. Therefore we will

and making relevant confirmation, recipients treat something as news which was not done as news (see also Smith, 2013; Steensig & Heinemann, 2013; Terasaki, 1976/2004).

We argue in this paper that when recipients in Dutch talk-in-interaction produce an *oh*-prefaced³ unrelated clausal response with yes/no-type interrogative word order, they implement what we gloss as a *counterexpectation remark*. This term should not be understood as a category of action, on par with such actions as requests or invitations, but as a specific combination of practices used for a specific interactional purpose, comparable to the action of *confirming allusions* (Schegloff, 1996a; see also Enfield, 2013; Sidnell, 2014).

By doing a counterexpectation remark a recipient (i) accepts the terms of the prior, informing turn—the action it implements and the information it conveys, (ii) treats that turn as not in line with a prior, private belief or expectation—one not made public in the interaction, (iii) topicalizes the unexpected inference, (iv) requests confirmation of that inference as well as what Robinson (2009) calls reconciliatory information, and (v) tentatively accepts the formulated inference or understanding.

Counterexpectation remarks, at least as we define them for this paper, thus come in a specific sequential position: after an informing turn. They are therefore produced in environments similar to other types of news uptake, such as free-standing *oh*. But as they constitute a more agentive form of uptake, they do not merely receipt information, completing a question-answer-*oh* sequence (Heritage, 1984a; Schegloff, 2007), but also launch a new adjacency pair.

We want to stress here that our claims are not about the speaker's actual, private beliefs; we have no access to the speaker's cognition and as such do not aim to discuss his/her cognitive state. But participants display beliefs through talk, and thus also make claims about what their prior beliefs were through talk, irrespective of whether these claims are true.

To support our argument, the analysis in this paper consists of three steps. We begin by demonstrating that *oh*-prefaced unrelated clausal responses with yes/no-type interrogative word order (YNIs) (G. Raymond, 2003) implement counterexpectation remarks. We first discuss the clearest cases: counterexpectation remarks that are implemented with *oh*-prefaced negative YNIs. As Koshik (2002, 2005; see also Reese, 2007) has shown, negative YNIs can be used in environments where prior beliefs of the recipient have been called into

stick to the term inference.

³Dutch *oh* seems to be used very similar to English *oh*. There is, however, little research on Dutch *oh*, and what research there is has focused on different sequential environments.

question. They imply that the formulated belief or understanding is counter to expectations. While this makes them particularly suitable for implementing counterexpectation remarks, we subsequently show that positive YNIs can also implement counterexpectation remarks. That is not to say that positive and negative YNIs are equivalent practices, but both formats can be used to treat a prior informing turn as counter to expectation.

In closing we show that when unrelated clausal response with yes/no-type interrogative word order are not *oh*-prefaced, they implement different actions. By not using *oh*, the recipient does not accept the terms of speaker's informing turn—either the information it provides or the action it implements—nor the inference formulated in the YNI. In fact, any change-of-state token is only produced after the speaker has provided confirmation and where relevant an account (see Heritage, 1984a). These non-*oh*-prefaced YNIs are thus used to convey that the recipient has a problem understanding or accepting the speaker's prior turn.

5.2 Data & Method

The data we use in this paper consist of 21.5hrs of audio recordings of Dutch informal phone and Skype conversations between friends and family, which were recorded by students at Utrecht University in 2011 and 2012. All speakers signed informed consent forms allowing use of the data for research and publication purposes, and the transcripts have been anonymized: all proper names are pseudonyms, except in a few cases where the original name does not help in identifying the participant and was necessary for analytical purposes—for example, we did not change the names of sports teams.

From these data we initially selected all *oh*-prefaced YNIs ($N = 38$). We subsequently removed the cases where the YNI (i) did not respond to an informing turn,⁴ or (ii) implemented topicalization in response to a news announcement (*was het leuk* / “was it fun”) (Button & Casey, 1985). This resulted in a collection of 27 counterexpectation remarks.

In order to compare these counterexpectation remarks with other YNIs we also collected the first 300 YNIs from the 20 hour corpus and then selected all YNIs that were used to convey that the prior, informing turn was not in line

⁴As was pointed out to us by a reviewer, this leaves open the possibility that counterexpectation remarks can also be produced in response to other types of actions. Of the eleven cases we removed, however, only two were produced in responses to a non-informing turn, and of these only one looks similar to a counterexpectation remark; the other is used to launch an activity disjunctive from the prior talk. But since it is only one case, we have kept it out of our analysis.

with the speaker's prior beliefs or expectations. This led to a total of 26 cases of non-*oh*-prefaced YNIs for comparison.

The data have been analyzed using conversation analysis (Ten Have, 2007) and transcribed according to Jeffersonian conventions (Jefferson, 2004). The transcripts consists of three lines: first the original Dutch, then a word-by-word translation into English, and finally a free translation.

5.3 Counterexpectation remarks

5.3.1 Combining practices

Informing turns should be designed to fit the recipient's knowledge state (Sacks et al., 1974): speakers should not tell recipient what they already know, presuppose information that recipients do not know, or convey information that recipients believe to be false. But discrepancies can arise, and when they do recipients can deal with them in myriad ways. For example, Heritage (1984a, p. 314ff.; see also Robinson, 2009) showed that recipients can contradict a speaker's statement by doing a counterinforming. More recently Smith (2013) and Steensig and Heinemann (2013) discussed practices with which recipients topicalize a discrepancy between their prior beliefs and the information conveyed by the speaker. Smith (2013) focused on recipients who formulate their prior belief with counterfactual modality (Kärkkäinen, 2009) by using turn-initial *I thought*. In contrast, Steensig and Heinemann (2013) focus on recipients who formulate an inference of the prior turn that is discrepant with their prior knowledge, implementing what Steensig and Heinemann call knowledge-discrepancy questions. With both practices recipients solicit not just confirmation, but also an account.

