Unfinished Turns in French Conversation:

How Context Matters

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Abstract

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On occasions, speakers do not complete their turns in conversation. Such syntactically incomplete turns are not treated with repair or misunderstanding. The responses that they receive display a clear understanding of the actions that the unfinished turns embodied. In this article, using conversation analysis, I describe the systematic occurrence of unfinished turns in French conversation. I show that context is necessary to the understanding of this type of turn and I describe the nature of that context. Data analysis reveals that unfinished turns are understandable primarily by reference to their sequential position. I conclude that unfinished turns are a locally managed resource fitted to the particulars of the talk in progress and built upon the context that the sequences that house them have so far provided.

Unfinished Turns in French Conversation: How Context Matters

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The central concern of this paper is to describe the systematic occurrence of unfinished turns (i.e., syntactically-incomplete turns) in ordinary conversation. Although the data upon which I shall draw are in French, the central issues of this paper are essentially generic and emphasize what may constitute context. Unfinished turns are not distinctively French. They may be found in other languages, but comparative analysis with other languages, which is beyond the purview of this paper, has not been systematically conducted to establish whether the use of unfinished turns varies across languages. What is reported here aims primarily at illustrating the import of sequential structure[1] (Chevalier, 2005).

As we can see at the arrowed turns in excerpts [1] through to [4], there are occasions in French when speakers may not complete their turns[2].

[1]- [Chevalier: 6:12- Erica]

(Mireille runs a drama group that Erica, a teenager, regularly attends. Erica had told Mireille that she was going to be away the following Monday, the day of the group's next play. Erica, at some later point, leaves a phone message for Mireille to call her back. When Mireille returns the call (this call), Erica's mother, Mme E (Mrs E), answers the phone and informs Mireille of her daughter's change of plan: Erica will, in fact, be in town on Monday, and thus available for the play. This is welcome news for Mireille, as lines 27-29 show)

27 Mireille   ↑<u>BON</u>! alors donc elle joue /lundi.

28   G<small>ood</small> so therefore she play (PRES) Monday

29   **↑Good! so she'll play on /Monday then.**

30   (0.4)

31 Mme E →   .hh ↑oui=enfin b<u>on</u> on veut pas non plus euh::::[:

32   .hh yes= anyway well we (IF) want (PRES) not no more uh [VERB+INF or QUE (that) +

33   subj clause]

34   **.hh ↑ yes= anyway/still we don't want to uh:::[(VERB or CLAUSE) either**

35 Mireille   [↑Mais <u>non</u>, >mais ça n'a

36   But no but that not have (PRES)

37   **[↑But <u>no</u>, >but it doesn't**

38   au<u>cu</u>ne import<u>an</u>ce< n- (.) .hh les <u>go</u>sses a s'arr<u>an</u>gent très très bien

39   none importance n-(.) .hh the kids they (FEM) arrange (REFL PRES) very very well

40   **matter at <u>all</u>< n- (.) .hh the k<u>i</u>ds they ma<u>na</u>ge v<u>e</u>ry v<u>e</u>ry well**

41   entr[e ellë:s

42   between them[selves] (FEM)

43   **between the:m**

[2] - [Chevalier: 5:1- Visiting Nana]

(Laure has called her mother, Karine, to enquire about the size that her grandmother (Karine's mother) wears. After discussion of this issue, Laure tells Karine that she (and her family) will not go and visit her grandmother on the day of the call, but instead the following day before going over to Karine's house for lunch)

54 Laure →   ºÇa vaêt mieux p'[c' que:]: comme ç<u>a</u> ça va pas /êteuh:::º

55   that go (PRES) be (INF) better because like that that go (PRES) not be (INF) uh [ADJ]

56   **ºIt'll be better c[u:z::] th<u>at</u> way it's not going to /be:uh::º [ADJ]**

57 Karine   [Ouais.]

58		Yeah
59		**[Yeah.]**
60	Karine	<Wǒhuais,>
61		Yeyeah
62		**<Yeaheah,>**

This paper will establish how context is necessary to the understanding of unfinished turns and what constitutes that context[3]. By demonstrating how unfinished turns are fitted to prior turns and how the responses they receive are, in turn, fitted to the unfinished turns, I will show that the systematicity or orderliness of unfinished turns resides largely in the systematic sequential position in which they may be found. In other words, unfinished turns are to be understood primarily by reference to their position in interactional sequences and position is the primary resource that participants have for understanding them. Since all unfinished turns are designed for the position they occupy, this paper will show that whatever is unsaid or partially unsaid will not only be so in, and for, some sequential context, but that it will also be designed for this context. In short, what is partially unsaid will be understandable by reference to the sequence in which it is produced. I will also show that unfinished turns display sensitivity to the particulars of the interactional contexts in which, and for which, they are produced (i.e., that they are fitted to the interaction-so-far). Unfinished turns are also concerned with considerations of syntax and turn organization. These will be addressed elsewhere. For now, since considerations of syntax are also to be understood in relation to sequences of action as the

units of organization for talk-in-interaction (Schegloff and Sacks, 1973, Sacks, Schegloff, Jefferson, 1974, Sacks, 1992, Schegloff, 2007), this paper will limit itself to the issue of sequentiality and position.

By and large, the primacy of the sentence has meant that unfinished turns of this type have been relatively neglected in the linguistics literature (Chomsky, 1965, 1972)[4]. In Conversation Analysis (CA), Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson's (1974) work on turn-constructional units (TCUs), a unit that may constitute a possibly complete turn (e.g., lexical, phrasal, clausal), Koshik's (2002) designedly incomplete utterances (DIUs) and Lerner's (1991, 1996) anticipatory completions constitute key attempts to address actual instances of 'non-sentences'[5]. The research reported here relates to a corpus of seventy naturally occurring French telephone conversations, providing several hours of conversation. Over 200 instances of unfinished turns were singled out from these conversations from participants of all ages and in varying relationships, suggesting that not completing a turn is not a trait specific of any one speaker and pointing to a phenomenon that is orderly and systematic.

Responses to Unfinished Turns

At first glance, there is nothing remarkable about unfinished turns. The syntactic items that are 'missing' are often not only guessable, they can regularly be 'obvious'. The striking thing about unfinished turns is that they are not treated with puzzlement or as out of place, despite their syntactic incompleteness. Neither repair nor misunderstanding tend to ensue (Schegloff, 1987a, 1992, 1997, 2000). In the present corpus, the responses that unfinished turns receive treat them as appropriate types of turn to occur where they occur.

Further, these responses respond to unfinished turns 'appropriately', (i.e., with a response out of the range of the possibilities available for the action that they embody). Such responses to unfinished turns display a clear understanding of that which the unfinished turns embodied and suggest that the latter are treated as having performed recognisable actions[6]. Unfinished turns are treated as interactionally complete. Further, the absence of repair also suggests that they are produced and treated as appropriate next turns to the turns to which they respond. In other words, unfinished turns embody actions that are understood as valid actions/responses to the prior turns by reference to which they are built. Thus, like any other turn, unfinished ones are understandable by virtue of the sequential implicativeness of prior turns (Schegloff and Sacks, 1973). Not only are responses to unfinished turns appropriate, they also contribute to the progression of the projects that the sequences in which the unfinished turns participate seek to perform. Thus, despite their lack of grammatical completion, unfinished turns are overwhelmingly treated as coherent utterances and are receipted as if they had been completed.

