# Interactional structures and engagement in service encounters: An investigation into communication at the hotel front desk

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## Abstract

The main aim of the study was to explore the specifics of communicative behaviour at the hotel reception that establish the institutional character of the interaction to accomplish a service encounter. The hotel provides a unique environment for research related to global communication and questions of politeness usage. Investigating conversations between hotel receptionists and their guests was used to demonstrate how interdisciplinary approaches can further knowledge in a globalised world order.

Nine and a half hours of naturally occurring interactions between receptionists and guests were videotaped in four hotels in three European countries (England, Germany and Spain). The analysis was conducted using Conversation Analysis (CA) as the primary method and enriched through the use of ethnographic notes. CA was used to show how normative social structures are invoked in service encounters at the hotel front desk. Ethnographic insights provided additional evidence for how the interactions are anchored in the social reality.

The findings suggest that conversations at the front desk are highly structured and possess features similar to institutional and mundane interactions. Conversations were classed into three phases (arrival, stay and departure), each of which has observable and robust interactional features. It is proposed that an effective encounter between hotel guest and receptionist is not solely reliant on a particular structure. Instead, the results indicate that a very specific amount of engagement by both the service provider and the customer is required. Thus, following the tradition of CA, it is demonstrated how precisely participants can organise their talk and behaviour according to a mutual preference of both guest and receptionist. The analysis showed that miscommunication occurs infrequent in these service encounters. Furthermore, intercultural notions are seldom made relevant in talk by participants.

The study contributes to knowledge in interactional, service encounter and tourism related literature. The findings also have implications for practitioners in the tourism industry.

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# Acknowledgements

*Under the comb, the tangle and the straight path are the same.*

*Heraclitus*

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# Author's declaration

I declare that this thesis is a presentation of original work of which I am the sole author.

This work has not previously been presented for an award at this, or any other university.

All sources are acknowledged as references.

# Chapter 1: Introduction

Engagement in conversation is an essential part of interpersonal interactions and provides one of the components in building relations between individuals. Havener (2013) refers to rapport as "the most beautiful connection[1]" between two people (p. 27). To Valdesolo and DeSteno (2011), rapport in social interactions acts as "a dynamic marker of affiliation" (p. 262) which can facilitate interpersonal compassion and altruistic behaviours. Travelbee (1963) understands rapport as the holistic expression of the fundamental basic beliefs a person holds about themselves and others which is expressed as "a non-judgemental attitude and respect for each individual as a unique human being" (p. 70). Interactional engagement is closely related to polite and courteous behaviour in that it has a 'tacit valance' regarding implicit norms which are carried across individual conversations (Eliasoph, 1987). These norms and behaviours are socially constructed (Holmes, 2012). While politeness is a well-researched but contested concept (Brown & Levinson, 1987), other forms of interactional engagement remain in the background in numerous societal contexts (Alison, Alison, Noone, Elntib, & Christiansen, 2013). Like politeness, any other form of affiliation and engagement in speech is co-constructed by participants through language and embodied behaviours. Aspects of the setting of an interaction, language and the speaking parties are salient in conversations (Edwards, 2012).This thesis combines Conversation Analysis (CA) with ethnographic observation to produce a rich but structurally sensitive account of rapport-in-interaction (Moerman, 1988), focusing on types of engagement individuals produce. Such reflection of traditional frameworks can be found in various disciplines across the humanities and social sciences leading to a critical turn (Kubota, 2012).

Literature and data are brought together through an appropriate framework. For this study, a complex social situation was chosen which comprises a number of epistemological positions in the literature. These literatures all present compelling evidence on valid and reliable measures which have been considered for this study to utilise an appropriate framework for its aims (Halloran, 1997). Data in the social sciences acts as a means of empirical evidence. Here, Conversation Analysis (CA) provides more than a methodology, but rather a specific frame (Stokoe, 2012). The analysis of the data is deeply rooted in CA literature, but allows other relevant literature to be used. Some combinations of different perspectives can be subtle but effective, as demonstrated by Rawls (1989) who attempts a theoretical bridge between Goffman and Sack's interpretation of society. Goffman (1983) beautifully portrays the interaction order in

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[1] my translation

society on various levels. Through the establishment of conventions in communication, interactants establish a level of conversational convenience. More specifically, for Goffman, courtesy in service is directly related to quality. His perception of the order of service is consistent with writers in the tourism industry (Bove & Johnson, 2002; Ford & Heaton, 2001). Such observations have been viewed as "common" or naïve and not based on empirical investigation (Lashley, 2002). Goffman's (1983) emphasis is placed on the notion that everything we do with language is relevant.

CA allows for investigation of naturalistic interactions, but substantiates any conceptualisation with empirical evidence. CA proposes that human interaction is orderly (Schegloff, 2007). Mundane interactions follow a particular order, much of which is shared with organisational communication, albeit with a few particularities in which routine is constructed time after time (Drew, Chatwin, & Collins, 2006; Drew & Heritage, 1992a; Heritage, 2006a). One of the aims of this thesis is to demonstrate how CA is a useful and appropriate framework to be incorporated into the knowledge base of other disciplines to generate interconnected understandings about society and communicative practices. Service encounters provide a point of access to interactions in which mundane life and institutional order connect. CA utilises natural conversations as data which allows for this interconnection to be investigated through the methodology. Over the last few decades, CA has developed a comprehensive library about orderliness in interactions, not only in English, but increasingly in other languages as well (Kerbrat-Orecchioni, 2006; Kurhila, 2004b; Placencia, 2004). It is the detailed insight into social interactions that CA provides that can make it a valuable contribution to research in other social disciplines by coordinating and aligning knowledge. The aim is to create new understanding by using established literature in various adjacent disciplines to fill in gaps between specialised research in one area and taken-for-grantedness (or lay experience) in another. Business studies as specialised area of research on hospitality and tourism provides the context for the study and with it the relevant expert knowledge. Interactional research establishes communicative behavioural patterns across different contexts. Understanding interactional engagement and how it is constructed in action, the concept is situated within a broader literature, encompassing CA and communication studies. In this, micro interactions as exemplified in service encounters are situated within a study of global context and international aspects of communication.

Communication studies, in which this project is situated has held an interest in human interactions and their social reality from its inception half a century ago (Berger & Chaffee, 1987). However, from its inclusive nature, communication studies became an independent discipline through defining its academic boundaries. With a changing social world (Blommaert,

2010), so have epistemological ideas been reassigned to communication and its understanding (Tranfield & Starkey, 1998; von Krogh & Roos, 1995). Still, the international outset of communication studies can be also found in other areas of enquiry (Coupland, 2003). As such, an interdisciplinary perspective on communication is nothing new, but rather a return to the original outset of the field (Shepherd, 1993). Urban environments are changing and becoming more and more diverse (Gumperz & Cook-Gumperz, 2012). In interactive scenarios in which cultural assumptions are shared, underlying motivations are likely to stay implicit and remain unnoticed (Gumperz & Cook-Gumperz, 2012; Tannen, 2012). It is thus intercultural conversations that can make explicit those phenomena that would otherwise not be observable. Common textbooks on culture are often derived from various disciplines like communication or psychology as well as business and management studies which commonly disregard language and interactions (Beamer & Varner, 2001; Samovar, Porter, & McDaniel, 2009). Here, cultural anthropology is commonly viewed as highly influential in the initial development of cultural awareness (Asgary & Walle, 2002). An understanding to what other disciplines make of social reality is understood as important for advancing interdisciplinary studies: Business is a highly communicative and collaborative activity that can only be effectively coordinated through the use of language, a matter which is foregrounded in the present study (Hooker, 2012; Piller, 2012). For Hooker (2012), business provides an ideal scenario for observing "a culture in action" (p. 389), because cultural specifics are most likely to become apparent in situations where its resources are most relevant to the speakers. Piller (2012) emphasises that the occurring discourses are to be placed in the "context of globalisation" (p. 12) and its key sectors in the new world order. Globalisation and concerns for the micro-order have been treated as conflicting due to their scopes of interest (Peters, 2003). Globalisation is commonly associated with integration in terms of economic (flows of capital) and cultural (new communications technology) processes, whereas point of a micro-ordered identity evoke concepts such as community or solidarity (Peters, 2003). Despite such apparent contradiction, global interactions have been described as complex and overlapping in their effects (Appadurai, 1990). Macleod (1999) states rather boldly that the tourist in this sense "personifies globalisation" (p. 445). So while intercultural enquiry can be observed in tourism (Piller, 2012), the reverse can also be argued by seeing tourism as culturally determined and deeply-rooted within history (Macleod, 1999). As argued, tourism has become an integral part of modern societies, making it an ideal place of context for multidisciplinary inquiries (Holden, 2005).