Counterexpectation remarks are a more fine-grained category of action. They are best analyzed as a specific combination of practices that together implement a specific action, what Enfield (2013, p. 100; see also Sidnell & Enfield, 2014) calls a *praction*. The practices used are not produced as distinct actions, but provide the recipients with different cues as to what type of response is being solicited, that is, what action the speaker of that practice is doing.

There are three practices the combination of which we gloss as counterexpectation remarks. The main practice is an unrelated clausal response: the recipient formulates an inference of the speaker's prior, informing turn. By being next-positioned, the understanding comes off as having been gleaned or inferred from the prior turn, even though the speaker had not designed that turn to convey this understanding (see Terasaki, 1976/2004; Maynard, 2003;

Steensig & Heinemann, 2013). By doing an unrelated clausal response, the speaker treats this inference as counter to expectation (Steensig & Heinemann, 2013; Thompson et al., 2015) and topicalizes it, thereby *shifting the focus of the at issue talk*: in the subsequent turns the participants discuss the inference formulated by the recipient, not the informing turn that was done by the speaker.

The following extract is a case in point. Lisa is going on vacation to Indonesia in six weeks and is telling in lines 1–2 when she has an appointment to get the necessary vaccinations. Initially Amelie receipts that answer with *oh* (Heritage, 1984a), but after a micropause she produces an *oh*-prefaced YNI. In it she formulates her inference that Lisa does not have to get those vaccinations a set number of weeks in advance of her trip. She thus shifts the talk from when Lisa is going on vacation, to whether the time she gets the vaccination matters.

(1) VC1-02:16.5–02:26.0

01 Lis volgens mij m:aandag over: (0.5) twee of
according.to me Monday in two or
 02 drie weken. .H >'kweet het eigenlijk [niet<.]
three weeks I.know it actually not
I think monday in: (0.5) two or three wee:ks.
.H >I actually don't [know<.]

03 Ame [o:]::h.
 04 (.)
 05 -> >oh moet het niet een bepaalde< tijd eh een pa-
oh have.to it now a certain time a
 06 -> een aantal weken van te voren:,
a number weeks of PRT advance
>oh does that not have to 'be done' a certain<
time eh a fe- a number of weeks in advance:,
 07 (0.4)
 08 of [()]
or [()]

09 Lis [o:h] >da' maakt niet uit<,=je moet
oh that matters not out you have.to
 10 het gewoon ten minste een maand van te voren
it simply at least a month of PRT advance
 11 doe:n,
do
[o:h] >that doesn't matter<,=you simply
have to do it at least a month in adva:nce,
 12 (0.6)

13 Ame °o[:h°;] [°oh ja°]
oh oh yeah
 °o[:h°;] [°oh yeah°]

The second practice is *oh*-prefacing. By *oh*-prefacing the speaker accepts

the information conveyed in the prior, informing turn, and thereby also tentatively accepts the subsequently formulated inference (Heritage 1984). It is treated as a candidate understanding that the recipient just now arrived at. In extract (1), Amelie's *oh*-preface conveys that she has tentatively accepted the formulated inference that one does not have to get vaccinations a certain number of weeks in advance. She thereby implicitly also accepts the information conveyed by Lisa that she will get her vaccinations in two or three weeks. Without *oh* her turn would likely be heard as challenging, as raising a potential problem (Steensig & Heinemann, 2013; see also section 5.4 in this paper)

The third practice is the use of the negative YNI, which in this environment treats the formulated understanding as contradicting a prior belief or expectation.⁵ In case of extract (1), Amelie uses the negative YNI to imply that she previously thought that there is a timetable for vaccinations, but that this belief has been called into question. She thereby asks of Lisa not just to (dis)confirm, but also to explain why she does not have to get her vaccinations a set number of weeks in advance. Only after Lisa has explained in line 9–10 that you have to get it at least a month in advance, does Amelie move to sequence closure (Heritage, 1984a; Schegloff, 2007). Acceptance of the inference is thus tentative until reconciliatory information has been provided.

This is different from yes/no declaratives (G. Raymond, 2010a), which are often called B-event statements (Labov, 1970), that are *oh*-prefaced: with these a recipients does now-understanding and solicits only confirmation (see chapter 4). In other words, by using a negative YNI the recipient accepts the speaker's prior, informative turn, but only tentatively accepts the inference that s/he has gleaned from it and offered up for confirmation. But at the same time, because it is *oh*-prefaced, her negative YNI will not be heard as a challenge, but as a prior expectation that in light of the prior turn has tentatively been abandoned.

5.3.2 Responding with negative interrogatives

In the example discussed in the prior section, the speaker used a negative YNI in doing the counterexpectation remark. In this section we will discuss additional cases where the counterexpectation remark is implemented with an *oh*-prefaced

⁵See Koshik (2005, extract 3) for a similar use of negative YNIs, albeit in a slightly different sequential environment. In that example, lacking ratification by the recipient of a formulated belief, the speaker moves from an assertive position—*But those were Alex's tanks*—to a weakened position—*Weren't those Alex's tanks?* The sequence gives rise to a possible understanding that a prior belief, in that case explicitly formulated, was incorrect, and this is made salient first with a negative YNI.

negative YNI. We begin our analysis by showing a prototypical case in which the recipient of an informing turn treats that turn as offering evidence against a prior belief, and where the speaker subsequently also treats that prior belief as something that could have been expected. In excerpt (2) Ronald is on the phone with Wendy, his girlfriend. He initiates the sequence by formulating his expectation that she will have class in a moment.

