

Interactional Competence: What can we tell from collaborative speaker transitions in multiparty university student meetings?

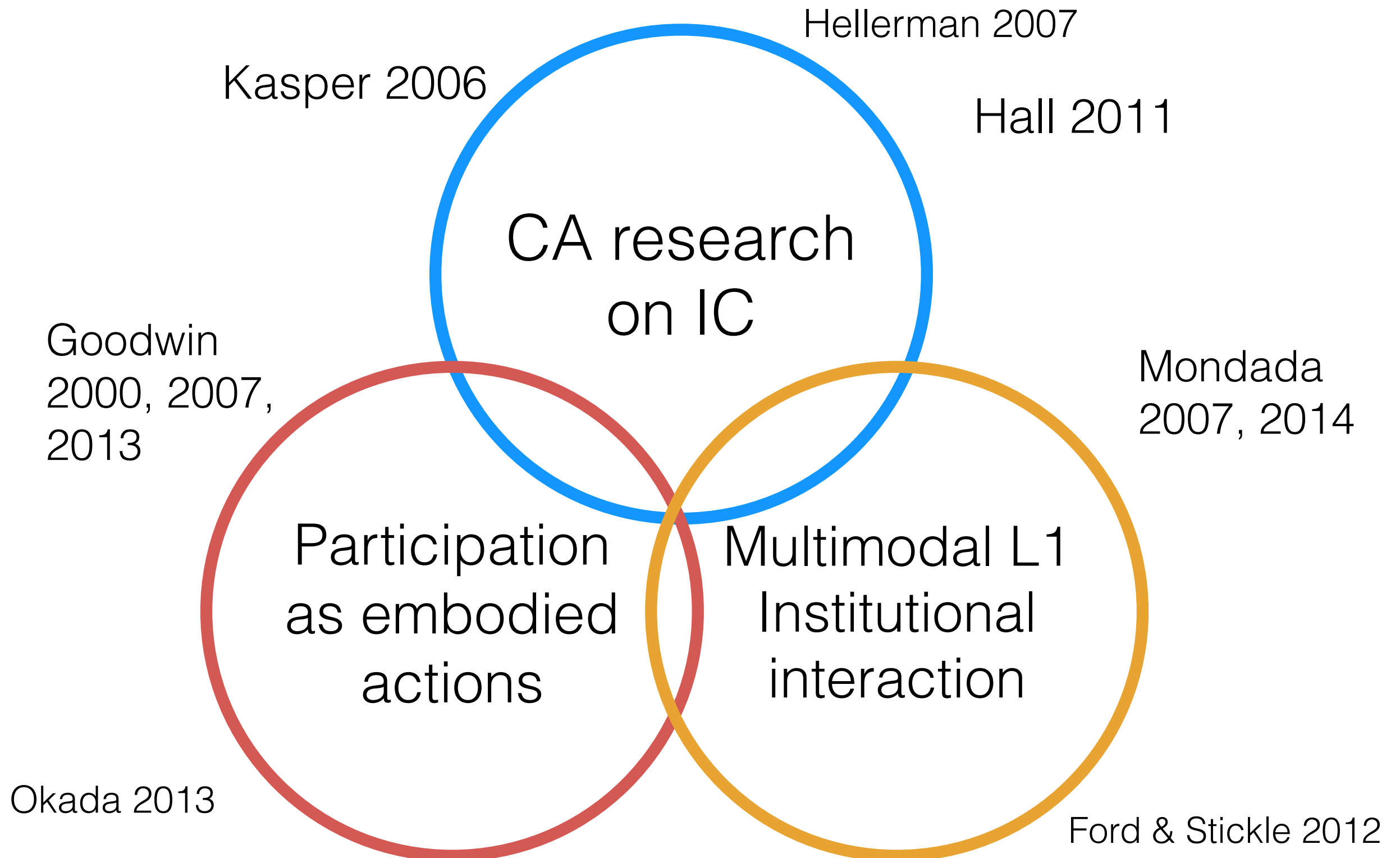


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Background



The Study

Participants

- Undergraduate students in naval architecture working on their final year project
- 10 hrs, 8 meetings of a group of 6 students over 4 months
- Newcastle University Corpus of Academic Spoken English (NUCASE)