Observable forms of engagement in conversations are used in this study to investigate how speakers navigate and decode communication in a specific setting, at the hotel front desk (Canagarajah, 2012; Piller, 2012). Access to the global from the local (e.g. diversity of goods) is

often taken for granted in the Western world and may be seen as a manifestation of complex economic connection (Boyd-Barrett, 1997; Giddens, 1993), as much as international communicative competences (Galtung, 1999; McPhail, 2002). Sociolinguistics has acknowledged the increase of international and intercultural connections and has provided avenues for researchers to investigate interactions accordingly (Coupland, 2011). Established literature allows now for a fine-grained microanalysis of a particular phenomenon. Piller (2012) identifies tourism and service work as suitable discourses for investigation. In an interconnected world, touristic endeavours provide a prime example of people interacting for different reasons and different purposes (Urry, 2007). But tourism is not only a social, but also an economic phenomenon. Even in times of economic downturn, tourism has continued to grow and to contribute to the world's diversification. According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), tourism matters and provides economic and employment benefits not only for the tourism industry, but also for many other related sectors (UNWTO, n.d.):



*Figure 1: The importance of tourism: from UNWTO (n.d.)*

Tourism represents an important part of the world's economy, including a multitude in interpretations and executions of "doing tourism" (Dann & Cohen, 1991; Urry & Larsen, 2011). Here, a hotel provides something akin to a naturally occurring laboratory where parties with particular attributes made relevant in different bodies of literature accessed for this project are – to a degree – forced to interact with each other, making them observable (Ogle, 2009; Veal, 1997).

Authors like Jaworski and Pritchard (2005) emphasise the "contested nature of discourse" (p. 4) which has led to allow for multiple realities to exist within a singular project. Social life is approached as a process that is prone to change and transformative energies (Badillo & Proulx, 2006; Swyngedouw, 2004). If communication is changing to match requirements of globalisation

and internationalisation, so do the competences required. These may include technological competence, cultural competence (includes awareness of genres and expectations) and linguistic competence (congruent linguistic messages with interacting parties) (adapted from Blommaert & Omoniyi, 2006). These aspects are investigated in this study. Although there is often as expectancy for an international standard in international communication, the actual exported conversational style is not necessarily the same or tied to a specific language (Braselmann, 2002; Hultgren, 2011). Communication studies require an approach to account for interactants' individual behaviours to discover and establish behavioural patterns. With its flexible methods, a discipline like sociolinguistics has the ability to begin to explain how phenomena are interconnected both on a macro and micro scale (Blommaert, 2003). The new economy in a globalised world consists of obstacles and opportunities for researchers (Heller, 2003). Knowledge is approached as socially constructed through experiences that are shared an that have the power to change practices in a given context (Machin & Leeuwen, 2003). Globalisation is understood as a force for ever-increasing mobility in economic terms, but mostly of people (Thurlow & Jaworski, 2003) and is regarded for this study as a notion which has shaped the social context under investigation, rather than an analytic focus. Boyd-Barrett (1997) terms globalisation a 'marked' concept which naturally asserts a connection between bodies of literature:

> 'globalisation' asserts the global-in-the-local, that is to say that the local is suffused and pervaded by a global which simultaneously extracts and selectively disseminates the local (p. 15)

## 1.1 Aim and scope of the study

Halloran (1997) argues for communication research to be treated as "not a game for remote academics engaged in research for the sake of research" (p. 29), but as an opportunity for a critical dialogue between scholars and practitioners. It is here that the principal thesis of the present study is situated: insights into a locally created global now across communicative interests and planes. The study's design is set in a hotel and as such against a tourism background, a site that Bell (2012) refers to as a "lens" of modern society. A hotel brings actors with different background, as much as differing interactional goals together creating a communicative "bubble" (Cohen, 1972; Jacobsen, 2003). The naturally occurring conversations are analysed within an overarching interactional project (Robinson, 2006), the overall stay of a guest in a hotel and categorised into individual phases and associated, observable patterns of communicative behaviour.

The present study examines naturally occurring interactions between receptionist and guest, and focuses on the conversationally refined communication practices in play in the

situation at the hotel front desk. Some of the literature in hospitality is concerned with top-down communication practices where communicative behaviour is prescribed in organisational settings (McColl-Kennedy & White, 1997). The aim of this project and the analysed data is to show that such top-down approaches are unable to describe the reality of interactions in that setting and to provide evidence in the form of observable communicative patterns. In other areas, the literature proposes that receptionists use trial and error practices in learning to communicate effectively (Thomas, 1997). The present study looks at how communication works at the front line, describing social reality. Therefore, one of the outcomes of the study is to establish "best practice" in interactions as they are observable and detectable in actual interactions. The patterns found through CA analysis can address what is to be treated by participants as desirable in an interaction.

The literature confirms that there has been a long standing fascination with guest / staff relationships which have long been reported to exist (Cohen, 1972), and is something that needs to be managed for a particular economic, but also interpersonal outcome (Atilgan, Akinci, & Aksoy, 2003). There is no apparent interest in the literature to address service encounters in naturalistic settings as they are produced and reproduced, that is how and to what purpose conversations are conducted sociolinguistically over the course of a guest's stay. However, this study comprises a corpus that is able to show how language is used to position the talk and thus the nature of the talk and the relationship in a particular instance in regards to engagement between participants. The terms provide the overall frame, with CA set as the overall framework.

## 1.2 Methodological framework

According to Halloran (2000) communication literature has not yet established a cohesive concept of value. Halloran notes that what constitutes value for one person may well be a set of beliefs, attitudes or a mere opinion to others. The present study aims to return to the original comprehension of communication as a science in which the social sciences aim to work together in explaining the social world (Berger & Chaffee, 1987). Although this study has been designed for a particular intent, some outcomes and results are applicable and could be rephrased into a teachable and learnable content (Clark, 1993). The present study uses naturally occurring conversations as the basis for analysis (cf. CARM (McCabe & Stokoe, 2010)). The analysis does therefore not need to utilise invented scenarios as is frequently done in research designed to develop international training programmes (Beamer & Valentine, 2000; Bhawuk & Brislin, 1992). The corpus collected for the study contains a collection of diverse conversational instances which illustrate the richness of communication at the hotel front desk while maintaining a coherent data corpus: different hotels, different countries, different receptionists/different guests,

different levels of experience/ different reasons for traveling, and differing languages. The analysis demonstrates that this is not a fragmented corpus, but rather a cohesive picture of the social environment as a whole. This is the main aim of the analysis in this thesis: to provide an insightful portray of the international frontline service interactions in the hotel industry.

In addition to the recorded corpus, extensive field notes were collected on site. The ethnographic material is used to engage with the context of the naturalistic data. The study conducts a detailed analysis of interactions through a microanalysis of the collected data in the context of their production. CA's engagement with data is an iterative process through which observable patterns are established. The resulting research questions were designed to aid this process to ground the present study firmly in the literature. International communication literature is concerned with diverse subjects, such as cultural, economic, political, social and technical aspects of communicative patterns (McPhail, 2002).

## 1.3    Research Questions

### 1.3.1    Macro Research Question
What is the overall structure of interactions at the hotel reception that establishes the institutional character of a service encounter?

## 1.4    Subordinate Questions
What are the sequential structures that coordinate the overarching intra-sequential project into individual encounters?

What are the main sequence types in the individual phases (arrival, stay, departure) of the overarching interactional project?

What are the main communicative behaviours that accomplish the encounter structures?

What are the particularities in communicative behaviour and how do they progress in engagement over the course of the total stay?

What are emerging patterns of interactional engagement in the language that are not bound by individual hotels, cultures or border boundaries?