(2) BN3-01:55.2-02:07.8

- 01 Ron =ga je nou e:h
ga you.SG now
=are you now going to e:h
- 02 >je hebt dadelijk col↑lege<;
you.SG have in.a.moment class
>you have class in a moment<;
- 03 (0.8)
- 04 Wen .h ja: om een uur;
yeah at one o'clock
.h yea:h at one o'clock;
- 05 ik ga ↑eerst nog even thuis wat dingetjes doen,
I go first still just home some things do
I am ↑first going to do some things at home,
- 06 °en dan eh°
and then
°and then eh°
- 07 (0.8)
- 08 Ron -> oh ↑ga je niet naar de bieb.
oh go you not to the library
oh ↑are you not going to the library.
- 09 (0.4)
- 10 Wen nee: >nee nee< °van↑daag niet°.
no no no today not
no: >no no< °not today°.
- 11 (1.4)
- 12 Ron ↑o:ke.
okay
↑o:kay.

In line 8 Ron uses the three practices discussed earlier, implementing a counterexpectation remark. First, Ronald formulates an inference of Wendy's answer: that she will not be going to the library. The evidence that he has been offered for this inference is that Wendy told him that she will do chores at home before going to class. Wendy, at least on the face of it, did not design her turn to convey that she would not be visiting the library any more than she conveys that she will for example not be going to a coffee shop. Ronald thus provides an unrelated clausal response to Wendy's informing turn. He thereby treats the

inference as based on Wendy's turn and shifts the focus of the at issue talk from going to class to not going to the library.

Second, Ronald's turn is *oh*-prefaced, with which he treats his inference as just now arrived at. He thereby tentatively accepts that she will not be going to the library thereby accepting that Wendy will be doing stuff at home and then go to class. In other words, it is only after Wendy has said she will be doing chores that Roland has come to belief that she likely will not be visiting the library.

Third, by formulating his inference with a negative YNI Ronald implies that he had expected that Wendy would be going to the library. He thereby requests not just confirmation of his inference, but also some form of reconciliatory information for this discrepancy. As Wendy has said that she is going to do chores, she has already accounted for why she won't be visiting the library, but nonetheless she elaborates. She says she is not going today, suggesting that her visiting the library is a regular and therefore expectable occurrence. She thus validates Ronald's prior expectation that she might have been going to the library.

Both participants show an orientation to Ronald's *oh*-prefaced YNI as suggesting a prior expectation. Ronald does so by simply asking the question. Whereas declaratives and tag-interrogatives convey a speaker's strong epistemic stance and solicit confirmation of speaker's expectations (Heritage, 2010, 2012a; G. Raymond, 2010a), negative interrogatives are used to solicit confirmation of the inverse of some belief or expectation of the speaker for which s/he has just been provided counterevidence (Koshik, 2002, 2005; Reese, 2007). Wendy in her response deals with the expectability of her visiting the library, by accounting that she won't visit today. That is, her visits are recurrent and therefore expectable.

By combining these practices a recipient of some informing thus conveys that s/he had a prior belief to which the speaker has provided counterevidence, and that in light of this evidence the recipient no longer holds that belief or at least strongly questions it. That is, the recipient does not challenge the speaker's prior turn, and attributes epistemic primacy in the matter formulated to the speaker. We will use two examples to offer further evidence that *oh*-prefaced negative interrogatives both accept the prior turn and treat it as counter to expectation.

First consider excerpt (3). The data is from a conversation between Miep and Bea, who are mother and daughter respectively. Bea has called Miep on a Friday to make arrangements for bringing over groceries on Saturday—it is clear that Miep is an elderly woman, but we do not know her exact age. Bea

shows in line 1 that she is launching a new activity with turn-initial *hee*.

(3) CS5-01:54.6-02:11.9

01 Bea =.HH hee ↓ik wilde morgen even langskomen
 hey I wanted tomorrow just come.by
 =.HH hey ↓I wanted to come by tomorrow
 02 om Eten te #brengen#. *to food to bring*
 to bring over #groceries#.
 03 (0.4)
 04 Mie wanneer?
 when
 when?
 05 (0.2)
 06 Bea m:orgen,
 tomorrow
 tom:orrow,
 07 (0.5)
 08 Mie -> #oh# kom ik ↑niet naar jou toe.
 oh come I not to you to
 #oh# am I ↑not coming to you.
 09 Bea nee je komt niet naar MIJ,
 no you.SG come not to me
 no you are not coming to ME,
 10 want z:ondag komt #ans:#. *because Sunday come Ans*
 because on s:unday #ans:# will come.

In lines 1–2 Bea says that she wants to come over the next day to bring some groceries. After a brief repair sequence in which the day is established Miep uses an *oh*-prefaced negative YNI in which she formulates her inference that she will not be visiting Bea. This is subsequently confirmed and accounted for by Bea: Ans, a friend of hers, will be visiting on Sunday. With her account, Bea indicates that Miep will not be able to visit her on Sunday as she normally would, since Ans is already visiting. But since Bea still has to bring over groceries, she plans to visit on Saturday instead.