In excerpt [1] above, not only is line 31 receipted as appropriate, it is actually responded to in overlap, with the preferred response for the action line 31 embodies. Mme E's daughter, Erica, has made a last-minute change of plan: she will, after all, be available on the day of the play performed by the drama group she attends. The unfinished turn at line 31 can be heard to display some attention to the possible disruption that may ensue from Erica's change of plan and from her proposed late involvement in the play. At lines 35-41, Mireille responds to the unfinished turn with a preferred fast disagreement (Pomerantz, 1984, Schegloff, 2007)[7]. In excerpt [2] above, the incomplete summary assessment at line 54 is receipted with an agreement in overlap at line 57 at the

point where the first part of the assessment is possibly complete after 'mieux' (better) and again at line 60.

In this corpus, unfinished turns were found to perform a range of actions as varied as requests, assessments and criticisms, amongst others. Despite such variety, there is an overwhelming tendency for unfinished turns to be treated as having performed recognizable actions and for the responses they receive to be 'appropriate' next turns to the actions that the unfinished turns embody. In the next section, I will consider the sequential resources that permit such uptakes in the face of such variety.

Subsequent Sequential Position and Sequentially Appropriate Next Turns

One identifiable characteristic of the unfinished turns presented in this corpus is that they occur in subsequent sequential position. That is, unfinished turns are responsive to some prior turn or are built off some prior turn and are understandable *primarily* by reference to such position[8]. In being responsive to the turn by reference to which they are built, UTs are designed as appropriate turns to occur after the prior turn to which they relate. In saying that turns are specifically fitted to prior turns, we must briefly turn to sequences of actions and their most basic format, the adjacency pair. As a minimal structure, an adjacency pair is a series of two turns, adjacently produced, that is, structurally or topically related to each other (Schegloff and Sacks, 1973, pp. 295-296, Sacks, 1992, Schegloff, 2007). Each turn is produced by different speakers. The turns are ordered as a first pair part and a second pair part and can be typed such that the first pair part of a particular type (say, a request) requires a second pair part of the same type (a granting or a rejection)[9]. A turn, then, projects a relevant next action, which it makes

'sequentially implicative' (Schegloff and Sacks, 1973, pp. 296, footnote 6). It is also worth registering that sequences and turns are not equivalent. A turn may be made up of units relating to different sequences. As we mentioned, these units are turn-constructional units (TCUs). A TCU is a unit that may constitute a possibly-complete turn and whose form may be less than a sentence (e.g., lexical, phrasal, clausal) (see Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson, 1974 for examples of each type). Participants regularly begin speaking in the vicinity of the possible completion of a TCU (ibid). There is only space to consider one case in detail here. Using the structure of sequences, I will show that the unfinished turn in excerpt [3] occurs in subsequent position in a sequence, that it is receipted as having accomplished a recognizable action and that the response it receives progresses the project of the sequence. Further, I will show that there are interactional grounds for the unfinished turn being produced where it is produced and in the way that it is produced and that it is fitted both to the sequential position in which it occurs and to the interactional particulars of the talk-so-far.

Example [1] is reproduced below as example [3] and includes the beginning of the sequence of interest.

[3] - [Chevalier: 6:12- Erica]

14 Mme E   >£Nannan c'est sa maman.£<=.hh oui >↑ê vous a app'llée parce qu'

15   Nono it be (PRES) her mummy =.hh yes she you (SG DIST) call (CPAST) because

16   **= >£Nono it's her mum.£< = .hh yes > ↑she called you because**

17   ê vous a dit qu'la semaine proch<u>ai</u>ne ê d'vait pas êt <u>là((h))</u>.<

18   she you (SGDIST) tell (CPAST) that the week next she must (IMP) not be (INF)

19		there
20		**she told you that n<u>ex</u>t week she wouldn't be <u>arou((h))nd</u>.<**
21	Mireille	Oui c'est <u>vrai</u>.
22		Yes it be (PRES) true
23		**Yes that's <u>true</u>.**
24	Mme E	Bon pis en <u>fait</u> ê part plu_{hhh}s.
25		Right well in fact she leave (PRES) [no] longer
26		**Right well in f<u>act</u> she's not leaving anymo_{hhh}re.**
27	Mireille	↑<u>BON</u>! alors donc elle joue /lundi.
28		<u>Good</u> so therefore she play (PRES) Monday
29		**↑<u>Good</u>! so she'll play on /Monday then.**
30		(0.4)
31	Mme E →	.hh ↑oui=enfin b<u>on</u> on veut pas non plus euh::::[:
32		.hh yes= still well we (IF) want (PRES) not no more uh [VERB+INF or QUE (that) +
33		subj clause]
34		**.hh ↑ yes= anyway/still we don't want to uh:::[(VERB or CLAUSE) either**
35	Mireille	[↑Mais <u>non</u>, >mais ça n'a
36		But no but that not have (PRES)
37		**[↑But <u>no</u>, >but it doesn't**
38		au<u>cu</u>ne import<u>an</u>ce< n- (.) .hh les g<u>o</u>sses a s'arr<u>an</u>gent tr<u>è</u>s tr<u>è</u>s bien
39		none importance n-(.) .hh the kids they (FEM)) arrange (REFL PRES) very very well
40		**matter at <u>all</u>< n- (.) .hh the k<u>i</u>ds they ma<u>na</u>ge v<u>e</u>ry v<u>e</u>ry well**
41		entr[e ellë:s

```
42                 between them[selves] (FEM)

43                 between the:m

44 Mme E           [Ah bon. pa'ce que: s[i l'au-

45                 Oh really because if the (SG) o-

46                 [Oh really. cuz: i[f the o-

47 Mireille                        [AH NON! .hh-

48                                 AH NO .hh

49                                 [Oh NO! .hh-
```

We may recall that Mireille has just been informed of Erica's availability on the day of the play and that Mireille understands this to mean that Erica will act in the play after all. The target unfinished turn at line 31 can be heard to be doing a display of what we may term 'other attentiveness', (i.e., of reluctance to be disruptive to others). This unfinished turn occurs in subsequent position. It responds to Mireille's upshot at line 27. This turn is, in turn, understandable by reference to a wider sequence beginning with '.hh oui' (.hh yes) in the second TCU of line 14[10]. There, Mme E initiates the business of the call, in effect telling Mireille something she already knows. Since one does not normally telephone people to tell them things they already know (Schegloff, 2007, Terasaki, 2004 (1976]), the second TCU of lines 14 and 17 is hearable as embodying a project other than informing. It is hearable as a pre-sequence (henceforth pre)[11], to which Mireille gives a go-ahead at line 21, clearing the ground for Mme E to produce, at line 24, the underlying action her pre projected: an informing that Erica has changed her plans and is now available. Mireille receipts this informing with an upshot at line 27 with which she displays her understanding of that of which she has just been informed[12]: Erica is

available to act in the play and will do so. To an extent, her turn is designed, through the emphatic '↑BON!' (good), the combination of the double upshot markers (alors donc) (literally, 'so therefore') and the downward intonation, as something taken almost for granted, given the new circumstances Mireille has been presented with. It is to this turn that the unfinished turn is responsive. Although Mme E accepts Mireille's understanding with 'hh ↑oui' (yes), her unfinished turn is not an embracing response to this upshot. Her response is mitigated by dispreferred features such as the pause at line 30 and 'enfin' (approximately 'anyway/still') (Pomerantz, 1984). Both what has been produced of the unfinished turn and the manner in which it has been produced suffice to project that Mme E is oriented to the possible negative impact of her daughter's change of plan. Irrespective of whether getting Erica to play had been her intention in informing Mireille of the new circumstances, her turn displays both attentiveness to others and her awareness of the possible consequences of her daughter's last-minute proposed involvement, which she designs as not to be necessarily taken for granted. In turn, Mireille produces a response to the unfinished turn that advances the project of the sequence in progress: a preferred fast emphatic disagreement issued in overlap at line 35, with which she rejects the possible disruption.