## 1.5    Structure and overall organisation of the thesis
*Chapter 2: Background/Context*

The chapter situates the study within a macro-, meso- and micro-context in the literature on global tourism through communication to service encounters. It describes the necessity of why the literature needs to be extended to include the detailed analysis of service interactions as they

occur at the hotel front desk. It is shown how tourism provides an insufficient framework and that analysis should be shifted to include an emphasis on social and geographical mobility. This includes a focus in investigations on behaviour, language and interaction as they relate to the intercultural and institutional context of the hotel reception.

*Chapter 3: Literature Review*

The review of the literature shows through the use of theoretical and empirical work the operational paradigms that are commonly used to address international and asymmetrical interactions as can be found in a hotel setting. The review pieces together literature that is often treated as individual entities. Communication and business research is demonstrated to provide valiant work contingent on each other. It is shown that interdisciplinary approaches to the study of interaction are now possible because of the relative maturity of the literatures involved. The argument is made that in order to successfully conduct an interdisciplinary project, the use of an established framework is necessary. The potential of Conversation Analysis as such a framework is established.

In the second part of the literature review, it is demonstrated that CA is a useful framework for this study. The chapter shows how CA has developed and recent applications that have been made which render the framework useful in investigating interactional environments that although they may have been addressed before in the literature provide a somewhat novel angle on the subject. Both literature on mundane and institutional interaction is reviewed to address the notion of "commercial hospitality" central to the study. In addition, more recent developments of CA as applied in other disciplines as well as the usage of CA on languages other than English and interlanguage developments are reviewed.

*Chapter 4: Methodology*

This chapter details the data collection process to study front desk interactions in hotels and explains the different aspects of the interactional data that will be analysed and how they will be integrated. The strategy was constructed to account for a sense of sensitivity to the needs of the hotel owners, and the requirement to not undermine the normal practices of the service encounter. In turn, these methodological strategies were informed by a broader ethnographic approach to the service encounter, which saw the researcher integrated into the 'normal' running of the hotel. The combination of ethnography and interactional analysis is therefore a key foundation for the study.

*Chapter 5: Analysis I – Arrival Sequences*

The first analytic chapter is dedicated to what is being called "arrival sequences". This chapter addresses sequences in the corpus that are concerned with hotel guests "checking in". It is established that for some hotels in the corpus, "checking-in" is the only mandatory interaction between guests and receptionists. As such, there is a particular status attached to the interaction that makes patterns of behaviour much more apparent in various regards. Based on the literature review, the analysis begins with the establishment of "effectiveness and efficiency" in service encounters at the hotel front desk. In a first part, the overall structure of sequences is introduced. Similarities and differences to established CA literature, like doctor-patient interactions are shown. Furthermore, three canonical examples of "doing check in" are introduced and are discussed in detail that show that there exists a "spectrum of engagement" in activities that are conducted at the hotel front desk check in. It is concluded that there is very particular and very observable pattern of how effective and efficient encounters are structured in terms of engagement activities. The analysis also shows examples of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in a hotel check in as observed in the corpus. Here, it is shown that proposing a new topic is usually not successful if done so by the guest.

*Chapter 6: Analysis II – Stay Sequences*

The second chapter addresses interactions that belong to "stay sequences". Those interactions that take place while a guest is staying at the hotel are not mandatory in any of the hotels observed. Therefore, the interactive structure is very distinctive to what has been discussed in the first analytic chapter. As a result, sequences are different to what has been addressed in the institutional CA literature. Instead, it is noticeable that interactions take on the form of request sequences. Three forms of requests are established: requests (for information, services or goods); pre-complains; and complaints. In light of the data collection, sensitive or upsetting conversations (to guest and/or receptionist) were not recorded. Therefore, this chapter only describes in detail request and pre-complain sequences. However, the ethnographic knowledge of the researcher allows for the establishment of the third category, complaints, in order to make distinctions between behaviours and their patterns observed.

Continuing from the first analytic chapter, what constitutes negotiated effectiveness and efficiency is redefined for Stay sequences. It is discovered that interactions during a guest's stay are handled in a very cooperative way. The majority of the corpus in regards to these sequences is therefore found in requests. The analysis develops how interactants use interactional engagement to manage their conversations in a way that is beneficial to any future communicative incident.

Pre-complaints are introduced as result of ethnographic knowledge and investigate situations in which participants pre-empty a potential conversational threat by claiming to be about to make a complaint. It is shown in the analysis, however, that participants negate the complaint making by employing request making strategies in their interaction instead. Since complaints, service failures and other communicative mishaps are of central interest to previous literature, the chapter concludes with ethnographic observations on complaining behaviour.

*Chapter 7: Analysis III – Departure Sequences*

The last analytic chapter addresses "departure sequences". In some hotels in this corpus, "checking-out" is a mandatory activity, in others it is not. "Checking-out" stands in direct relation to the activity of "checking in", so the first part of this chapter describes similarities and differences between the two activity sequences. It is shown that even though the overall structure seems to be nearly identical, there are very clear distinctions between what is done in the interactions. Again, what is treated as effective and efficient is different to the previous chapters and is redefined for the purposes of this last chapter. The analysis shows that unlike in arrival sequences, guests have the opportunity to propose new topics. It is developed how interactional engagement activities govern this incident of final departure and how leave-taking is negotiated between participants.

*Chapter 8: Discussion*

This chapter summarises the main findings developed in the three analytic chapters, introducing conceptual models for each of them and discusses how the three phases of a guest's stay form a coherent interactional whole. The chapter combines the individual findings to an extended analysis across the individual phases developing the overarching interactional project. Tourism is confirmed as a relevant area of study in today's social world. It demonstrates that a micro-analysis of speech is connected to its macro context, creating "a global now". The chapter utilises the ethnographic field notes to deepen the analysis and develops the implications of the methods employed for the study.

*Chapter 9: Conclusion*

This chapter summarises the main findings and presents an overview of them. The chapter also targets the limitations for this study and makes suggestions for future research. These include further engagement with the existing corpus as well as prospective studies employing a new or different corpus. Although CA is commonly not used to make behavioural implications, some recommendations and suggestions of how the results of the study could be used or adapted to

address organisational behaviour is made for application in the real world. Implications are provided for contributions to the service encounter literature in general, the hotel industry and the study's contribution to CA and talk in German.

# Chapter 2: Background and Context

## 2.1 Aim of this chapter

This chapter addresses the epistemological background to the study. It develops the connection between time and space as a human experience, and positions language-in-interaction as the main resource in organising practices (Thurlow & Jaworski, 2014). Concepts and definitions extend from two distinctive concerns: *situational conventions*, rituals and conventions observed within the discourse represented in the corpus and accessible through micro-analysis; and *conventional situations*, institutional reasoning and practicalities for *why* social reality in this context presents itself the way it does, deduced from ethnographic study. Conventional situations are found in the perseverance of *organisations* in everyday life (Grey, 2013); situational conventions in the understanding the way that language and communication is used for the *organisation* of everyday life and its accompanying social activities (Fineman, Gabriel, & Sims, 2010). Despite a growing maturity in the literature on these distinctive views of organisation, the "cross-fertilisation" (Grant & Iedema, 2005, p. 38) between the corresponding fields remains limited: institutional and mundane contexts of conversations have been addressed with a focus on language within CA, but with a disregard for it in intercultural communication studies. A major contribution of this study is the productive combination of these approaches. This chapter details the conceptual context and background terminology which is utilised throughout the study.

## 2.2 The social sciences and tourism

Tourism studies, and particularly research on hospitality, are recent developments (Baum, 1997; Echtner & Jamal, 1997; Franklin & Crang, 2001; Pearce, 1993; Ritchie, 1993). Provenance for its establishment has come from various fields and epistemological difficulties remain. In addition, scholars have begun to use tourism as a setting for research within their own discipline (e.g. Cruz, 2015; Fernández-Amaya, Hernández-López, & Blitvich, 2015). Such a focus may largely be anticipated, since sciences establish new sub disciplines with particular boundaries to differentiate them from existing ones. However, studies are set within established paradigms, and hence viewing tourism studies as a *discipline* leads to multiple understandings and attributions of expertise in the literature.