Miep uses the by now familiar three practices. First, she uses an unrelated clausal response, treating her inference as based on Bea's prior turn and shifts the focus of the at issue talk from Bea's plan to bring over groceries, to Miep not going to visit Bea. Miep's inference is of course strongly implied by Bea's plans—if Bea is going to visit Miep, it will likely not be the other way around as well—but Bea did not formulate her plans as such. Second, by *oh*-prefacing this inference, Miep claims that she has just-now arrived at it and thus treats Bea's plan to come over as already established, that is, not as something she has to

agree to. Third, by using a negative YNI she implies that she previously believed she would be visiting Bea and requests reconciliatory information for why she won't be. Bea aligns with this request by not only giving a type-conforming and preferred *nee* (G. Raymond, 2003), but also providing an account: she already has someone coming over on Sunday.

An additional interesting point of this excerpt is that Miep in her uptake seems to ascribe a different action to Bea's turn in line 1–2 than what Bea had designed that turn to do. Bea formulates plans that are contingent on Miep's availability. Miep is a co-participant in the proposed plans and it would thus seem that she would have to accept it. Miep, however, formulates the plans in line 8 as having already been established: she has just inferred that she will not be visiting Bea. Miep thereby treats Bea's turn not as a proposal that has to be agreed with, and in fact after shifting the focus of the talk she never agrees or disagrees, but as simply announcing a change in plans in which she has no say. She treats Bea's turn as an informing, not a proposal.

Miep thus treats Bea's turn in lines 1–2 as contradicting her prior, private belief that she would be visiting Bea, and by *oh*-prefacing her uptake of that turn, Miep shows that she has tentatively accepted it and thus abandoned her own expectation. Bea also orients to Miep's *oh*-prefaced negative YNI as such: she does not simply confirm, but goes on to give an account for why Miep cannot visit (Steensig & Heinemann, 2013; Thompson et al., 2015).

The following case offers further evidence that *oh*-prefaced negative interrogatives claim that the preceding talk was not in line with the speaker's prior, private beliefs. The excerpt is from the start of a phone call where Toos has called her friend Angela. In line 1 Toos responds to Angela's reciprocal *how are you*, building on that response to shift to a new topic in line 2.

(4) LM1–00:12.1–00:31.4

01 Toos <ook #hoo:r#>.
 also PRT
 <me too>.
 02 ik ↓lag even lekker <op bed te chillen>.
 I lay just nice on bed to chill
 I was just lying <in bed and chilling>.
 03 (0.3)
 04 Ang ↓echt?
 really
 ↓**really?**
 05 (0.4)
 06 -> ↓o:h ↑moet je nie[t aan je] scriptie.
 oh have.to you.SG not on your thesis

the contradictory states of affairs: her prior belief that Toos has to work on her thesis, which she thinks Toos had only just started working on (lines 13–14), and Toos' announcement that she is relaxing.

Thus we see in (4), as we did in (1)–(3), that recipient use *oh*-prefaced negative YNIs to convey that the prior, informing turn by the speaker was in some way not in line with their prior, private beliefs. Again, whether these are actual beliefs in the mind of the speaker is not what we're interested in and we make no claims about this. Our point is that the speaker treats it as what s/he previously believed. By formulating an inference and treating it as just-now arrived at as a result of the interlocutor's prior turn, these YNIs are used to treat the prior turn as counter to expectations, and solicit reconciliatory information for the two contradicting states of affairs.

5.3.3 Responding with positive interrogatives

So far we have focused exclusively on negative interrogatives, but in fact positive interrogatives can be used in a similar, albeit not completely identical, manner. We will demonstrate this on the basis of two examples.⁶ In the first case, excerpt 5 below, the recipient initially produces a positive YNI and after a short pause adds a negative YNI, changing the preferred response from *yes* to *no*. Tina has just been telling Anna, her daughter, what she had for dinner and that it tasted very good, which Anna assesses positively in line 1. Tina then in line 2 shows that she is now going to ask about Anna, and subsequently, after 0.3s of silence, displays her expectation that Anna still has to eat (line 4).

- (5) AG1–06:21.4–06:39.3
- 01 Ann =↓oh ↑chillie;;=
oh chill
=↓oh ↑chill;;=
- 02 Tin =en jij:?
and you.SG
=and you:?
- 03 (0.3)
- 04 je ↑moet nog eten.
you.SG have.to still eat
you still ↑have to eat.
- 05 (0.7)
- 06 Ann ik heb al: een zak ↑wortels leeggegeten?=
I have already a bag carrots empty.eaten
I've already: eaten a bag of carrots?=-

⁶See chapter 4 example (6) for an additional case.

07 Tin =ja,
 yeah
 =yeah,

08 Ann °.h°
 09 (0.4)
 10 <moet nu alleen nog e::h>
 have.to now only still
 <now I only still have to e::h>

11 (0.9)
 12 een tar↑taar bakken;
 a tartare bake
 bake a tar↑tare;

13 (0.2)

14 Tin -> oh maar ben je alleen;
 oh but are you alone
 oh but are you alone;

15 (0.8)

16 -> is ni[c_{ole}] der niet;
 is Nicole there not
 is ni[c_{ole}] not there

17 Ann [ja]
 [yeah]

18 (0.8)

19 Ann <nee die moet allemaal dingen voor de
 no she has.to all things for the
 20 *dies van ↓veri regelen>.=*
 anniversary of Veri arrange
 <no she has to arrange a bunch of things for the
 anniversary of veri>.=

21 Tin =oh ja ja ja.
 oh yeah yeah yeah
 =oh yeah yeah yeah.

Anna's response in line 6 shows that neither confirmation nor disconfirmation are appropriate responses. She has already eaten something, a bag of carrots, but she also still has some cooking to do, baking a tartare. Instead of simply receipting or assessing Anna's answer, Tina provides a positive *oh*-prefaced YNI, inquiring whether Anna is alone (line 14). After a 0.8s gap and in overlap with Anna's confirmation, she uses a negative YNI to inquire whether Nicole, Anna's roommate, is not with her (line 16). Anna subsequently explains that Nicole has to make arrangements for the anniversary of her student society (similar to fraternity/sorority), which Tina receipts with *oh ja* in line 21.