Thus, Mme E's unfinished turn is understandable by reference to the prior sequence having initiated a course of action (an informing) that was understood and responded to as such by Mireille. This unfinished turn is responsive to Mireille's own response to the informing. Further, the unfinished turn is also understandable by virtue of its occurrence *after* the business of the call has been dealt with, where agreement has been reached between the parties (Mme E has accepted Mireille's proposed upshot) and

where, potentially, closure of the call is possible. Without the prior local context that the prior turn and the prior sequence afford Mme E, such a turn would be hearable as grammatically and interactionally incomplete, since the matter to which it would have related, had it been produced in initial position, would have yet to arise. The point where interactional and social norms intersect may shed light on why Mme E selected such a turn format in that position when closure was an alternative.

Whilst the norms of conversation have brought a particular sequence to a place where it could be closed and would allow for closure of the call, its business having been addressed, social norms are such that, even by French standards, closing the call at this point may be heard as abrupt[13]. It could be done at the cost of inferences being made about Mme E being heard to be pushy, inconsiderate etc. Since interaction does not occur in a social vacuum, Mme E needs to be heard to show some awareness of the potential consequences of her daughter's change of plan and not to take her last-minute involvement for granted, if she is to avoid such inferences. In producing an unfinished turn, she is then able to register an awareness of, or even a concern about, the consequences of her daughter's actions, whilst not bringing the turn to completion by inviting her recipient to come in[14]. In the most vernacular of senses, Mme E is fishing for Mireille's disagreement[15]. Of course, inferences could also be made about Mireille, should she not come in with the preferred fast disagreement rejecting the strongly projected display of negative impact, as she would be heard to be tacitly agreeing with it.

Thus, it is the placement of the unfinished turn at a point of possible closure of a sequence that secured a favourable outcome that bestows upon the turn its understanding as doing a display of other attentiveness. It is also the placement of the unfinished turn in

subsequent sequential position, (that is, at a place that requires a response to the prior) that enables the turn to remain unfinished. The placement of unfinished turns in subsequent position can also be observed in excerpts [4] and [5] below.

[4] - [Chevalier: 6:10- Le Touquet]

(Etienne has telephoned his friend, Mireille. Amongst other things, they discuss Etienne's upcoming holiday in Arras, in the north of France. Mireille enquires as to which beaches may be nearby and where Etienne may go swimming. She proposes Boulogne as being nearby, towards which Etienne is noncommittal (data not shown). In turn, Etienne suggests Le Touquet, which is south of Boulogne)

321 Etienne   ºYa l'#<u>T</u>ouq<u>uet</u> ouss((h))iº,

322   There is 2PLREF too

323   **º There's l'# <u>Touquet</u> to((h))oº,**

324 Mireille   Tu ↑di:s?

325   You say (PRES)

326   **You were ↑sayin:g? / ↑Sorry:?**

327 Etienne   Le Touq<u>uet</u>.

328   2PLREF

329   **Le Touq<u>uet</u>.**

330   (0.5)

331 Mireille   ↑.HHAH PEUT-ETRE!=↑o::::h non=le ↓Touq<u>uet</u> c'est

332   .hhah maybe=oh no 2PLREF it be (PRES)

333   **↑.HHAH MAYBE!=↑o::::h no=le ↓Tou<u>quet</u> it's**

334   →   <u>va</u>ch'ment ↓plu:::s

335   very (COL) more [ADJ]

336   **a he̲ll of a lot ↓mo:::re [ADJ]**

337   (0.3)

338 Etienne   º Ouais b'h fi̲n bo̲n=Bou̲l/o:gneuh, º

339   Yeah well still well PLREF

340   **ºYeah we̲ll sti̲ll =Bou̲l/o:gneuh,º**

[5] - [Chevalier: 9:9- Rabbits]

(Fred has telephoned her step-mother, Karine, to say that she would be home that afternoon (line 17), as she

has decided not to go to the beach. Immediately after this, Fred tells Karine that she has some rabbits for

her)

17 Fred   ↓Donqueuh:: >on est là̲.< = par cont' j'ai tes /lapi̲ns.

18   therefore uh we (IF) be (PRES) there = by against I have (PRES) your (SG IF) rabbits

19   **↓Souh:: >we're at ho̲me.< = incidentally/by the way I have your /ra̲bbits./ some ra̲bbits for**

20   **you.**

21   (0.8)

22 Karine   ↑Ah d'accord,

23   Ah alright

24   **↑Oh alright,**

25 Fred   Hein?

26   M

27   **M?**

28 Karine →   Mm:. (.) [↑Ban bah j'les prend/raieneuh::=

29   Mm (.) Okay well I them take (FUT) uh [TIME/DAY]

30   **Mm:. (.) [↑ Okay well I'll take/collect them [TIME/DAY] uh::=**

Briefly, in excerpt [4], Etienne discusses with his friend, Mireille, the beaches that may be near Arras in the north of France where he is due to go on holiday and where he could go swimming. Mireille produces an unfinished turn (an adjective is not produced) at line 334. Although Mireille is having trouble with the 'le Touquet' at line 324, (possibly due to the heavy breathiness) which Etienne repairs with a clearer pronunciation (line 327), Mireille's unfinished turn occurs in subsequent position. It is responsive to Etienne's suggestion of 'Le Touquet'. Mireille initially considers 'Le Touquet' with 'hhah peut-être'(ah maybe) (line 331) and, following a realization ('↑o::::h non' (oh non), rejects it as not being nearby, indicating that it may be 'plu:::s' (more), most likely something along the lines of 'loin' (far). Etienne accepts this, although in a mitigated fashion with the pause at line 337 and the 'b'h f̲i̲n̲ b̲o̲n̲, approximately 'yes, well still'. The word 'B̲o̲u̲l̲/o:gneuh,', coming on the heels of this mitigated acceptance, as it does, and delivered with sound stretches and an emphasis on the first syllable that lend the word what can be described as a less than appreciative tone, sets up a contrast between Boulogne and Le Touquet and indicates that, whilst le Touquet may not be as close, his suggestion of it after Mireille's suggestion of Boulogne, had to do with the fact that the latter may not, in his eyes, be a suitable beach.

Eventually, it turns out that Mireille thinks Le Touquet is further from Arras than Boulogne and that Etienne rejects Boulogne on the basis of it being a major industrial port unsuitable for swimming. An unfinished turn in subsequent position is also

observable in excerpt [5]. Fred has telephoned her step-mother, Karine, to say that she would be home that afternoon (line 17), as she had decided not to go to the beach. This is followed, in the same turn, by an informing that Fred has some rabbits for Karine 'par cont' j'ai tes /la<u>pins</u>' (by the way I have your rabbits/some rabbits for you'). Again, the unfinished turn (which projects a temporal reference to come, e.g., tomorrow; the next time I come over) occurs in subsequent position. It is responsive to that informing, which Karine receipts as news (line 22) after a significant pause (presumably linked to the disjunctiveness of the informing with what immediately preceded it). In turn, Karine's unfinished turn at line 28 takes Fred's 'hein' as encouraging further talk. In this unfinished turn, Karine displays an understanding of Fred's informing as a possible request for collection/invitation to make arrangements for collection, which she addresses. They go on to discuss the price and weight of the rabbits and finalize arrangements for collection (data not shown).