Researchers interested in tourism appear to emphasise empirical accounts of economic and commercial transactional events implications of which are addressed in this chapter. Sociologically oriented inquiries, which focus on a social interaction between a tourist and their host (Veal, 1997), exist as a secondary concern. Farrell and Twining-Ward (2004) refer to such separated treatment of a common subject as

a restricted approach to research, governed by disciplinary priorities and researchers' educational backgrounds (that) is an impairment to integration, unity and sustainability (p. 277).

Farrell and Twining-Ward (2004) promote a tourism 'panarchy' (cf. Allen, Angeler, Garmestani, Gunderson, & Holling, 2014) for research. They propose that research should encompass core, comprehensive, regional, and global/Earth tourism systems. Their discussion extends from earlier research where a call for an integrated approach to tourism had been made to discontinue a view of tourism activities as "operating in a virtual vacuum" (Farrell & Runyan, 1991, p. 37). These two publications make a case from an ecological perspective which is situated in a geographic understanding. The notion has been articulated from other disciplinary starting points, such that research acknowledges the complexity of communication in a touristic environment (see e.g. Apostolopoulos, 1996; Cohen & Cohen, 2012; Dann & Cohen, 1996; Holden, 2005; Lanfant, 1993; Ryan, 1991). Business management has a strong interest in the economic and commercial aspects of an engagement. Saee's (2006) work attempted to introduce aspects of managerial behaviour from a communication perspective to a business audience. Simpson's (2008) finds it lacking due to a limited utility of its findings for understanding everyday practices. Business research aims to find solutions to issues preventing optimal performance, rather than valuing exploratory studies. In a widely used management textbook, Goeldner and Ritchie (2012) gloss over the communicative, or "soft skills" of working in the industry by declaring that "shopkeepers and clerks themselves should be amiable and courteous" (p. 273), possess "sufficient" language ability (English, and any other relevant languages for the destination (p. 273), and be "cheerful", "patient and understanding" (p. 274). Scholars have argued that tourism experiences are connected to elements of materialistic exchange, social interaction and movement in physical space (Adam Jaworski & Thurlow, 2011). Erving Goffman (1953) promotes such an understanding of face-to-face interaction in a touristic environment within his doctoral thesis; Behaviour and social conduct are linked to the social order and are strongly tied to the place in which it occurs. Goffman's approach is utilised to integrate the different literatures.

Tourism is an important economic driver for the majority of countries (Burns & Novelli, 2006; E. Cohen, 2004; Crick, 1996; Hart, 2000; Holden, 2005; G. R. Larsen & Guiver, 2013; Marriott Jr. & Brown, 1997; Piller, 2007, 2012; Szerszynski & Urry, 2006; UNWTO, n.d.; Wergin, 2012; Xin, Tribe, & Chambers, 2013). As a "key sector of the new world order" (Piller, 2007, p. 219), academic interest in the subject has increased over the last decades (E. Cohen & Cohen, 2012; T. Duncan, Scott, & Baum, 2013; D. G. Pearce, 1993). The literature in the area has matured over the years (Hudson, Miller, & Hudson, 2006) in the sense that researchers have

written extensively on diverse aspects of tourism, establishing a certain taken-for-granted-ness for approaches in how common understanding is portrayed. Seminal authors, such as Eric Cohen or Dean McCannell have published on the subject extensively since the 1970s and continued to review, revise and update their theories. In turn, their seminal pieces (cf. E. Cohen, 1972; MacCannell, 2013) have allowed a rich academic discussion to develop which in turn has over time developed tourism studies as an academic discipline. Despite scholars' continued and interest in the area, approaches and definitions have not gained a consensus (Darbellay & Stock, 2012; Gee, Makens, & Choy, 1997; Holden, 2005; Hudson et al., 2006; MacCannell, 2013; Platenkamp & Botterill, 2013; Ren, Pritchard, & Morgan, 2010; Ryan, 1991; Xiao & Smith, 2006). Society, and hence the concept of tourism, has changed dramatically over the past decades; while travel has become more accessible, terrorist attacks and natural disasters have influenced perceptions of travel (Urry, 2003). Such issues are not the focus of this study, but it is important to understand that tourism is directly linked to all aspects of social, political, economic, environmental as well as technological change (Cohen, 2004; E. Cohen & Cohen, 2012; Good, 2013; Hall, 2005; Pritchard, 2000; Ritchie, 1993; Wearing & Wearing, 2001).

The term tourism has been described as problematic since it is used both in academic enquiry, and also by the lay person[2] (Tribe, 1997, 2000). It has been argued, that tourism and associated subjects (e.g. mobility and hospitality) are too fragmented to constitute an independent academic discipline (Franklin & Crang, 2001; Tribe, 1997). The present study acknowledges the variety of contributions that have been made to research in the realm of tourism and thus utilises "tourism studies" to denote variety and complexity that does not rest on a single theoretical model. Rather, analysis of the data from the corpus is used to provide insights into how interactions at a particular time and space are constructed under the notion of touristic hospitality, and in turn construct that interaction and 'touristic hospitality'. Key concepts are developed to reflect this dual construction. This chapter's main concern is to present the background for touristic hospitality by taking an interdisciplinary position, based on core concepts which provide the context and scope for the study, as explicated in the following chapters. The background as it is constructed here determines the literature included in the latter review, methods adopted, including aspects of data collection and fieldwork, as well as concerns for the ensuing analysis. The insights from the different literatures are not contradictory, but instead provide for an holistic interdisciplinary approach to a complex subject. According to Przecławski (1993) due to its

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[2] The dichotomy between adjacent literature described earlier in this chapter may well add another lay understanding to research carried out; the often limited understanding displayed in research of "the other" discipline can lead to the perpetuation of misconceptions of how contexts are positioned.

complexity "The contemporary world needs dialogue"; this work is rooted in such a dialogue (Coupland, 2010).

The academic study of tourism is sometimes described as an "indiscipline", rather than a distinctive discipline (Hall, 2005; Tribe, 1997). Scholars have questioned whether tourism can be segmented into an individual industry at all, since it is part and subject to numerous global influences (Gee et al., 1997). Tourism studies concerns itself with the multidisciplinary provenance of its research community, yet research from other disciplines that utilises tourism as a mere setting for the interaction between people can overlook the complexities of this context (see Hernández-López & Blitvich, 2014; Hernández-López & Fernández-Amaya, 2015). As a result, authors have argued that tourism studies as a field of inquiry remains invisible as and among other academic disciplines (Walton, 2006) since the wider social structure in which the interactions are based remains largely unaddressed.

Scholars underline that there is no singular theory to encompass research into tourism and hospitality. Dann and Cohen (1991) suggest that there cannot be a comprehensive theory of tourism, since it is a "target field" which is constituted of many sub domains to which research can be applied. Research in the tourism literature has created large bodies of literature, addressing various individual areas and resulted in more fragmented representations (Pearce, 1993, 2005). A conscious linking of literature across areas of investigations should then be vital in constructing a clear analytic perspective that takes into account the richness of the interactions found in tourism. Tourism and its actors' behaviours have fascinated many people. The subject has been addressed from many angles which has produced a rich knowledge base - knowledge that should be valued and used to underpin research in the area (Pearce, 2005; Pearce, 2005; Ryan, 1991). In this sense, tourism becomes associated with notions of social identity (Burns & Novelli, 2006). Tourism research, thus, has always drawn on various disciplines, leading to its multidisciplinary nature. In addition interdisciplinary approaches can provide the communicative building blocks across different levels of expertise (Echtner & Jamal, 1997; Moscardo, 2006).

## 2.3 Tourism as setting for social and communication research – some premises and challenges for addressing concepts

For scholars interested in interpersonal communication, tourism provides an ideal context for observation of social and cultural interaction. Tourism has an important role in a world characterised by globalisation. The industry brings together not only people from different cultural backgrounds, but also individuals and companies with different motives and social goals (Wijesinghe & Lewis, 2005). Tourism encounters are "natural laboratories for the investigation of stress and coping, culture learning, and social identification" (Berno & Ward, 2005, p. 598).