Like the *oh*-prefaced negative YNIs discussed in the prior section, Tina's turn in line 14 consists of three practices. First, while Anna has been talking about what she is having for dinner, Tina responds by asking whether she is

alone. She thus implements an unrelated clausal response, shifting the focus of the at issue talk. Second, her turn is *oh*-prefaced, treating her inference that Anna is alone as just now arrived at, and tentatively accepts this inference. Third, by using the YNI she claims a relatively unknowing stance with regard to the inference. This does not mean that the issue of whether or not Anna is alone is considered in question: by *oh*-prefacing she tentatively accepts this inference and, as is indeed clear from her subsequent negative YNI, she no longer holds to the belief that Anna is in company. By using a YNI instead of a declarative she treats the inference as unexpected but unlike the subsequent negative YNI, her positive YNI does not explicitly register an abandoned expectation.

The positive YNI as it is used here is in a sense a weaker version of the negative YNI. With an *oh*-prefaced negative YNI the speaker implies that s/he had a prior belief that is directly contradicted by the prior talk, and with a positive YNI the speaker merely treats the formulated inference as unexpected. Having abandoned a prior belief as in (5) is only one of the reasons why something may be unexpected.

The following case makes that emphatically clear. Bea has called Moniek, her daughter, simply to chat. After a reciprocal greeting sequence, Bea asks Moniek in line 1 how she is doing.

(6) CS4-00:02.0-00:18.2

- 01 Bea =hoe ↑is het met je.
how is it with you.SG
how are you.
- 02 (0.2)
- 03 Mon het is goed met mIJh;
it is fine with me
I'm doing fine;
- 04 (0.9)
- 05 Bea o:h? ↓wat bEn je aan het doen.
oh what are you.SG on the do
o:h? ↓what are you doing.
- 06 (.)
- 07 Mon ik ben effe aan het eten met marjanne.
I ben just on the eat with Marjanne
I'm just having dinner with marjanne.
- 08 (1.0)
- 09 Bea -> oh b- is mar↑janne bij je.
oh is Marjanne at you
oh b- is marjanne at your place.
- 10 (0.3)
- 11 Mon nee: ik ben bij marjanne,
no I am at Marjanne

Using a positive YNI thus does not suggest an abandoned expectation: There's no evidence that Bea had any expectations about Marjanne. But neither does it merely convey an inference, nor does it treat the matter as still in question. Speakers can extract news, that is, foreground somethings as news that was not conveyed as news, both with declarative or polar interrogative word order (Steensig & Heinemann, 2013; Thompson et al., 2015). By using an *oh*-prefaced YNI, Bea does not treat the news as something she just now learned (cf. chapter 4), but as in some way not in line with her prior beliefs, that is, as unexpected.

The reason for why Bea considers Moniek's being at Marjanne to be relevant then and there does not become clear immediately: Both participants treat Bea's turn as requesting confirmation. And after having resolved who is visiting whom, Moniek simply launches a new activity, thanking Bea on Marjanne's behalf. It thus initially seems that it is merely treated as unexpected news.

But if we look at how the conversation progresses (see (7)), we see that this activity is closed quickly: The talk between excerpts (6) and (7) comprises a mere nine seconds in which Bea acknowledges Marjanne's gratitude. Immediately afterwards Bea says that they will keep the conversation short (line 35). Moreover, with the resumption marker *maar* ("but") (Mazeland & Huiskes, 2001) and the inferential *dan* ("then") Bea designs this proposal as based on earlier talk: Bea conveys they should keep the conversation short, because Moniek is with Marjanne. She thus changes the activity from a somewhat standard conversational opening, *how are you*-sequence and establishing a first topic (Schegloff, 1968), to the topic of Moniek being with Marjanne, as it means they can only talk briefly.

(7) CS4-00:27.4-00:34.1

- 29 Bea .H heb je- >hEb je< heb je het er
 have you.SG have you.SG have you.SG it her
 30 ook gegeven? le[uk.
 also given nice
 .H did you- >did you< did you also give it to her?
 ni[ce.
 31 Mon [ja. leuk hè?
 yeah nice TAG
 [yeah. nice right?
 32 (0.8)
 33 Bea ja [↓leuk
 yeah nice
 yeah [↓nice
 34 Mon [()
 35 Bea HEY MAAR dan e:h >houwe we 't maar effe< ko:rt,

hey but then keep we it only just brief
HEY BUT then e:h >we'll just keep it< brie:f,
 36 (.)
 37 Mon ja:ha [()
yeah
yea:hea [()

Bea thus treats the inference as unexpected and as relevant, because it means Marjanne is not available for talk. An assumption that is inherently conveyed if not by calling (see Schegloff, 1968), then by moving into the conversation without checking whether the recipient is available for talk. By calling, Bea has interrupted a social encounter, and not just any social encounter: a dinner between friends. By proposing to keep the conversation brief and relating that proposal to her inference that Moniek is having dinner with Marjanne, she implies that had she known that Moniek was having dinner with Marjanne, she would not have called.