In sum, in all the above cases, the unfinished turns occur in subsequent position in their respective sequences. It is the context provided by the prior turns and by the project that the wider sequences seek to perform that provides for the projectability and recognizability of the actions that the unfinished turns embody, in the face of the latter's grammatical incompleteness. Not completing a turn can, then, be understood as a locally managed resource that is fitted to the particulars of the talk in progress and that is built upon the context that the sequence has so far provided.

Unfinished Turns in Apparently Initial Position

Over 200 instances of unfinished turns were found in this corpus. All were found to occur in subsequent position. Cases of incompleteness other than unfinished turns (i.e., incomplete TCUs within otherwise complete turns) were also found. They are beyond the purview of this paper. Overwhelmingly, unfinished turns are receipted with responses that progress the projects of the sequences in which they are housed and there are interactional grounds for the occurrence of unfinished turns that can be explicated by reference to their placement. On occasions, however, there are cases that appear to deviate from the pattern outlined above. In these cases, unfinished turns seem to occur in initial position, i.e., to initiate a new course of action. Let us consider one such case.

[6]- [Chevalier: 9:7- Weather permitting]

(Karine has called her step-daughter, Fred, to ask whether she and her family would be home that afternoon. Fred's response is somewhat resistant (data not shown) and problematic for Karine who issues line 72)

72 Karine →   S[I: VOUS PARTEZ: euh::: tu:::,

73   If you (PL COLL) leave (PRES) uh you (SG IF) [S VERB (O)]

74   **I::[F YOU'RE LEAVIN:G uh::: you:::, [S VERB (O)]**

75 Fred   [(

76   (0.3)

77 Fred   Si ch'<u>pars</u> oh ↑nan si ch'<u>pars</u> ch'pars de bonne heu:re ↓et

78   If I leave (PRES) oh no if I leave (PRES) I leave (PRES) of good hour and

79   **If I do <u>leave</u> oh ↑no if I do <u>leave</u> I'll leave ear:ly ↓and**

80   je reviens vers euh:::: <u>vers</u> cinq /heures.

81   I return (PRES) towards uh towards five hours

82   **I'll be back around uh::: <u>around</u> five /o'clock.**

83   (1.4)

84 Fred   >↑C'à dire que dans la <u>soi</u>rée ch'rai <u>là</u>.<

85   it at say (INF) that in the evening I be (FUT) there

86   **>↑ that is in the <u>eve</u>ning I'll be <u>in</u>.<**

87   (0.6)

88 Karine   ptk ou::i. [(0.3) ban- a- (0.1)   ] hein?

89   ptk yes (0.3) okay a- (0.1) mm

90   **ptk ye::s. [(0.3) okay a- (0.1)   ] mm?**

In example [6], an unfinished turn occurs at line 72. It is one of Lerner's (1991, 1996) compound TCU formats (if X, then Y). As I noted, compound TCU are two part-structures that provide a grammatical juncture that recipients may use to enter, though they need not, an ongoing turn. In the example at hand, Fred does not take up this option. Karine only produces the first component of the compound TCU at line 72. She produces it as marked and treats it as potentially delicate through the use of multiple sound stretches on 'si' (if), 'partez' (are leaving), 'tu' (you) and 'euh' (uh)[16]. In response to this unfinished turn, Fred produces a full turn that includes a repetition, mutatis mutandis (i.e., allowing for the deictic change accounting for speaker change), of the preliminary component of the compound TCU. In other words, she builds her turn upon the resources

that Karine has made available in her prior turn and, in it, shows that she understood Karine to be addressing the time at which Fred would return, if she were to leave. The 1.4-second pause at line 83 (see Jefferson (1983) on a possible 'standard maximum' silence of one second in conversation) displays that the way in which Fred understood Karine's unfinished turn is somehow problematic. In the absence of uptake by Karine, Fred goes on to produce an increment that provides the upshot of her prior turn and shows how it was to be understood (line 84): she will be home that evening. The pause and Karine's hesitant 'ptk ou::i' (ptk ye::s) (line 88) indicate that this increment is also problematic for Karine. Again, as with previous examples, the unfinished turn receives a response showing that the recipient was able to acquire an understanding of the turn, despite its grammatical incompleteness and despite the possible ambiguity that might have arisen from Karine initiating a course of action with an incomplete turn. In initiating a course of action, Karine's incomplete turn begins a new sequence. In other words, at first glance, it may be said to occur in initial sequential position. Consideration of the data that precede the extract shows that the unfinished turn is, nonetheless, still understandable primarily by reference to its subsequent sequential position.

Pre-Sequences as Context

In this section, following a brief explanation of pre-sequences within the conversation-analytic framework, I will show that, to understand those unfinished turns that appear to deviate from the pattern reported above, the nature of the context that informs the occurrence and treatment of unfinished turns must include both the knowledge that participants have of the possible moves that are made relevant by, and

can be anticipated from, structures such as pre-sequences, and an orientation to such sequential routines[17]. Subsequent position is, then, not concerned solely with the position in which second parts of minimal sequences may occur, but also with the trajectory of a sequence and the structural format that a speaker selects to launch it.

Schegloff (1968, 1979, 1980, 1988, 2007) has emphasized in conversation-analytic terms the role of pre-sequences in prefacing different types of turns/actions (also see Levinson, 1983, for a detailed description)[18]. Pres are adjacency-pair sequences that are produced specifically to be preliminary to some (often quite specific) actions. A clear example can be seen with 'are you doing anything?', which is regularly understood to be a preliminary to an invitation (Schegloff, 1979, p.47, 1988, p. 58). A 'no' type response would constitute a go-ahead and the invitation may be issued in the next turn (e.g., 'do you want to go out tonight?). A 'yes' type response would block its occurrence, but a version of what the invitation might have been may then appear (e.g., I was going to ask whether you wanted to go out tonight). A 'why 'type response (hedge) makes a full response to the pre contingent upon the type of action that the pre projects. Thus, a pre is not just a turn (or a sequence) that comes before some other turn/sequence. It is a turn that occurs in a specific slot such that the occurrence of the main action that a pre-sequence projects (here the invitation) depends upon the response that the pre receives. In other words, sequential structures such as pre-sequences can be seen as evidence of 'interactive planning' due to the projectability they provide of future moves in the sequence (Drew, 1995; also see Streeck (1995) and Levinson (1995) for a discussion of the role of pre-sequences in the light of projection and planning). A range of actions/sequence types can be prefaced by pre-sequences, for example, pre-requests, pre-

offers, pre-announcements (Terasaki, 2004 [1976]), but an item such as a summons can also act as 'generalized pre' (Schegloff, 1968) in that it mobilizes the recipient's attention prior to the sequence which requires that attention[19]. Motivations for using pre-sequences include the avoidance of rejections/refusals (i.e., dispreferred responses in conversation-analytic terms) or the avoidance of less preferred sequences to follow (e.g., a pre-request may be a way of avoiding making a request by inviting an offer) (see Sacks, 1992, passim). In sum, a pre not only projects a main action/sequence, it also projects a slot for this action/sequence and, as I noted, it may also project the type of action that this main underlying sequence may seek to perform. With that in mind, I shall now consider in excerpt [7] the pre-sequence that preceded the unfinished turn at line 72 in example [6] and consider how the participants orient to the projection of a slot for this main action.

[7]- [Chevalier: 9:7- Weather permitting]

36 Karine →   ptk .hhhh est-ce que:: vous êtes <u>là</u> cet après-midi::¿

37   ptk .hhhh (INT) you (PL COLL) be (PRES) there this after-noon

38   **ptk .hhhh a::re you all <u>in</u> this afternoon::n¿**

39   (.)