Tourism, in an economic and commercial sense, may be understood as an autonomous and self-regulated system, or an industry, whereas the social sciences emphasise the relationship between social actors and their engagement with the world (Darbellay & Stock, 2012). Tourism and travel in general are temporally defined experiences (Urry, 2003). Touristic experiences have a chronological sequence, are experienced as the passing of time and have clear starting and ending points. This conception continues in an individual's memory where the overall recollection is stored (Ryan, 1997d). These temporal, and related spatial, constraints provide a highly specific setting for social research, as Stringer and Pearce (1984) explain:

> Tourism offers a naturalistic laboratory, a self-contained and limited set of social behaviours in which traditional topics such as attitude formation and change or group dynamics are unavoidable. It invites attention simultaneously to the environment, cultural context, and (short-term) temporal processes more immediately than do many other applied fields (p. 15).

Tourism as a context, thus, provides an interactive context for particular individuals interacting for particular reasons (Moscardo, 2006).

A number of concepts frequently co-occur with the study of tourism. Culture, for example, is essential in the construction of the touristic experience (Barker & Härtel, 2004; Ryan, 1997c; Steiner & Reisinger, 2004). Behaviour, viewed as anchored within cultures, is different for the tourist on vacation, not only because of the geographical distance to the home, but also because "holiday" or a "trip" is a respite from the usual social norms and restrictions that guide behaviour in their home culture. Being on holiday may elicit behaviour different to interactions in everyday life. Kim and McKercher (2011) report on individuals' tendencies of temporarily suspending their concepts of behaviour, such as what constitutes appropriate social interactions (such as inhibitions toward interaction in regards to drinking and associated behaviours). The concept of "the tourist" is not necessarily associated with a home culture, but with behaviour that is displayed at the destination – a notion that highlights the interplay between conventional situations and situational conventions. Being away from home may change how individuals understand normality. Thus, the tourist is "interested in things, sights, customs and cultures different from his [sic] own, precisely because they are different" (Cohen, 1972, p. 165). Hotels, however, appear to have a different status: "After seeing the jewels at Topkapi, the fabled Blue Mosque and bazaars, it's awfully nice to come home to the Istanbul Hilton." (advertisement in Time magazine, as cited in Cohen, 1972, p. 164). The hotel is described as a safe haven, or a home away from home (Marriott Jr. & Brown, 1997), a concept that is still of great importance today for the industry. Tourism is therefore premised upon destination authenticity on the one and

the reassuring familiarity of home on the other – a challenge considering that tourists visit from different countries, and have differing tastes and requirements.

Studies have found supporting evidence for this "special" relationship between hotels, their staff, and the guests who stay in them. Staff are seen to develop strong feelings of attachment to the guests, and vice versa (cf. also Mars & Nicod, 1984, as cited in Butcher, Sparks, & O'Callaghan, 2002). Tourism "breaks the isolation of cultural groups and creates an awareness that there exist other people who have other ways" (Hofstede, 2001, p. 452). In this respect, the interaction that occurs may have a considerable impact on cross-cultural understanding in a globalised world.

Tourism encourages participation from a vast number of individuals, much like it invites research from an equally diverse academic background. The result can create mixed messages to the different target audiences (professional/industry (commercial), lay consumer (private) and academic (industry professional (educational) or lay person (social)) (cf. Morrison, 2002, as cited in Hudson et al., 2006, p. 238)). Modern tourism is characterised as an intercultural interaction, but is a superficial form of international encounter, and is unlike that portrayed in classical marketing discourses (Hofstede, 2001).

Tourism provides a particular setting for interpersonal communication that is situated at the intersection of a various disciplines. Reisinger and Turner (2002) identify 17 disciplines as contributing to the "territory of tourism[3]" (p. 194), from social studies, to geographic interpretations and business research. Disciplines related to communication and language do not form part of their model.

Tourism is characterised by intercultural, interpersonal, institutional and sociolinguistic communication. At the same time, interactions between guests and hosts are service encounters, and hence goal oriented business interactions. Tourists should not only feel comfortable, but also need to be interacted with in a competent manner. The institutional setting of the interaction establishes the context in which a service provider needs be capable of providing a relevant relational discourse for the encounter (Langlotz, 2009). Communication in tourism, much like any other form of ritualised interaction, is complex and definitions of the communicative mechanisms extend from various paradigms. The following discussion presents multiple interpretations of social structure inherent in this study, rather than tourism as separated from communication as presented in theoretical models such as Reisinger and Turner (2002). The

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[3] namely: Anthropology, Gender Studies, Sociology, Leisure, Political Science, History, Recreation, Philosophy, Psychology, Geography, Marketing, Law, Economics, Planning, Management, Business, and Ecology

notions explored treat tourism as a sociological concept (Cohen, 1979), the tourist as an entity in time and space (Lanfant, 1980; Urry, 2007), and foregrounds the related social roles and matters of identities (Burns & Novelli, 2006).

## 2.4  Macro context: tourism

Tourism, as much as its settings, has been extensively addressed in the literature. As a result, some of the interpretations have become 'contested' (Pritchard & Jaworski, 2005). As such, there is no intention to provide an exhaustive overview of what has been argued over decades in various fields, but rather to provide a scope for the present study. Concepts and understandings overlap in bodies of literature and are treated as such to create a holistic understanding for the conduct of an interdisciplinary study situated in a particular communicative context. Definitions start at an abstract and macro level, and their connections to concrete 'micro' phenomenon are demonstrated.

### 2.4.1  Social structure in tourism

Social interaction provides the basis for social structure (Goffman, 1997c) and its global manifestation (Appadurai, 1996). Tourism provides a context for communication in every day encounters that constitute a routine, but do not form part of ordinary daily routines in a person's life. The location of the touristic encounters is also distinct and removed from everyday life as it relates to the concepts of home, even if it is not a specifically isolated location in a Goffmanian (1953) sense. These interactions follow to a large extent what has been identified in literature on social interaction, but these interactions also provide for additional components within the encounter. Sociolinguistics in a globalised world is comprised of communication on the move, as Jaworski and Thurlow (2013, 2010) observe. Sociolinguistics can then act as a connection between the micro-aspects in social interaction, and the macro-aspects in society and social structure. Social structure extends to globalised relations. Tourism and issues of globalisation have been addressed from economic, political and cultural perspectives which provides for a rich backdrop of the present investigation (Appadurai, 2001; Garrett, 2013, 2010; Heller, 2013, 2010; Kramsch & Boner, 2013, 2010; Wergin, 2012). Global connections provide the basis for global movements, such as tourism. The concept of globalisation has been considered "emotionally charged" (Berger, 2002, p. 2) in the public eye through the attentions from different paradigms. It has been argued that economic as well as cultural aspects of globalisation can be attributed to developments in transportation and communication means of human exchange (Blommaert & Dong, 2013, 2010; Mufwene, 2013, 2010), providing a vital aspect of tourism. For the purpose of this study, culture in a tourism context should be viewed as a concept that is *open for participation by all* (Van Rekom & Go, 2006) and thus, as contingent on the interaction of people

(Burns & Novelli, 2006). Furthermore, culture is understood to be represented (implicitly and explicitly) in categories of speaker, language and the setting of the interaction (Edwards, 2012). As such, tourism is understood as a function, element, transmission, and meeting of culture which can also bring about factors in cultural change (Przecławski, 2005).

## 2.5   Meso context: tourism and hospitality as research setting

Traditionally, tourism has been associated with travel for leisure, but the notion of social mobility has proven to be more complex. It is one of the most important economic factors in the world (Piller, 2012). Tourism has been described as the "commercialisation of strangeness" (Podemski, 2005) and "commercialised hospitality" (Cohen, 1996). The consumer of tourism (e.g. guest in a hotel) is the reason why services exist, thus the setting is commercial, a supply and demand chain (Ogle, 2009). The setting is influenced by human motivation and interest in engaging with other people and places (Ryan, 1997c). Blue and Harun (2003) point out that "tourism" as a form of commercial hospitality deviates strongly from the traditional understanding of hospitality between friends and family - As a form of social interaction, "traditional hospitality" does not require payment, but "commercial hospitality" is focused on satisfying a paying customer, a notion that is contingent on the understanding of various terms within this study. Definitions of tourism are abundant and dependent on the context in which they are used, but a number of themes more prevalent in the literature and may be described as core concepts. Tourism is a global (a) sector of economy or an industry; (b) (peacetime) movement of people; (c) holistic system of complex social relationships between people in human collectivities; and (d) challenging sociocultural phenomenon (Apostolopoulos, 1996; Dann & Cohen, 1996; Hall, 2005; Ryan, 1991; Watson & Kopachevsky, 1996) .