While it may seem that Bea is proposing to keep the conversation short of her own accord, on deeper inspection it looks like Moniek has been dropping subtle hints that Bea is calling at a bad time. First, she does not answer Bea's *how are you* in the conventional way with a simple adjective, but instead gives a clausal response. Second, she does not reciprocate the question, resulting in a lapse of 0.9s. Third, she answers Bea's inquiry in line 5 in the most minimal way, stating only what she is doing. She does not take it up as a topic proffer (Schegloff, 2007), and the result is again a lapse, this time of 1.0s. Finally, she does not treat Bea's turn in line 13 as an invitation or an opportunity to say more about what she is currently doing with Marjanne.

If these points do show that Moniek treats her mother's call as ill-timed, they are subtle clues, and they also do not work very well. While both agree to keep the conversation short, they actually talk for another minute and a half, in which Bea unsuccessfully solicits news from Moniek (data not shown). When Moniek says that she wants to get back to being *gezellig* ("fun" / "sociable") Bea instead passes the phone to Moniek's father. Only when Moniek starts pressing for an end to the conversation by saying that it is not *gezellig* if she is on the phone the whole time do they move to conversational closure.

To sum up, we have shown in this section that *oh*-prefaced positive YNIs are used in a manner similar to *oh*-prefaced negative YNIs: When produced in response to an informing turn, they are used to convey an inference from the interlocutor's prior turn, and treat that inference as unexpected. Both also make relevant confirmation as a next action.

But there are differences. While both negative and positive YNIs treat the

inference unexpected, the negative YNIs do and positive YNIs do not imply a now abandoned expectation. By contrasting the inference to a former belief, the negative YNIs make the here-and-now relevance of the inference immediately clear. Positive YNIs however merely imply that the inference is somehow not in line with the speaker's prior beliefs. The here-and-now relevance of the inference is therefore not made clear through the counterexpectation remark itself.

Yet, in Dutch talk-in-interaction, negative and positive YNIs can both be used as counterexpectation remarks. With an *oh*-preface and sequentially following turns that are done to inform they can display that the inference made was not expected.

5.4 Challenges and repair

In the previous sections we have argued that by combining three practices—(i) an unrelated clausal response, (ii) *oh*-prefacing, and (iii) yes/no-type interrogative word order—speakers implement what we gloss as a counterexpectation remark. In this section we will show two actions similar to counterexpectation remarks. Both consist of an unrelated clausal response with yes/no-type interrogative word order, but in both cases the recipient does not preface his/her turn with *oh*. Like knowledge-discrepancy questions, these non-*oh*-prefaced YNIs are used by recipients to address a discrepancy between the speaker's prior informing turn, and the recipient's prior knowledge or beliefs (Steensig & Heinemann, 2013). In these cases, however, the recipient does not necessarily request confirmation and elaboration. While these actions can receive confirmation and an account, the speaker can also provide only confirmation or even back down, treating the response not as an inquiry, but a challenge (see Heinemann, 2008). Without the *oh*-preface the recipient does not accept the terms of the prior informing turn—neither the action it implements nor the information it conveys—and thus implements a different action.

Consider for example excerpt (8). Sarah and Jessica are talking about a mutual friend who is in her final year of high school. In the Netherlands, high schools have a centralized national exam, which their mutual friend has to take. Sarah in line 2 says that the exams are soon, and this is initially accepted by Jessica with her claim of remembering in line 3; *oh ja da's waar* ("oh yeah that's right") (Heritage, 1984a; see also section 4.3.1).

(8) DN1-02:54.3-03:15.5

01 Sar ja >ik weet niet< hoe vaak zij ↑werkt >nou
yeah I know not how often she works now

02 eigenlijk<.=maar ze heeft (.) binnenkort exa:mens
actually but she has shortly exams

03 °volgens mij°.=
according.to me
yeah >I do not know< how often she ↑works >now
actually<.=but she has (.) to take exams soon °I
believe°.=

04 Jes =↑oh ja das ↑waa:r;
oh yeah that.is true
=↑oh yeah that's ↑ri:ght;

05 (0.4)

06 -> ↑is dat niet deze week begonnen al de
is that not this week started already the
 -> exa:mens?
exams
↑has that not started this week already the exa:ms?

07 (1.2)

08 Sar zou zo eens kunnheh hu hu (.) .Hh
could thus once can
could just be the case hu hu (.) .Hh

09 Jes volgens mij[: ↑wel >namel]ijkh<.
according.to me ADV namely
I believe[: ↑so >namel]y<

While Jessica initially accepts Sarah's informing turn that the exams are soon, even claiming that she also knew it, she uses a negative interrogative in lines 6–7 to introduce her expectation that the exams have in fact already started. As she uses a negative interrogative, confirmation would be in line with Sarah's statement that the exams are to start soon. That is, a confirming response would mean that the exams have not started this week. But Sarah does not provide confirmation. In fact, both participants in the subsequent talk orient to the YNI as a challenge, as a reversed polarity question where disconfirmation is the preferred response (Koshik, 2005): (i) Sarah backs down from her earlier statement, now saying that it could be that the exams have already started (line 8) and (ii) Jessica states that she actually believes that the exams have already started (line 9).

Jessica's YNI seems to hold the middle ground between a counterinforming and a counterexpectation remark. She does not say Sarah is wrong, and that the exams have already started, but neither does she treat the formulated state of affairs as an inference she has now arrived at. She thus creates room for Sarah to either confirm, to claim epistemic primacy, or to back down. The difference

between Jessica's YNI and the cases in section 3 is brought about by the lack of *oh*: as Jessica's turn in line 6 is not *oh*-prefaced she does not convey tentative acceptance of either the formulated inference and therefore the terms of the turn it addresses.