40 Fred   Euh:::: <u>nor:</u>m- <u>peu:t-ê</u>t.=alors peut-êt que oui peut-êt que nan<<ça va

41   Uh norm maybe =so maybe that yes maybe that no=that go (PRES)

42   **Uh:::: <u>nor:</u>m- <u>may:be</u>.= so maybe yes maybe no<<it'll**

43   dépend' du <u>temps</u>. .hahhh

44   depend (INF) of the weather .hahh

45   **depend on the <u>weather</u>. .hahhh**

46 Karine ↑A:hh (.) ui.= nan c'est- c'est- c'est Céline qui deman:de,=

47 ahh yes=no it be (PRES) it be (PRES) it be (PRES) NAMEF who ask (PRES)

48 **↑O:hh (.) yes.= no it's- it's- it's Céline who is askin:g,=**

49 Fred = >Uais.< Si y fait beau euh::: si y fait beau on va à la /plage.

50 Yeah if it do (PRES) beautiful uh if it do (PRES) beautiful we (IF) go (PRES) at the

51 beach

52 **= >Yeah..< If it is ni::ce [weather] uh::: if it is nice we're going to the /beach.**

53 Karine Oui:[:,

54 Yes

55 **Yes:[:,**

56 Fred [Hein, si y fait pas beau on res:te¿ = donc ça va

57 okay if it do (PRES) not beautiful we (IF) stay (PRES)=therefore that go (PRES)

58 **[okay, if it is not nice we're stay:ing¿= so it's going**

59 dépend du temps.

60 depend (INF) of the weather

61 **to depend on the weather.**

62 Karine Uai:s¿

63 Yeah

64 **Yea:h¿**

65 Fred J'vais voir ça en début d'après-midi¿

66 I go (PRES) see (INF) that in beginning of after-noon

67 **I'm going to decide that in the early afternoon¿**

68 Karine Ban:.

69	Okay
70	**Okay:.**
71	(0.8)

As we saw, Karine produced an unfinished turn at line 72 in example [6]. Although it is the first part of a sequence that initiates an action, this unfinished turn is understandable by reference to the pre-sequence Karine issued at line 36 and the response it received. At line 36, Karine enquires as to whether Fred and her family will be home that afternoon. Fred's turn is not a definite response confirming whether she will be home or not. This may be heard as somewhat resistant. Whilst one anonymous reviewer of this paper argued that a 'it depends on the weather' type response does not prevent the main action projected by the pre from being issued, we note, however, that this response constitutes neither a straightforward go-ahead nor a clear block and that the turn immediately following the response to the pre (line 46) does not hearably produce this main action. It is interesting that, in this turn, Karine receipts Fred's information as news with 'a:hh' (oh) and delivers her next move as delicate. Through several self-repairs and with a continuing intonation projecting more to come, Karine accounts for why she is asking: she is asking on behalf of someone else. Telephoning someone simply for the sake of knowing their availability would be rather odd and Fred does not treat the asking on behalf of someone else as the action Karine's pre projected. In the remainder of the sequence, Fred produces an account of why it will depend on the weather (lines 49 and 56-59) (she may go to the beach, if the weather is nice) and indicates that she will make a

decision in the early afternoon (line 65), thus orienting to Karine's initial enquiry about her availability as leading up to something more. The sequence closes at line 68.

As I noted, a main purpose for a pre-sequence is to project that it is preliminary to some other main action. In the case at hand, the main action to which the pre-sequence is preliminary remains unclear by the time the pre-sequence closes. Did Karine (or Céline) want to visit Fred that afternoon? Did she/they want to request something from her? We do not know at that point. Thus, the relevance of that main action remains active and Fred may listen to Karine's ensuing talk for how it may constitute this main action. The pre-sequence having closed at line 68, there is now an ambiguity regarding whose turn it is and what is to be done in it, ambiguity which is reflected in the almost simultaneous start by both participants at lines 72 and 75. Karine takes the turn and takes up the issue raised in Fred's prior turn, that of Fred possibly going out[20]. As noted, this turn is incomplete and provides only the first component of a compound TCU. The slot that this incomplete turn occupies may be listened to for how it may be the underlying action to which Karine's pre was preliminary.

However, this unfinished turn at line 72 was interactionally generated, that is, it arose out of the interaction-so-far, rather than as a possible reason for the call, since it is built on Karine having been told in the course of the interaction that Fred may go out that afternoon and that she had yet to decide whether she would or not. Further, what is produced of this turn-so-far is somewhat insufficient to project unambiguously the kind of action that Karine may have intended. Karine may be enquiring about when Fred would be going out or may be heading towards asking Fred to let her know whether she would, in fact, be going out. Or she may be heading towards a different project

altogether. We do not know from the data available. What we do know is that the unfinished turn takes up the issue Fred raised in her prior turn (that Fred may be going out) and that Fred responds to it with what she understood Karine might have meant with her unfinished turn (lines 77-80): she provides an indication of when she is likely to leave and return, if she does indeed happen to go out that afternoon. Again, then, the unfinished turn is responded to 'appropriately' in the context in which it occurs. Fred displays an understanding of a grammatically-incomplete turn, an understanding that is fitted to, and derives from, the sequential development so far. Whether such an understanding is that which Karine had hoped for is another matter, which will remain unresolved. We note however that, despite Fred's response to the unfinished turn being fitted to the interaction-so-far, the long pause at line 83 shows that this response is in some way problematic for Karine, to the extent that Fred clarifies how her prior turn was to be understood: she will be home in the evening, if not necessarily in the afternoon. With this, Fred orients to Karine's initial enquiry about her availability and, in providing this additional information, displays that Karine may have had a reason for asking beyond simply wanting to know. Thus, in structural terms, although Fred's response has not completely blocked the occurrence of the main action the pre projected, the unfinished turn Karine does produce at line 72 is interactionally generated and not enough of it is produced to disambiguate fully whether this partial turn was going to be the beginning of that main action. A slot may present itself, but the ways in which what goes into it relevantly occupies that slot may not always be entirely clear (see Sacks, 1992). Nonetheless, both participants can be seen to use their knowledge of the structure of sequences to produce and make sense of the interaction.

As noted, despite Fred's response being fitted to the interaction and to the development of the sequence-so-far, this response is problematic for Karine. This can be seen not only in the long pause at line 83, but also in what happens next (extract [8]).

[8] - [Chevalier: 9:7- Weather permitting]

108 Karine → Si vous part^{hh}ez¿

109   If you (PL COLL) leave (PRES)

110   **If you are leavin^{hh}g¿**

111 Fred   M::¿

112   M

113   **M::¿**

114 Karine   Hhhahh £tu: passes un p'tit coup £d' <u>fil</u>¿   ((laughter at L114 sounds

115   Hhhahh you (SG IF) pass (PRES) a small blow of wire   like embarrassment))

116   **Hhhahh £ [can] you: give us a £<u>buzz</u>¿**

117 Fred   Ouais, d'ac[co((h))rd. je- je-

118   Yeah alright I I

119   **Yeah, al[rig((h))t. I- I-**

At the end of extract [6], someone calls Karine. The latter spends a few moments speaking offline to that person (lines 91-107, data not shown). She returns to the conversation with Fred (extract [8]) with a redoing of her prior failed attempt[21]. This time, however, she designs the redoing as the definite first part of a two-part structure inviting a show of understanding. Having received a continuer at line 111, Karine goes on

to produce the final component of her compound TCU (line 114). Her turn is clearly designed, and recognisable, as a request for Fred to telephone her and let her know her decision. With the laughter at line 114, Karine treats this request as a delicate one[22]. Fred grants the request at line 117. Again, whether this version was going to be the version of Karine's first try at line 72, we cannot be sure. What we do know is that this request was interactionally generated, that is, it emerged from what Fred said in the course of the interaction, rather than as the reason for Karine calling, and projects that some plan/action of Karine's may be contingent upon Fred being home and that she enquired about Fred's whereabouts for reasons beyond simply wanting to know. The main action that Karine's pre projected was, in fact, a self-invitation by Karine to visit Fred, which is only issued after the two women have addressed the issue, over several more turns, of when Fred will be home exactly. Fred shows she understood Karine's initial enquiry as leading up to some such action, which she readily accepts (data not shown).