Hotels provide one of the key areas in which tourism consumers and their hosts can interact. Hotels can be defined and classified in various ways (Gee et al., 1997; Rojek, 1993). Although an extensive technical differentiation is not deemed necessary for this study, chapter 4 provides some details on comparable elements between the participating hotels. Within tourism, hotels have a specific social function. As Goffman (1953) observes in a side remark in his doctoral dissertation, a hotel can sustain a location as a "practical place for tourist interest" (p. 30). Thus, a hotel is situated at the intersection between an individual and the experience of a destination. Guests at a hotel are the sole reason why a hotel exists (Ogle, 2009). It is a "home away from home" where visiting people feel that they are not only welcome but wanted (Marriott Jr. & Brown, 1997). Furthermore, a hotel is a place where others provide the basic needs of life (Rojek, 1993). As such, the realisation of commodities from shelter and sustenance to the handling of leisure and emergency situations, are done through a third party, a gate keeper, most

frequently the front desk staff. Thus, by temporary leaving their home environments, guests in a hotel surrender their daily routines, both in the form of tangible tasks as well as linguistically rendered occurrences to an organisation (Cohen & Taylor, 1992). Thus, a hotel is understood here as "a serviced space in which the basic requirements of life - food, drink, warmth, shelter and security - are supplied by others" (Rojek, 1993, p. 191). The impact on communication is demonstrated in this study.

Hotels are a particular kind of organisation where everyday life is different to everyday routine. How and where an individual lives has an impact on what one does (or can do) with organisations and institutions (McCabe & Marson, 2006). This notion is important for the present study as it raises questions on how much interactions in a hotel rely on taken-for-granted concepts like "place-language" (McCabe & Marson, 2006, p. 98) and how social actors address this. Interactions in hotels between front line staff and guests provide a notion of hospitality that is governed by a particular role distance that participants in an encounter are commonly said to be aware of (Rojek, 1993). Global mobility and its marketing strategies have rendered hospitality within hotels a recognisable standard in which notions of public and private are negotiated as a payable service with expectations from both the service provider and the consumer. This can lead to tensions in differentiating between being a tourist or a (paying) guest (Burns & Novelli, 2006; Cohen, 2004; Rojek, 1993; Ryan, 1991).

### 2.5.1 Communication as situating practice

It has been argued that communication studies from its outset provides a fertile ground to develop ideas that might not have been possible in any of the other discipline available within the social sciences (Rogers, 1989). Berger and Chaffee (1987) explain that scholars have now begun to made "their academic homes somewhere within the field of communication rather than in surrounding disciplines Unlike early research in the field, however, it may be argued that communication-oriented research has much more matured literature to draw from, which is not only the orientation of this study, but may define how social sciences can challenge established views and paradigms (Pritchard & Jaworski, 2005). It may be argued that international communication communicates across nation states, a notion that may account for why misunderstandings are not frequent in interactions using a lingua franca (Ammon, 2013, 2010; Canagarajah, 2012). However, intercultural communication may also highlight difficulties in attempting to addressing global contexts (Kramsch & Boner, 2013, 2010). An added layer of difficulty constitutes in the observation that what constitutes the exact context of communication within the tourism environment is not always positioned within clear boundaries, with actors

moving across the line of otherwise established definitions (Abram & Waldren, 1997; Rojek, 1993).

As an aim, tourism renders access to other cultures more plausible (O'Reilly, 2005), even if its authenticity is somewhat debatable it provides a context for social relations and a connection between "home" and "away" (Doorne & Ateljevic, 2005; Holden, 2005; Adam Jaworski & Thurlow, 2013, 2010).

## 2.6    Micro context: service encounters as social interactions

The seemingly straight forward definition of service encounter still remains an ambiguous term since understandings are different between management and discursive approaches (Pegg & Suh, 2006). Although this may not be true for a more generic approach to what constitutes services, it has been argued that service in tourism "have to be produced *and consumed* in very particular places. Part of what is consumed is in effect the place in which the service provider is located" (Urry, 1996a, p. 193). Furthermore, service encounters in tourism are important to tourists. They turn them from a "passive consumer" to a "proactive partner" to render a stay or a holiday "successful" (Ryan, 1997b) which has been argued to contribute to interactions in tourism to be both intense and intimate that are rare in other service sectors (Baum, 1997) – interactions in which they participate matter to tourists (Laws, 2006; Pearce, 2005). A strong focus is placed on every interaction between service provider and recipient. They provide opportunities for an organisation to interact with a customer (Carlzon, 1989; Carlzon, Polk, & Spiro, 1987). Services cannot be tested, returned, replaced or reworked (Baum, 1997; Kandampully & Kandampully, 2006). As a result, aspects of quality in service are intangible, instantaneous and depend on systems that have been implemented provided by people based on their skills (Bitner, 1995; Bitner, Ostrom, & Morgan, 2008; Oriade, 2012). Thus the approach to be adopted for the purpose of this study accounts for the complexities observed not only in the literature, but also in the data of this study. Ventola (2005) writes:

> Service encounters are everyday interactions between the customer and the server whereby some commodity (information **or** goods) will be exchanged. Sometimes this commodity is to be described in terms of concrete material goods, and sometimes the commodity is 'linguistic goods', i.e. the exchange of information. In both cases, the exchange **may** involve monetary exchange as well. (p. 19, my emphasis)

Experience and performance of a service or encounter are understood to be rendered through discourse (Pritchard & Jaworski, 2005). However, it has been suggested in business literature that customers may be unable to differentiate consistently between tangible and

intangible services[4] (Chang & Tarn, 2008). Discourse definitions have emphasised a particular and existing difference between the exchange of a service and a transaction. Here, it is argued that a service is usually provided free of charge (e.g. provision of information) and a transaction involves the exchange of money (Dumas, 2008; Kerbrat-Orecchioni & Traverso, 2008). However, in a hotel one may argue that these exist within a particular framework: the guest has paid for a mainly tangible service in form of renting a room, yet intangible services, including information to be provided, are expected to be included in this price (see also analysis chapter II for negotiation of appropriateness of additional services during a guest's stay at a hotel (see section 6.2)). Thus, identities are pliable within the tourism industry which can lead to confusion about expectations between consumers and providers of the service (Abram & Waldren, 1997; Berno, 1999). Commodities in this sense then can be treated as a "worldview": in a marketable situation, they may evoke the exchange of money for goods; in social interactions they may be treated as such, but without a monetary rendering (Radin, 1996): Encounters in tourism commonly can be classed as both a commodity and a symbol (MacCannell, 2013). In this study, this notion is represented in what interactants *do* in their conversations, both in reference to materialistic components and (cultural) experience. Commodities become part of a cultural as well as cognitive dimension (Kopytoff, 1986). Following a Marxist perspective, Appadurai (1986) suggests that commodities are products which in a first instance are designed for an exchange, making them objects that possess an inherent economic value. With this, the process of commodisation, much like the process of globalisation is connected to temporal, cultural as well as social factors.

While service encounters in Conversation Analysis have often been described as occurring between an expert and a lay person (Hall, Sarangi, & Slembrouck, 1999; Heritage & Robinson, 2006; Holmes, Stubbe, & Vine, 1999; Sarangi & Roberts, 1999; Silverman, 1999; Strong, 2001; Waitzkin, 1991), historically, interactions in tourism have been prone to an element of "master-servant" relationships prior to the advent of mass-participation over the past decades (Baum, 1997; Urry, 1996b). Baum (1997) uses Ritz Carlton's motto of "We are Ladies and Gentlemen serving Ladies and Gentlemen" ("Gold standards," n.d.) as an example of how the positioning and perception of service providers and consumers have been devised to reflect a change in society.