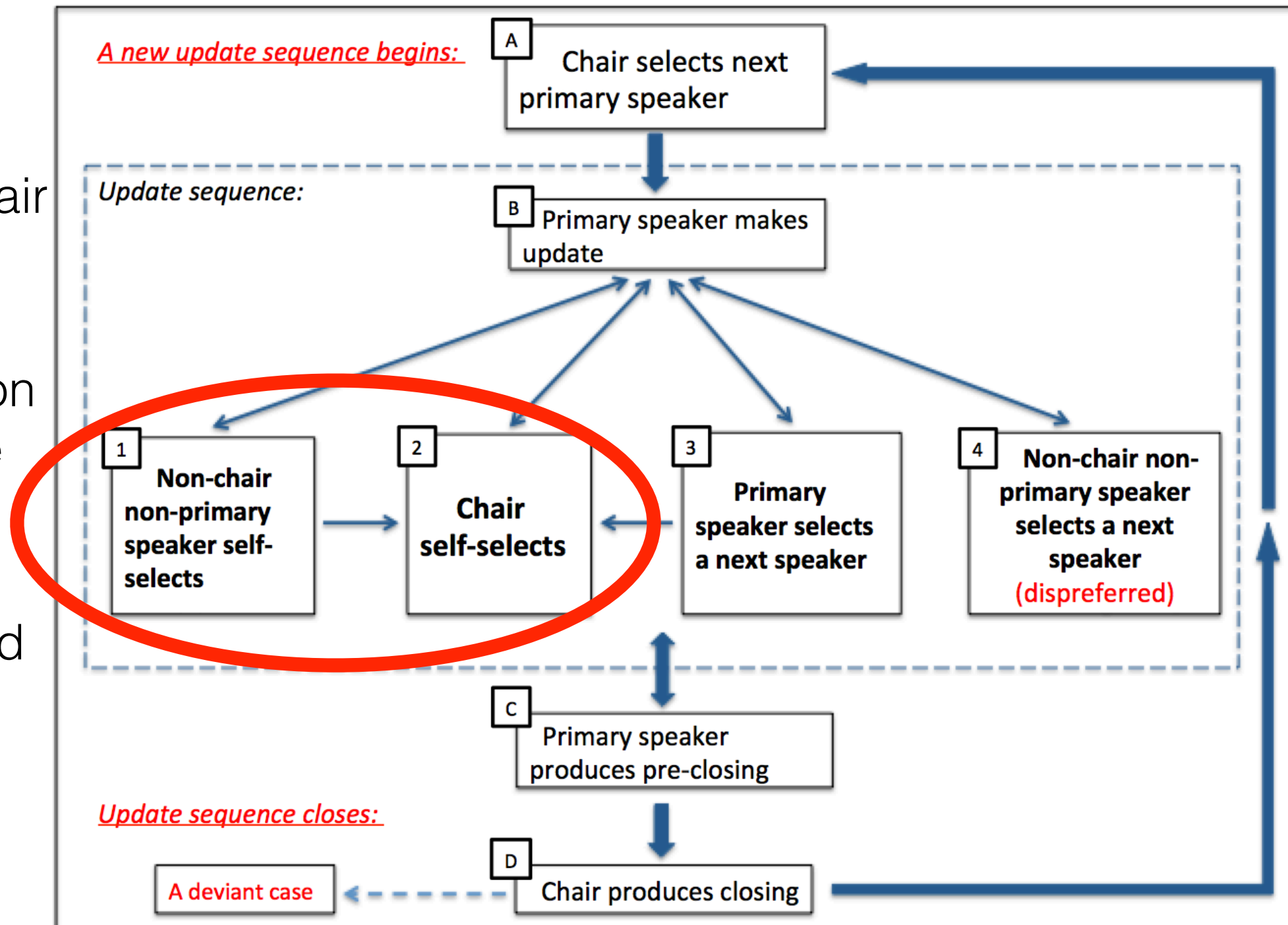
The institutional setting

- A simulation of real-life business meetings
- An educational goal-orientation



The focal phenomenon: speaker transitions during roundtable update sequence

- An appointed chair
- A round-table update discussion organised by the meeting chair
- A chair-appointed primary speaker