Both the unfinished turn and its response are understandable by reference to an orientation to the nature of pre-sequences as providing a local context, one in which an underlying project has been invoked and a slot for a main action has been projected and made procedurally consequential (Schegloff, 1991a) for the way in which the pre-sequence is treated. The occurrence of a pre-sequence having set up the relevance of this main action, the recipient may, then, scan the talk for a place where it may occur such that, when that place is identified, the talk occupying it may be listened to for how it constitutes the projected main action or may be understood and treated as that action. It is the participants' knowledge of this context, that is, knowledge of the possible next moves that a pre may engender, that enables the talk following the pre-sequences to be listened

to, in the first instance, in the light of the 'routine' structural trajectories of pre-sequences, as Drew (1995) and Streeck (1995) note. In the example at hand, since none of the straightforward sequentially implicative responses (clear go-ahead or block) has been issued, Karine, as the producer of the pre-sequence, treats the slot which may be heard as that for her projected underlying action as a delicate one, which she opts to address with an unfinished turn. In spite of this, the response to the unfinished turn displays an understanding of what the recipient took it to accomplish. In sum, unfinished turns underline the participants' orientation to the sequential structure of talk, which, in turn, illustrates the fact that such turns are understandable *primarily* by reference to their systematic occurrence in subsequent sequential position.

In the present corpus, in all cases of unfinished turns occurring in sequences expanded by pre-sequences, the structural development and progression of the pre-sequences is problematic in some way. In each instance, this problematicity and the inability to proceed smoothly to a projected main sequence provide grounds for participants managing the trouble with unfinished turns. Typically, repair is the organization through which participants address problems of speaking, hearing and understanding the talk (Schegloff, Jefferson and Sacks, 1977, Schegloff, 1992, 1997, 2000), but, as this section showed, problems may not be restricted to understanding talk. They may also concern the lack of understanding of the sequential unit being deployed, where it properly begins and end and what may be an appropriate response to it. Schegloff (1991b, p. 164ff) shows that problems with the sequential status of talk may be addressed through third-position repair, with participants displaying an orientation to the organization of repair. The cases in this corpus suggest that not completing a turn may

also be one means in French conversation through which participants may address problems concerned with the sequential development of talk. Further, in the corpus, all the pre-sequences leading to unfinished turns are also regularly treated by their speakers as delicate. This should not surprise us since the very nature of pre-sequences is one that orients to the possibility of trouble. If the role of a pre-sequence is to prepare the ground for the most auspicious development of an underlying action, the pre-sequence speaker orients to the possibility that this underlying action may be rejected, if issued on its own[23]. In the present corpus, one way of taking this trouble into account interactionally may be to pursue this project by not completing one's turn. The latter is a resource that enables the speaker to register his/her orientation to the project in hand without fully verbalising the turn whose full production the problematic development of the pre-sequence has rendered troublesome. The cases in this corpus show that the apparently initial position in which some unfinished turns may appear to occur is not actually an initial one, but one that is informed by the presence of a pre-sequence that provides some context that 'sets the initial terms for conduct and interpretation in the next moments' (Schegloff, n.d., p. 12), a context that places the unfinished turn in subsequent sequential position and builds upon the knowledge that participants have of the normative development of sequences and the possible moves they project.

I noted at the outset that unfinished turns were found to embody a range of actions. To a degree, specifying the full range may be an unnecessary endeavor. Not completing a turn is *not* a practice that is used to accomplish a specific action[24]. Rather, it is a *resource* that is sensitive to the trajectory of the talk-so-far and to the manner in which its sequential structure has progressed. In other words, it is a resource that is

locally managed and that is locally sensitive to what has gone on in the talk and to the recipient for whom it is deployed.

Concluding Remarks

In this paper, I have considered the long reach of sequential structure and the ways in which it informs our understanding of unfinished turns. Particularly, I have considered the sequential positions in which unfinished turns occur in French conversation, the actions they may perform as well as the ways in which they display sensitivity to the particulars of the interactional contexts in which, and for which, they are produced. I have shown that unfinished turns were regularly receipted as appropriate types of turns to occur when and where they occurred and that they were overwhelmingly treated as coherent and as if they had been interactionally complete. That they are so receipted permitted an appreciation of the systematic nature of their environments of occurrence.

A focus upon the sequential placement of unfinished turns has revealed that the latter occur overwhelmingly in subsequent sequential position such that what occurs beforehand provides a context that informs the interactional grounds that motivate the occurrence of unfinished turns. The fact that unfinished turns are understandable by reference to their position in sequence was further underlined by their occurrence in apparently initial position. Where unfinished turns occur in apparently initial position, such position was shown to be, in effect, not the initial position in the sequence, that is, not the position for the turn that launched the sequence, but one that followed the occurrence of a pre-sequence. In this corpus, no unfinished turns were found to occur in

the environment of pre-sequences whose progression to the main action was entirely smooth. Instead, all occurred where the progression of the pre-sequences displayed some problematicity. On the one hand, pre-sequences were shown to provide a context that partially informed and shaped what was due to occur next. On the other, the trouble that afflicted the progression of the sequence provided both a rich context and interactional grounds to which participants were sensitive and that they opted to address by not completing some of their turns. Not completing one's turn was shown to be a resource that allowed participants to register the project that they were seeking to achieve, whilst not producing in full the turn that embodied that project. The non-completion of a turn revealed itself as a resource that is locally managed by participants, that is fitted to the particulars of the talk and that is used to perform various kinds of interactional work.

As part of this interactional work, I have shown that, whilst unfinished turns were not associated with any one action, the use of such a resource was part of doing the specific action embodied in the turn. Unfinished turns are not just incomplete sentences that can be disregarded because of their 'ungrammaticality'. They are a phenomenon that can only be understood by reference to sequential placement in conversation. They are also a resource that is used to accomplish interactional work fitted to the talk in progress. In this corpus, the systematic occurrence of unfinished turns can be explained neither by the actions they perform, nor by the topics that they address. Nor can unfinished turns be explained by the participants' sociodemographic characteristics or relationships. The nature of the context that enables us to understand unfinished turns is sequential. It is primarily by reference to the position they occupy that they can be understood.

This paper cannot end without a note about the composition of unfinished turns. Whilst sequential position is undoubtedly a major resource helping to project the interactional tasks that unfinished turns seek to perform, there is, nonetheless, a close relationship between the design of a turn and the action it performs. Sequential position does not solely account for the work that unfinished turns accomplish. The design of unfinished turns turns out to be no more random than their sequential placement. Speakers carefully select what goes in their turn and what is left out in the service of the project they seek to accomplish. Some of the compositional resources that speakers may use in designing their unfinished turns include syntactic configurations such as left dislocations/detachment, as in excerpt [9], reflexive verbs and their impact on the syntactic structure of a turn, as in excerpt [10], and the use of sound stretches and 'euh', which typically features in cases of unfinished turns.