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[4] This notion seems to be somewhat substantiated by various audiences at conferences where this study in its ongoing form was presented. Commonly, listeners seemed to be unable to judge what kind of service they were receiving from their hotels (a physical space to rest, tangible) and the conference they were attending (knowledge exchange, intangible)

Service encounters have been addressed in different contexts as well as for particular purposes in the literature. As a result, the positioning that authors have taken is reflected in their studies. There are three common ways in which service encounters have been described in terms of their communicative action: public, semi-public, and semi-private. Service encounters in tourism can occur under various circumstances and are not limited to interactions at the hotel front desk. Consequently, service encounters in a touristic environment may be classed at any of the three levels of privacy, depending on where and how the encounter takes place (Rojek, 1997; Urry & Larsen, 2011). In addition to what the literature has attributed to the three concepts, I suggest some additional considerations to the approaches to display them on a continuum. Conventions for engagement in interactions in a public environment have been described by Goffman (1963) and influence the distinction. The boundaries of the categories extend beyond the content of an interaction to psychological and spatial arrangements (Goffman, 1963).

- *Public* (e.g. Félix-Brasdefer, 2015): interactions that are considered public (or 'accessible' in Goffman's (1963) terms) by both interactants and bystanders; An example within the tourism context may be asking someone for directions.
- *Semi-public* (e.g. Placencia, 2005): interactions are considered of public nature by bystanders; Prospective interactants may choose to engage in an existing conversation on the premise that the interaction is accessible to bystanders and outsiders. Goffman (1963) observes that such behaviour does not follow the usual conventions – Interactants should either fully engage in a conversation or not at all. An example might be a group having a conversation about a restaurant in front of the establishment on which a waiter comments.
- *Semi-private* (e.g. Kerbrat-Orecchioni, 2006): interactions are considered to be private by bystanders; Bystanders and prospective interactants treat the conversations as private events and may choose to retract from the immediate environment instead of intervening or participating in an existing conversation[5]. Goffman (1963) illustrates the difficulties

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[5] Chapter 4 section 4.10 (p. 85) provides a detailed account of ethical and moral considerations for classifying these interactions as semi-private. Examples provided mainly concern hotel guests behaviour. However, the orientation towards privacy is apparent in receptionists' behaviours as well. In Hotel D, guests often ask information about (international) football matches being broadcast in a communal area, a practice which often evolves into small talk concerning the individual teams. Guests will approach male receptionists to an extent that they will postpone the query if there is no male receptionist in attendance. The only receptionist who is interested (or rather, highly passionate about it) in this sport, however, is an elegant, dainty, middle aged female. However, once a guest has chosen to talk about this subject to a male receptionist, there appears to be no grounds available for this female receptionist to enter the conversation. This is accepted as a given. Since the female receptionist's interest in the sport (and her desire to share her passion with like-minded guests) is known to the male receptionists, they have developed a teasing habit in which they explicitly display their ignorance or even mockery of the sport to the guest while the female receptionist is conversationally forced to remain silent. While the male receptionists will admit that they would prefer for their female colleague to talk to the guests, all have expressed the notion that this is a conversational impossibility. While this may be in the initiation of the

associated with any form of "civil inattention" (p. 156ff) that nonparticipants display to demonstrate their non-involvement when spatial arrangements suggest otherwise.

As will be demonstrated throughout this study, service encounters at the hotel front desk are considered *semi-private*. This notion is addressed in detail in chapter 4 (section 4.10, p. 92) and is continued throughout the analysis of the data which supports the understanding that the interaction between a service provider in the tourism industry and the consumer can be viewed as intimate (Baum, 1997; Pearce, 2005). Tourism has a particular interest in communication between people that is related to repeated interactions between strangers which initially will account for asymmetry in relations and which needs to be managed in subsequent interactions. Thus, even though the concept of supply and demand central to service encounters in general can be applied to interactions in tourism, research has expressed additional concern for strains in communicative settings related to nearness and distance between hosting party and the guest (Watson & Kopachevsky, 1996). The focus of the present study does not lie on defining what exactly a commodity is, but rather what constitutes a commodified exchange (Appadurai, 1986). In the realm of tourism encounters, language and its use has been described as a commodity exchange in itself (Jaworski & Thurlow, 2013, 2010), a notion which would render linguistic exchanges in this context into exchanges of economic value (Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991).

## 2.7 Interacting parties: constructing the social order

Service encounters in the present study are constructed through two interacting parties, receptionists and hotel guests. Both have been identified as conceptual frames in associated literatures.

### 2.7.1 Front-line staff

Some research suggests that the front-line division of any organisation, regardless of the sector it may operate under, has some unique characteristics that make the environment different to challenges an employee might face in a management role (Robertson, 2003). Some of the research highlights the gatekeeping function that front line staff has, as well as portraying them as a somewhat overlooked population within an organisation, partly due to the tightly defined job roles and the hierarchical nature within an institution where front desk workers commonly are situated at the most junior level. It is common for tourism literature and its textbooks to inform their readers that a front-line employee should possess certain characteristics, including being helpful, gracious, friendly, cooperative, amiable and or courteous. Language abilities are also

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interaction due to appearance and gender (Radner, 2004), her apparent inability to join in on the conversation to establish herself as an expert seems to be pointing to the aspect of treating the content of the interaction as of private nature.

commonly glossed over and it might be stated that these should be at a sufficient level (Goeldner & Ritchie, 2012; Zhao, 1991).

The growth of tourism as a truly global service enterprise has led organisations to focus on maintaining relationships with their customers. These interpersonal interactions are accomplished through front line staff (Anderson, 2006; Kandampully & Kandampully, 2006). Interactions between staff and customer are thus important, not only for the perceived level of quality provided by an institution, but they are also the interface to basic and mundane human interactions in everyday life and tourism is mainly concerned with human activity (Laws, 2006; Przecławski, 2005; Urry, 1996b). While it may be argued that social relationship through tourism as a commodity realised in service encounters is not naturally occurring, it is still a topic that provides important information about the modern world (Crick, 1996; Smith, 2005; Vukonić, 2005; Watson & Kopachevsky, 1996).

### 2.7.2 Tourists

Definitions of what constitutes a tourist have changed and evolved over the maturation period of tourism literature. MacCannell (2013) has regularly updated his seminal work since its first edition in 1976. Each edition features an additional preface in which MacCannell reflects on the state of research. It remains the sole attempt in the literature to describe a general theory of tourism and provides a detailed overview of different concepts to address the complex concern of social identity (Burns & Novelli, 2006). Commonly, definitions revolve around economics and purposes of travel. For example, market segmentation (Davidson & Cope, 2003; Goeldner & Ritchie, 2012), a concern for what activities tourists engage in at their destination (O'Reilly, 2005) - Or definitions related to a sociological imagination, seen in tourists' perception of their experience (Cohen & Taylor, 1992; Rojek, 1993) and the concept of space (Urry, 1996a, 2005). Overall, "social behaviour, at whatever level it is conceived, occurs in time and space" (Pearce & Stringer, 1991, p. 148) and is, therefore, subject to a great number of contextual, but also environmental influences that define how an interaction develops. Unlike in traditional definitions (e.g. Lanfant, 1980) where a tourist is associated with a limited and definite amount of activities, modern takes have abandoned the notion of a contingency between "leisure" and "tourism" – an idea that may have fostered confusion both in the discipline, but also with the layperson (Abram & Waldren, 1997; Davidson & Cope, 2003).

Cohen (1979) provides an early summary of the history of tourism research and notes that traditionally the "tourist has been portrayed a s a superficial nitwit, easy to please as well as to cheat. Isolated in the environmental bubble of tourist hotels, restaurants and other touristic establishments, he was seen as an easy-going superficial creature, with only a slight contact with,

and even a slighter understanding of, his surroundings" (p. 19). Thus, a "tourist" is a specific type of individual engaging in particular and set behavioural patterns. Even though Cohen claimed already more than 30 years ago that the notion of "the tourist" has changed, literature in any of the adjunct fields still seem to rely heavily on rather broad assumptions and stereotypes to brand and market services and destinations (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Mei, 2014; Wang, Li, & Li, 2013).