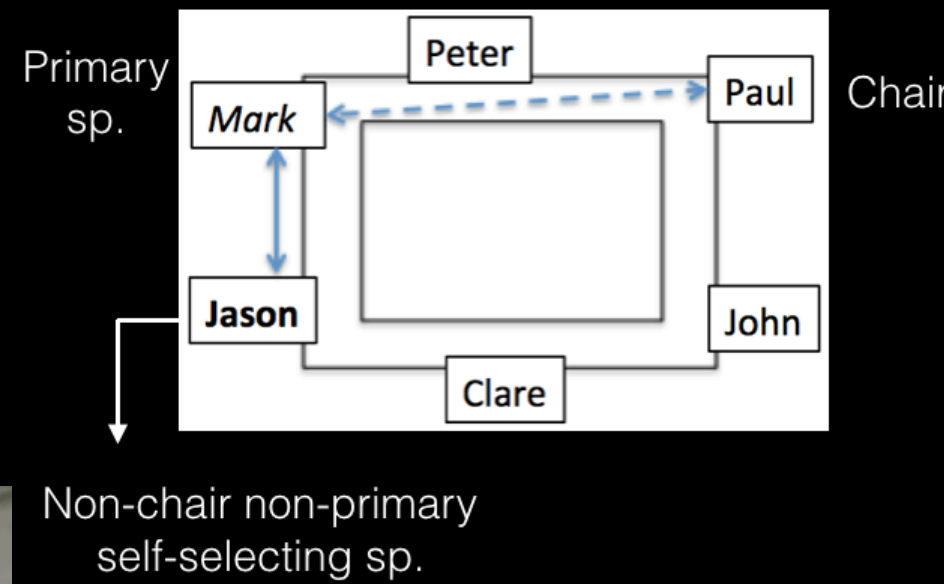


What is Interactional Competence?

Participants are socialised members of the local community, who (re)shapes and (re)establishes the local ecology and activity through their talk-and-bodies-in-interaction:

- orientation toward locally emerging roles
- orientation toward local distribution of 'rights to speak'
- mobilisation of multimodal resources to shift participation framework

Case 1: non-chair non-primary speaker self-selection





Nod, gaze front →

Gaze shift to Mark →

Mutual gaze with Mark →

Disestablish mutual gaze →

Nod, lean toward Mark, gaze at Mark, upper body repositioning →

1 MAR: (.) cos [we DID]≈
 2 PAU: [mhm]
 3 MAR: ≈ Δat theΔ STAR:T we talked about↗ (0.3) logistics didn't
 4 we- we talked about↗ (0.4) we'd start to pla:n↗
 5 (0.7) if Δyou're gonna to buil it- say on theΔ north coast what
 6 (.) likely ports would you u:se↗ what kind of distances↘
 7 (0.5)
 8 MAR: [so] looking at↗
 9 PAU: [yeah↘]
 10 PAU: (.) talk about how the: ports [or uh] ≈
 11 MAR: [IMPLICATIONS of] ≈
 12 JAS: [((clears throat))]
 13 PAU: ≈ [expanding and stuff↘] yeah≈
 14 MAR: ≈ [whe:re you would↗]
 15 JAS: ≈°go into de[tails↘]°≈
 16 PAU: [°yeah°↗]≈
 17 MAR: ≈ &yeah↘
 18 (1.0)
 19 MAR: but YEAH I would &keep it basic at the start↘ °so° when I move
 20 on from toda:y↘
 21 (0.9)

Jason's 1st attempt of self-selection:

Sequential position	Verbal/embodied conduct	Emerging roles
Pre-turn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closely monitors ongoing talk between Paul and Mark (L10/13 - gaze shifts, nodding) Vocalisation at overlap, possible display of incipient speakership (L12 - throat clearing) during overlap) 	attentive recipient → incipient speaker → possible next speaker
1st TCU	Establishes mutual gaze with Mark by end of TCU	current speaker
After 1st TCU	Withdrawal of mutual gaze, continue to display attentive reciprocity (L19 - nodding, upper body repositioning, gaze shifts)	attentive recipient