The following excerpt is also a case in which the negative YNI indexes resistance to the terms of a prior informing turn. In this case the speaker treats the prior turn as confusing; that is, the speaker claims a lack of understanding and shows why she does not understand. The excerpt is from a conversation between two friends: Rianna and Melinda. Rianna has been telling about her recent visit to a university in Belgium where she might want to get a master's degree.

(9) CL1-01:00.3-01:24.4

01 Ria °ik° vond er drie lEU:k,
I found there three fun
 °I° liked three of them,
 02 en die WA:ren >d'r allemaal< niet eens.
and those were there all not even
and they WE:re >none of them< even there.
 03 .H[h
 04 Me: -> [HUH?
 [HUH?
 05 -> maa[r ↑wist je dat niet van te voren.]
but knew you that not of PRT ahead
bu[t ↑did you not know that beforehand.]
 06 Ria [() ik dacht .hh]
I thought
 [() I thought .hh]
 07 (0.7)
 08 nEE: er stond op de site van JA:
no there stood at the site of yeah
nO: it said on the website like YEAH:
 09 °dat en dat° zijn masteropleidingen,
that and that are master's programs
°that and that° are master's programs,
 10 en dat er geen .HHh E::h (.) niet
and that there none not
and that there not a .HHh e::h (.) not
 11 >zalk maar zeggen< zo'n WOR:kshop van WAS.
shall.I just say such.a workshop of was
>so to speak< like a WOR:kshop of WAS.
 12 dat je gewoon echt (.) voorlichting krijgt.
that you.SG simply really information get
that you simply really (.) get information.

In line 1 Rianna is finishing a complaint. She had gone to Belgium to get information about three specific programs, but the university did not provide information on those programs. An affiliating response might be something like co-complaining or expressing sympathy, but instead Melinda claims she does not understand with *huh* and then uses a YNI to address the question of whether Rianna could have known in advance. She uses a TCU-initial *maar*, not as a resumption marker, but to show that there is a contrast between what Rianna just said and her uptake. In other words, she can be seen to question whether Rianna has a right to complain: should she not simply have prepared better. Melinda also responds to it as such: she provides confirmation and explains that indeed she could not have known in advance, shifting the blame to the university.

Melinda's YNI shares some features with the counterexpectation remarks: she addresses a discrepancy between Rianna's prior informing turn and what might be expected. Rianna also subsequently confirms and elaborates. But as Melinda's turn is not *oh*-prefaced, it does not convey an inference Melinda has now arrived at. Instead, using *huh* she claims that she does not understand the prior turn and in her YNI she formulates the problem.

Finally, consider (10). This excerpt is also from a conversation between two friends, Christy and Marsha, who are talking about a recent soccer match, the final of the annual cup in which FC Twente beat Ajax 3–2 despite being down 0–2 at half-time.

(10) DL1–03:10.0–03:29.5

01 Mar: tom die ging EErst helemaal niet eens meer
Tom he went at.first at.all not even anymore
 02 kijk:en enzo. .h roep maar wEEr als het gel#ijk
watch and.such yell just again if it tied
 03 staat#. *stands*
tom he at FIrst did not go watch anymore at all
and such. .h just shout when it #is tied# again.
 04 (0.8)
 05 Chr: -> ↑maar (m-) (0.2) is tom voor ↑twent↓#e:#.
but is Tom for Twente
↑but (m-) (0.2) does tom support ↑twent↓#e:#.
 06 (1.1)
 07 Mar: jaha:,
yeah
yeahea:h,
 08 Chr: o:h dat w[ist ik niet.]=
oh that knew I not

09 Mar: o:h I d[idn't know that.]=
 [(ook fan)]
 [(also fan)]
 10 Chr: ='kdacht dat tom ook voor a:jax wa:s.
 I.thought that Tom also for Ajax was
 =I thought that tom also supported a:jax.
 11 (0.5)
 12 Mar: #nee:: hij is voor ↑twente#.
 no he is for Twente
 #no:: he supports ↑twente#.

In line 1 Marsha tells that Tom, her boyfriend, stopped watching when Ajax was ahead and that he wanted her to call out to him only if the game was again level. What follows is a silence of 0.8s, after which Christy produces a YNI, formulating her inference that Tom supports Twente. Christy's turn has almost all the telltale signs of a counterexpectation remark: (i) it is an unrelated clausal response, (ii) it has yes/no-type interrogative word order, and (iii) it formulates an inference that is not in line with her prior beliefs, a contrast that is even marked with turn-initial *maar*. But she only produces an *oh* after Marsha has provided confirmation, that is, she does not accept the revised understanding until after the confirmation.

Notice that after Marsha's confirming response, Christy explicitly formulates that she did not know (line 8) and that she thought that Tom supported Ajax (line 10). Although this prior belief is introduced with *Ik dacht* ("I thought") it is a different practice from the "I thought"-initiated turns discussed by Smith (2013). In the cases discussed by Smith, the "I thought"-turn is produced in response to a problematic informing turn in order to reveal a discrepancy and solicit an account for that discrepancy. Here Christy uses it after the discrepancy has already been resolved, and it gets only re-confirmation. She uses it to account for the delay in progressivity. It is a practice that is frequently produced to account for a problem after repair has been initiated and resolved (Ekberg, 2012; Schegloff, 1992; see also example 5 in chapter 4).