[9] - [Traverso corpus - Gin]

70 C→ .h du ↑gin ça te::[:

71   .h of+the gin that you (SG IF) [CONJ VERB]

72   **.h ↑gin you [CONJ VERB] it**

[10]- [Chevalier: 9:8- Confusion]

118 Karine →   [Hahhh £↓Bvan. B'h euh:::£ ºc'est moi qui m'suis

119   Hahh okay well uh it be (PRES) me who [VERB] (REFL-CPAST)

120   **[Hahhh £↓Okay. W'll uh:::£ ºit's me who [VERB]) myself**

121 Laure   ºhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh

122 Karine → maleuh-º[.hhhh ºº hein¿ºº

123   badly uh .hhhh mm

124   **badly uh- º [.hhhh ºº mm¿ºº**

In the context of unfinished turns, syntax and turn organization can be seen to be carefully fitted to the sequential places for which they are invoked. These considerations must be explored to provide a more detailed and accurate picture of the ways in which unfinished turns are overwhelmingly treated as interactionally complete in this corpus. The composition of unfinished turns will form the basis of a subsequent paper.

In the introduction, I noted that, at first glance, there was nothing remarkable or notable about unfinished turns. Unfinished turns are a phenomenon that appears to be utterly banal. This may very well be, in one sense, the mark of their success as an interactional tool. Something as unnoticeable as an unfinished turn emphasizes the exquisitely subtle aspects of the organization of talk of which participants take note to bring off understanding. They enable us to notice what is usually 'seen but unnoticed' (Garfinkel, 1967, p. 180). Unfinished turns illustrate the fact that no detail of the organization of talk can be dismissed without analysis or treated as insignificant or inconsequential.

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Appendix A　　　　　**Transcription Conventions**

/	Forward slash marks a less marked intonational rise
\	Backward slash marks a less marked intonational fall
Ë	Marks that the sound /e/ that would normally be mute has been voiced or, if normally voiced, that it has been accentuated
Ŏ	Marks a pronunciation of /o/ that signals expressivity, mostly sympathetic and aligning
aver<u>ti:r</u>	Underlining with colons marks a stressed lengthened syllable
coins^{s}é	A superscript /s/ marks a whistling sound on /s/ or a lisp
plu$_{hh}$s	Subscript h within a word indicates a blowing exhalation. The more hs, the stronger the exhalation
#	Marks the onset of ingressive speech, (i.e., where inbreath infiltrates the speech). The more ##, the longer the ingressiveness
Bon/Ban/Bein	Variant transcriptions of 'bon' (good/okay) attempting to capture its differing pronunciations
Non/nan	Variant transcriptions of 'non' (no) attempting to capture its differing pronunciations

All other symbols not mentioned here are used in accordance with the Jeffersonian transcription system.

Appendix B   **Translation Abbreviations**

Where examples are given, the boldface marks the elements of interest.

CPAST/	Compound (two-part) past tense (e.g., ils **ont mangé**/they have eaten)
CPP	Compound Pluperfect (past) (ils **avaient mangé**/they had eaten)
IMP	Imperfect (past) tense (ils **mangeaient**/they were eating)
FUT	future (simple) tense (ils **mangeront**/they will eat)
COND	Conditional tense (ils **mangeraient**/they would eat)
PRES	Present (simple) tense (ils **mangent**/they eat/are eating)
SUBJ	Subjunctive mood (à moins que vous ne **soyez** pas là/unless you are not in)
IMPT	Imperative (**écoute!**/listen!)
INF	Infinitive (il va **manger**/he is going to eat)
P-INF	Past infinitive (infinitive verb + past participle) (contente d'**avoir fini**/happy to have finished)
REFL	Reflexive verb
PL COLL	Plural collective (2nd person plural pronoun 'vous' used to address a group) – its use does not indicate whether each person in the group is addressed individually with informal 'tu' or formal 'vous')
SG DIST	Singular distance (2nd person plural pronoun 'vous' used to address a single person marking a more distant/formal relationship)
SG IF	Singular informal (2nd person singular pronoun 'tu' used to address a single person marking intimate/informal relationship)
IF	Informal (used with 'on', it indicates that the 3rd person singular pronoun 'on' is used as an informal 'we' (as opposed to formal 'on' meaning 'one'))
STD	Standard (marks the use of the 1st person plural 'nous' (we) rather than 'on')
[VERB]	Bracketed words indicate unarticulated item(s) in unfinished turns
CONJ VERB	Conjugated verb
VERB	Verb
ADJ	Adjective
O	Object
S	Subject
FEM	Feminine gender
MASC	Masculine gender
PLREF/2PLREF	Place reference. Where the name is made up of more than one word, the number of words is indicated before PLREF
NAME/2NAME	Name of an entity (e.g., newspaper). Where the name is made up of more than one word, the number of words is indicated before

	NAME
NAMEF/2NAMEF	Name of a **female** person. Where the name is made up of more than one word, the number of words is indicated before NAME
NAMEM/2NAMEM	Name of a **male** person. Where the name is made up of more than one word, the number of words is indicated before NAME
VOC	Vocative
COL	Colloquial
PL	Plural
SG	Singular
INT	Interrogative form (not necessarily a question)
+	Marks concepts expressed together within the same word that require more than one word in English

Footnotes

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[1] Whilst unfinished turns are not specifically French, some aspects of the design of the turns reported here rely upon the distinctive grammatical resources that the French language affords. These grammatical aspects are reported in Chevalier (n.d.).

[2] The data has been transcribed using, for the most part, the Jeffersonian transcription system used within Conversation Analysis. Where necessary, it has been adapted. Modified or new symbols are listed in appendix A. The data are presented with two lines of translation, except for lines composed only of pauses, which have not been repeated. Translation symbols are listed in appendix B. The first line provides a literal word-by-word translation. The use of transcription symbols is limited in this first line to pauses, latches and cut-offs to assist the reader in locating words. All transcription symbols have been used in the second translation line, which provides a fluent English translation. Translation permitting, these symbols were applied to the equivalent sounds upon which they occur in French so as to give the reader a sense of the places where specific features occur. Word order has been preserved in the first translation line. It has been adapted to provide a fluent English translation in the second line. The first translation line also provides additional grammatical information in parentheses such as tense and number marking. In line with conversation-analytic transcription, an attempt has been made to capture the talk in a way that reflects how it sounds. This accounts for the variant renderings and non-conventional spellings of the same word, for instance, 'non (no) and its variants 'nan' and 'nah', 'bon' (good) and its variants 'ban', 'ben' or 'bah' (well) and its variants beh', b'h'. Discourse markers such as 'bon' have also been translated in ways that fit the interactional tasks they accomplish and the places where they occur. Thus,

'bon' has been translated both as 'good' and 'okay or 'hein' as 'uh' or 'mm'. See

Bruxelles and Traverso (2001) for a report of the diversity of tasks that 'ben' may be used

to accomplish. Finally, the type of items that is left unarticulated in unfinished turns is

indicated in square brackets in the two translation lines.

[3] For an overview of the opposing arguments concerning what context consists of, see the

Billig-Schegloff debate relating to the Conversation Analysis and Discourse Analysis

positions (1999). Also see Mandelbaum (1990/91), Wetherell (1998) and Blommaert

(2001).

[4] Unfinished turns are characterized by the presence of 'euh' (uh) and sound stretches.