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Shift gaze toward Paul, nod →

Lean back, touch nose →

Lean forward toward Mark, shift
gaze toward Mark →

22 MAR: basically try and look at a- a total Gantt chart (0.3)
23 business wise~
24 PAU: ~yeah~
25 MAR: ~what who: Δwould applyΔ for funding~ (.) where~ (0.7) and
26 then~ as we get into more details I can apply:~
27 (0.9)
28 MAR: °apply those°~
29 PAU: ~yea:h~ Δare you gonna be talkingΔ about~ like~ the supply:
30 chain [°as well°]
31 MAR: [ΔThat's what I'm] THINKING ofΔ YEAH cos you you've got
32 to allow Δfor that I think~Δ
33 PAU: (0.3) yeah~
34 MAR: ~ that's a &huge (.) °part of the cost yeah°~
35 JAS: ≈ °uh°
36 (0.7)
37 PAU: °um that'll be good°~

Jason's 2nd attempt of self-selection - pre-turn position:

Sequential position	Verbal/embodied conduct	Emerging roles
Pre-turn	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Closely monitors ongoing talk (L29/33 - nodding, gaze shifts, upper body repositioning)• Display attentive reciprocity toward Mark (L34 - lean forward, gaze shifts)• Vocalisation 'uh' at TRP showing willingness to talk (L35)	<p>attentive recipient → incipient speaker → possible next speaker</p>



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Turn-beginning & 1st TCU

Mark withdraw gaze

Jason dual-orientation

35 JAS: ≈ °uh°
 36 (0.7)
 37 PAU: °um that'll be good°≈
 38 JAS: ≈o- OBVIOUSly to do the cost\ benefit analysis you need more
 39 details: as we said\
 40 MAR: (.) ye[ah\
 41 JAS: [to \wards\ uh: hh (0.4) wha- HOW long\
 42 what time you need:d\ .hh (.)
 43 for us to give you the \final detailed\ desi:gn\∇
 44 (.)Δso you canΔ do: the wor:k\ before\
 45 (.) Δdue time\Δ
 46 MAR: (.)uh- ↑WHAT I'd like to do it set it all up\
 47 (0.6)

1st increment

2nd increment

3rd increment

Jason's 2nd attempt of self-selection - 1st TCU and beyond:

Sequential position	Verbal/embodied conduct	Emerging roles
Turn-beginning & 1st TCU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restarts, to gain speakership • Mark responds with gaze after turn beginning • After mutual gaze established, lean backward • Sustains mutual gaze with Mark • By end of TCU, shifts gaze toward co-participants (dual-orientation) 	Current speaker (non-chair, non-primary)
Turn extensions (3 increments)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st: Mark's brief verbal response & gaze withdrawal, Jason uses verbal floor-holding devices, re-directs to co-participants (dual-orientation) • 2nd: sustained reciprocity from Mark, Jason displays dual-orientation • 3rd: Mark starts to withdraw reciprocity, Jason sustains gaze toward Mark, brief gaze to co-participants at the end 	Current speaker (non-chair, non-primary)