These three cases show that while unrelated clausal responses to informing turns implemented with YNIs treat that prior turn as counter to the speaker's beliefs or expectations, they do not implement counterexpectation remarks. Instead, they treat that prior turn as somehow problematic in light of the recipient's prior beliefs. *Oh*-prefacing is thus a crucial aspect of counterexpectation remarks: it indexes that the speaker has tentatively accepted the formulated understanding and by extension the terms of the prior informing turn, both the information it conveys and the action it implements.

5.5 Discussion & Conclusion

Research over the last thirty years has shown that participants have a large array of resources to respond to informing actions such as news, stories, and other tellings of past, current, or future experiences (see Thompson et al., 2015, for an overview). All these responsive actions take a different stance to the informing action, and therefore have different sequential implications. On the one hand recipients can be mostly passive recipients by conveying that they have been informed, typically by using a change-of-state token like *oh* (Heritage, 1984a; see also Heinemann & Koivisto, 2016 and the references cited therein) thereby proposing sequence closure (Schegloff, 2007). At the other end of the spectrum, we find actions with which speaker's actively partake in the informing sequence. By formulating prior beliefs, recipients can treat the informing turn as not just conveying new information, but as information that contradicts those prior beliefs, and thus merits elaboration (Steensig & Heinemann, 2013; Smith, 2013; Robinson, 2009). They actively transform the newsworthiness of the prior turn (see Maynard, 2003; Terasaki, 1976/2004).

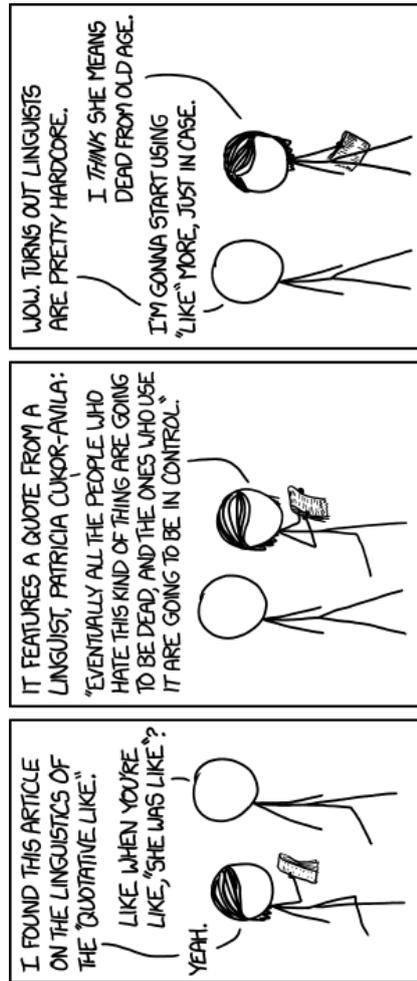
The analysis in this paper contributes to this line of investigation by discussing one specific way in which recipients in Dutch talk-in-interaction respond to informing turns: producing an *oh*-prefaced yes/no-type interrogative in which they formulate an understanding inferred from the informing turn. We glossed these as counterexpectation remarks; they treat the prior turn as conveying information that is counter to what the recipient expected, even though that prior turn was not designed as such. We have argued that in producing such a response, the recipient (i) accepts the terms of the prior, informing turn—the action it implements and the information it conveys, (ii) treats that turn as not in line with a prior, private belief or expectation—one not made public in the interaction, (iii) topicalizes the unexpected inference, (iv) requests confirmation of that inference as well as what Robinson (2009) calls reconciliatory information, and (v) tentatively accepts the formulated inference or understanding.

To support this analysis, we compared counterexpectation remarks to YNIs that also treat a prior informing turn by the interlocutor as providing information that is counter-to-expectation but that are not *oh*-prefaced. We showed that because these YNIs are not *oh*-prefaced, they do not accept the terms of that prior turn and instead treat that turn as in some way problematic. In each case the recipient has discrepant beliefs or expectations, but is not yet willing to even tentatively commit to the inference gleaned from the speaker's turn. That these YNIs implement different actions from counterexpectation remarks is partially revealed in their sequential uptake: (i) the speaker can back down, treating

the response as a correction or challenge; or (ii) the speaker can provide only confirmation and no reconciliatory information. The recipient can also convey that s/he has a problem by prefacing the YNI with *huh*, which is used to claim a problem with understanding the prior turn.

Both the way in which this combination of practices is used and the infrequency with which we find it in casual conversation suggest that these *oh*-prefaced YNIs are not one fixed practice. Instead, counterexpectation remarks consist of multiple practices that are combined to implement one specific action and make relevant a specific response; they are best analyzed as what Enfield (2013, p. 100) calls a *praction* (see also Sidnell & Enfield, 2014). The relevant practices with which these counterexpectation remarks are implemented are as follows: (i) the recipient produced what Thompson et al. (2015) call an unrelated clausal response: a response that formulates some inference that was gleaned from the prior informing turn; (ii) this response is *oh*-prefaced to index a here-and-now change-of-state (Heritage, 1984a) and convey that the speaker has accepted the terms of the prior informing turn and has tentatively accepted the formulated inference; and (iii) the response has yes/no-type interrogative word order to request both confirmation and reconciliatory information (Robinson, 2009).

This paper thus supports the idea that there is much to be gained in our understanding of talk-in-interaction by looking not at particular actions or practices, but focusing on a more micro level of participant behavior; what is recurrently achieved by a specific combination of behavioral practices in a specific sequential environment (e.g., Schegloff, 1996a). It will lead to the discovery of actions that are maybe impossible to anticipate and it can demonstrate the ability of people to attend to the most subtle details of interaction and design their actions accordingly moment by moment, without even having to be aware of it.



God was like, "Let there be light," and there was light.