There have been attempts in Psycholinguistics to address disfluent speech such as 'uhm'

and 'uh', although it tends to be treated as irrelevant, hindering comprehension, or as

associated with topic unfamiliarity (Arnold, Fagnano and Tanenhaus., 2003, Merlo and

Mansur, 2004, also see Brennan and Schober, 2001, Clark and Fox Tree, 2002, Bailey

and Ferreira, 2003 for treatments of disfluent speech). In Relevance Theory, Stainton

(1994, 1997, 2000) has addressed non-sentential or sub-sentential speech, relying,

however, upon isolated instances of elliptical sentences rendered out of context.

[5] Koshik (2002) identified DIUs as a pedagogical practice used by teachers in a

classroom setting to elicit self correction of written-language errors and to prompt the

students to correct the trouble source just before which the teacher's unfinished turn

stops. Lerner's (1991, 1996) anticipatory completions focused upon the compound TCU,

a turn format exhibiting a two-part structure in which the preliminary component

foreshadows and projects a final component. Examples include 'if X, then Y'. This turn

format affords a grammatically- and socially-provided place for 'conditional entry into

the turn space of another speaker' (1996, p.238). Entry into another's turn space is, however, conditional in that it is regularly confined, as is the case with word searches, to the provision of the item(s) continuing the turn-so-far, (i.e., the syntactic completion of the turn-so-far). Anticipatory completions are one way of doing affiliation with the compound-TCU speaker or of displaying alignment in conversation. They are also found in pedagogical settings with the same effect (Koshik, 2002, Lerner, 1995). Despite being deployed to accomplish different actions, DIUs and anticipatory completions share one similarity: the recipient provides a syntactic continuation of the disrupted turn. This is a major difference with the phenomenon under investigation. Unfinished turns are not pursued with syntactically-fitted continuations. Also see Schegloff (1996a) for analyses of non-sentential TCUs, and Diaz, Antaki and Collins (1996) on collaborative statement formulations.

[6] In the present corpus, the responses that unfinished turns receive tend not to be anticipatory completions (Lerner, 1991, 1996).

[7] Preference organization refers to a structural relationship between the parts of a sequence and to the alternative responses that the first part of a sequence may make relevant. Both preferred and dispreferred responses have their own structural features. Here, although the action performed by line 31 is not a self-deprecation, it has resonances with it as it, too, invites a preferred disagreement (see Pomerantz (1984) and Schegloff (2007) for a description of preference organization).

[8] 'Prior turn' does not necessarily refer to the immediately prior turn. Only systematic, detailed analysis will reveal the relationship that exists between turns. Further, subsequent position is not equivalent to second position. Whilst it is true that many

unfinished turns occur in second position in a sequence, (i.e., mostly as second pair

parts), they can also occur in other subsequent positions such that subsequent position is

to be understood as non-initial position in sequence.

[9] An adjacency pair can be expanded in all its axes: before the first pair part with a pre-

sequence, between the parts of the main sequence with an insertion sequence, and after

the second pair part with a post-expansion sequence (see Schegloff (2007) for examples).

I will turn to pre-sequences in a subsequent section of this paper.

[10] The first TCU of line 14 brings the problem of identification that has occupied most of

the talk since the beginning of the call (Mireille mistaking Erica's mother for Erica) to an

end, whilst the 'oui' (yes) in the second TCU responds to the question Mireille asked at

the beginning of the call, 'c'est toi Erica qui a app'llé?' (is it you Erica who called?) (data

not shown).

[11] As pre-sequences are discussed in detail in this paper, the reader is referred to the

section 'pre-sequences as context'. Briefly, however, the status of lines 14-17 as a pre is

related to Mme E mentioning something Mireille already knows and to the past tense on

'dire' (to tell) with which the turn projects that it is contrastive with what is to come. See

Schegloff (1980, 1988, 1990, 2007) as well as Terasaki (2004 [1976]), for pre-sequences.

[12] This is reminiscent of Drew's (1984) reportings in invitations in which speakers

produce a reporting, but not its upshot, which the recipient is left to find for him/herself.

[13] Vernacular characterizations of French culture regularly focus upon issues of

argumentativeness, rudeness, bluntness. For example, one recent survey reported in the

British broadsheet newspaper *The Guardian,* regarding the way in which other European

nations viewed the French, listed arrogance, rudeness and disobedience as three of this

nation's top five characteristics. Elsewhere, I will show that a) differences in the ways in which people mobilize and adapt interactional structures and resources in culturally-sensitive ways may partly account for cultural perceptions and b) that misunderstanding may emanate partly from differing interactional styles.

[14] I can only register here that the organization of turn-taking (Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson, 1974), along with the sound stretch and the 'euh', contribute to this invitation.

[15] The term 'fishing' is used vernacularly here and is not meant to refer to the practice by the same name described by Pomerantz (1980).

[16] Bergmann notes that '...the delicate and notorious character of an event is constituted by the very act of talking about it cautiously and discreetly' (Bergmann, 1992, p.154). The features of delicacy identified in English talk include markers of hesitation such as 'hum, uh', sound stretches, cut-offs, pauses (Pomerantz, 1984, Schegloff,1996a). It appears that they may also be used in French to similar ends. Also see Schegloff (1980) for pre-pres acting as pre-delicates and Silverman (1994) for practices involved in the production and management of delicate items by counsellors and their patients.

[17] This is not to say that pre-sequences develop in a fixed manner, but, rather, that participants orient to the possible normative development of such sequences and the moves they project. In this respect, pre-sequences are sequential routines that may be said to display some element of interactive planning. See Drew (1995), Streeck (1995) and Levinson (1995) who take up this theme in Goody's edited collection of essays. Also see Heritage (1990/1).

[18] For a contrastive account of the types of sequences at hand from the perspectives of both Speech Act theory (indirect speech acts) and Conversation Analysis (pre-sequences),

see Schegloff (1988) who argues that, in focusing upon the relationship between the form of an utterance and its function (indirection), Speech Act theory misses the sequential context in which pre-sequences occur. Levinson (1983) also provides an analysis of indirect speech acts from a conversation-analytic perspective. Also see Cooren (2005) for an exposition of the ways in which Speech Act theory may contribute to the understanding of pre-sequences, if one goes beyond the notion of indirection.

[19] A particular type of pre-sequence is the pre-pre (Schegloff, 1980), a pre-sequence that allows some preliminary element pertinent to the projected sequence to be established, typically a pre-mention or a pre-condition, before the sequence projected by the pre-pre is articulated. It is preliminary to a preliminary, not to the main action itself, and commonly takes the form of 'can I ask you a question', 'can I make a suggestion' etc.

[20] The structural features of the talk suggest that Karine may have a primary claim over the next turn. Karine has made the call. She has initiated the pre, with which she has projected an underlying action. She has also closed the sequence at line 68. The next turn is also a place where a main action may occur.

[21] See Schegloff (1987b, 1996a) for examples of how reusing the same words can constitute redoing the same action.

[22] See Jefferson (1984) for ways in which laughter may be used in talk about troubles, and by extension, in delicate talk.

[23] In the case of pre-announcements/tellings, this can clearly be observed in the fact that the announcement itself is vulnerable to repair, if issued without a pre, as can be seen in the response provided to the announcement that was delivered 'neat' in the first line of the following example.

[TG, 18:34-19:28]

Bee: Oh Sibbie's sistuh hadda ba:by bo:way.

Ava: Who¿

Bee: Sibbie's sister.

Ava: Oh really?

Bee: Myeah,

Ava: [°(That's nice.)/[°(Sibbie's sistuh.)

See Schegloff (n.d.) about the pre-knowness and the 'on-delivery recognizability' (p. 33)
of tellings.

[24] For a clear example of a practice used to accomplish one type of action, see Schegloff's
(1996b) work on confirming allusions.