Turn-beginning & 1st TCU



1st increment



2nd increment



3rd increment



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Discussion on findings

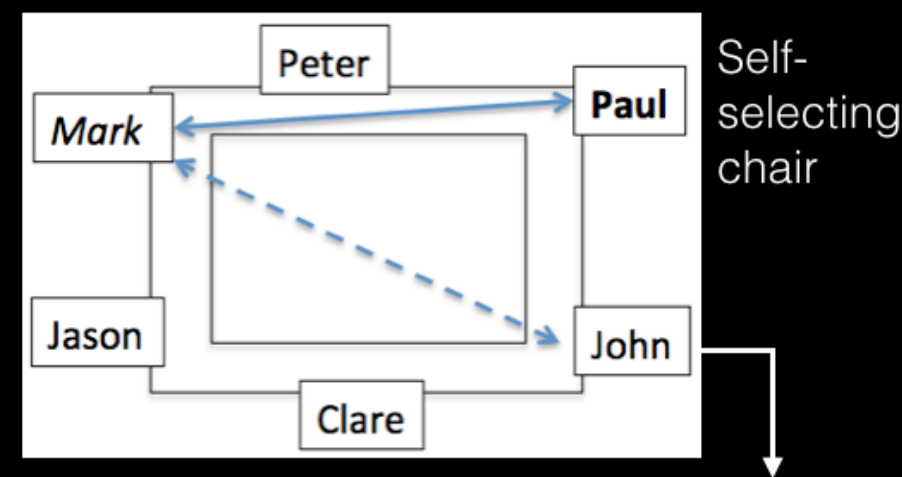


Jason self-selects as a non-chair non-primary speaker:

1. Locally emerging roles at various sequential environments (active recipient - incipient speaker - possible next speaker - non-chair non-primary current speaker);
2. Mobilisation of multimodal resources at these sequential environments to progressively gain, maintain and negotiate speakership;
3. Exploit interactional resources made available by the physical space/seating arrangements (i.e., dual-orientation)

Case 2: chair self-selection

Primary
sp.



Non-chair non-primary
current sp.

Mark

Paul

John



Chair's self-selection - pre-turn:



Sequential position	Verbal/embodied conduct	Multi-tasking as the chair
pre-turn	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leaning on the desk, taking meeting notes• Switches tasks: puts pen-cap back, adjust upper body and gaze shifts, monitoring on-going talk between John/Mark• Gaze down on meeting notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keep meeting notes• Monitor proceeding of meeting agenda• Monitor the direction of on-going talk



51 JOH: (.) to do this and attach it to wind farmer~
 52 MAR: ~ye[ah~]
 → 53 JOH: [than] it is just to do it[°it's what is°]
 → 54 PAU: [WELL↑ that's the]
 55 whole point [of the] project≈
 56 MAR: [yeah~]
 57 PAU: ≈ [Δisn't itΔ~ WE↑ want] actuall:y↗
 → 58 MAR: [cos we've- yeah~]
 59 (0.3)
 60 CLA: ((clears throat))
 → 61 PAU: (.)it doesn- it doesn't matter if-it's cheaper or more
 62 expensive it's [just] the fact that we're proving↗
 → 63 JOH: [yeah~]
 64 PAU: (0.7) [what price] it is yeah~
 65 JOH: [°it can be done°]
 66 JOH: ≈ yeah~ (.) ↑no that's fine~

Chair's self-selection - turn beginning and beyond:

Sequential position	Verbal/embodied conduct	Shifts of Participation Framework
turn-beginning & 1st TCU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Puts pen-cap back, lean backward, readiness to talk (L51) • Early entry of verbal turn, overlapping John's TCU-final (L54) • Continue 1st TCU, overlapping Mark's turn (L55) • Upper body repositioning & gaze at Mark, leading to Mark's verbal drop-put (L57) • Gain John's gaze by end of TCU • Prefaces upcoming talk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progressively diverting current participation framework: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Early entry to John's turn (Chair - All) 2. Block Mark's emerging participation framework, gain his reciprocity (Chair - Mark) 3. Gain John's reciprocity
Beyond 1st TCU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progressive re-direction to John: abandon current verbal turn (L57), initiate new verbal turn & shift gaze toward John (L61) • Mutual orientation with John (L63-66) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progressive establishment of new participation framework (Chair - John)



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Discussion on findings



Paul's self-selection as a meeting chair:

- Orientation toward the role as meeting chair, switch in-between multi-tasks & executes the chair's 'rights to speak';
- Progressive shifts of participation framework (chair vs. all, chair vs. current speaker, chair vs. target recipient), esp. using gaze direction as a crucial resource

So what?

- *How multimodal resources can be mobilised by competent participants to:*
 1. Contextualise turn-taking practices & accomplish speaker transition;
 2. Shape and shaped by the local ecology of the meeting activity (roundtable update sequence);
 3. Act according to different participant roles;
- *Future study on IC:*
 - A. Longitudinal data collection: how the group dynamics develop over time;
 - B. Diversity of multimodal resources made available by different physical space/seating;
 - C. Academic/professional practice: can we train people to develop IC?