For this study, a fairly wide approach to what constitutes a tourist is adopted. Since the study was conducted in a particular institution, the hotel, a relevant uniting characteristic of all participants is the voluntary and temporary relocation to a serviced environment. The focus, thus, is on the temporary social mobility of an individual (Urry, 2007). An individual is treated as an actual person and member of society in this study and is not focussed on overly theoretical models of "tourist". While the context of the study is located in the realm of tourism, the concern in this study rests on social interactions and relations, rendering the tourist the relevant actor and focal point (MacCannell, 2013). Thus, a touristic stay (and therefore a tourist) is defined for the purpose of this study as an individual who spends one or more nights away from their home for any reason other than (semi) permanent employment or education (Ryan, 1991). Tourists are not a homogenous group, but rather, doing "being a tourist" is a social role that an individual can adopt for a specific purpose as part of their social identity (Burns & Novelli, 2006; Pearce, 2005; Podemski, 2005). This notion of tourist identity is connected to other spheres of an individual's life (McCabe & Johnson, 2013). The self, and the experience of "self" is prioritised in the literature that focuses on sociological components of self-expression. However, such a notion also stresses the individual as most important in the experience, disconnecting it from what has become a global industry characterised by mass-participation (Wearing & Wearing, 2001). Tourists are not passive consumers, but play an important role in constructing a place and the phenomenon that is global mobility (Burns, 2006; Papen, 2005; Urry, 2005). Commonly, this is accomplished through the interaction between the consumer and an agent of an organisation in the form of an encounter (Jaworski & Thurlow, 2013, 2010). The notion of social identity then becomes not a fixed understanding, but as Ryan (1991) demonstrates, rather a continuum of social activity through which participants may move:

Tourist environments and associated feelings

TOURIST     CUSTOMER     VISITOR        TRAVELLER     GUEST     FRIEND

| Little perception of individuality  Tourist as outsider to *specially prepared* events | Individuality as *formal*  Tourist as *outsider to normal events* | Individuality as *informal*, social  Tourist *part in normal events*, as equal |
|---|---|---|
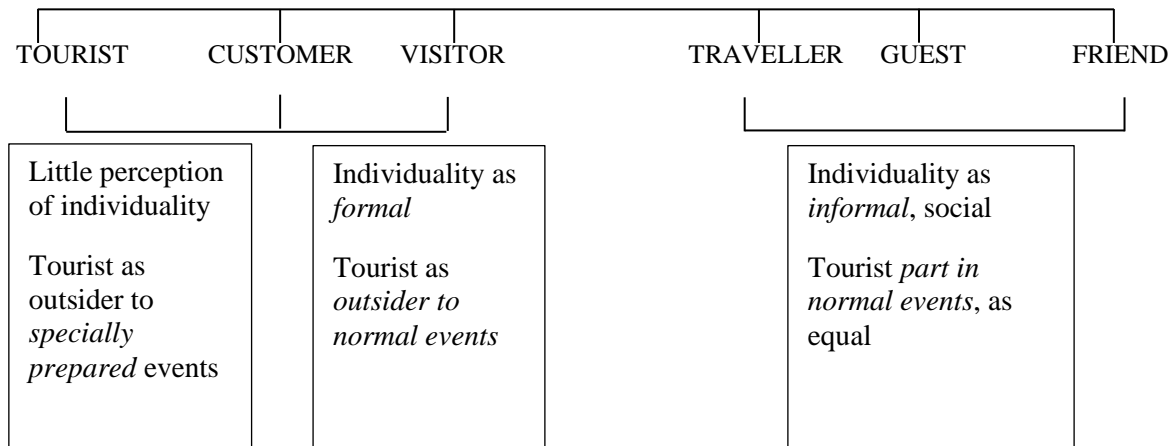
*Figure 2: The tourist-friend continuum (adapted from Ryan, 1991, p. 37)*

Tourists thus may be viewed as more than a consumer of a service, but as active co-producers of their experiences. Any form of contact or encounter between guest and hosting culture is bound to produce some form of customer relationship, even if – or maybe because – this constitutes the essence of mass tourism cliché (Normann, 2000; Voase, 2000).

## 2.8    Further premises for this study

Different contexts have been shown to be connected to how information flow is understood in different disciplines. This notion is developed further in the following chapters and affects how literature is understood for this study. There are two concepts that reoccur in the literature, effectiveness and efficiency, which are further developed through the analysis of the data available in this study. Organisations can be "culturally fragmented" (Wilkins & Ouchi, 1983, p. 469) where the social reality of the front-line may not necessarily represent a managerially desired behaviour system (Cameron, 2008). The present study argues that any "totalistic" (Goffman, 1961b) features of an institutions must be achieved and maintained through micro-level interactions which in turn become manifestations of macro-structures outside of the organisation.

It is proposed that literature treats these two concepts in a particular way: business literature appears to take a top-down approach, whereas communication and discourse literature uses the interaction as a starting point. While business research shapes how interaction is to be conducted in an institution, providing guidelines and systems, communication research often describes what is happening, demonstrating a definite disregard for the established contexts with

the accompanying established practices. While this has been addressed in some research (Hernández-López & Fernández-Amaya, 2015), there still seems to exist limited exchange (Grant & Iedema, 2005; Pritchard & Jaworski, 2005) between disciplines.

A further distinction of how communication and its flow are treated within the literature is proposed to conclude this chapter. The two terms which frequently occur in any of the associated literatures, without providing much context or being accompanied by an articulated definition: *effectiveness* and *efficiency*. For the purpose of this study, a dichotomous view of these concepts in discourse oriented literature as well as business literature is acknowledged, together with their underlying premises. These are presented here and developed during analysis and discussion to be applicable to the context of this study. The discussion chapter (see 8.5) develops an empirically based definition, using this study's data as evidence.

*Effectiveness*

Underlying the premise of effective, service encounters are said to be reproducible (Normann, 2000). Thus, interactions can be designed in a top-down approach to fulfil this criterion (Bitner et al., 2008; Laws, Prideaux, & Moscardo, 2006; Shostack, 1982).

Traditional communication literature appears to favour a dual approach when addressing matters of effectiveness. Individual competence is centralised which would indicate a down-up approach to the matter. However, in combination with largely theoretical and/or empirical measures, the results remain presented as something that can be implemented from the top-down (Berger, 1986; Brislin, 1986; Detweiler, 1986; Furnham, 1986; Gudykunst, 1991).

*Efficiency*

Most prominently in the business literature, efficiency is related to the concept of change. It is a literature in search of developing measures to render service encounters that are already effective more efficient. Such approaches have been associated with superficial changes and, thus, superficial results – or the reason why implementing change does not seem to work (e.g. Anderson, 2006; Ogbonna & Wilkinson, 1990). As a result, effectiveness may be favoured over efficiency (Robertson, 2003).

Communicative approaches have seen the notion of efficiency in a different light. Here, it is acknowledged that politeness and its perception in the discursive environment may be accomplished through the deviation of what would constitute maximally efficient behaviour (Holtgraves, 2005).

## 2.9    Conclusion: interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary notions

In this chapter, definitions governing the understanding for this study have been provided and put into context for this study. It has been highlighted that views on concepts have been approached from numerous angles and that there exists not only tension within the discipline, but also an apparent lack of understanding and communication between researchers addressing issues related to the tourism and global mobility context.

Ultimately and most prominently, the contextualisation of this study in light of these definitions is to distinguish pre-understanding from understanding obtained from the analysis of data (Laws et al., 2006). This is done with the understanding that tourism and its research is a complex subject. While interdisciplinary approaches have been seen to evolve, it remains a fundamental problem for researchers to utilise approaches to the subject from within their home discipline (Echtner & Jamal, 1997). An interactionist approach then, is proposed to focus on relationships and personal experiences (Wearing & Wearing, 1996) with the aim to uncover the working principles that help shape the social realities of its actors in various settings, including home and work environments (Cohen & Taylor, 1992) - an aim with sociolinguistic studies such as the one presented here is concerned with discovering and describing replicable methods to approach qualitative research (Gumperz & Cook-Gumperz, 2012).

While it has been demonstrated that much of contemporary discussions on tourism have focused on abstract conceptualisations, the question largely remains 'How tourism' (Franklin, 2004, p. 278). With this study, the hotel is understood as an importantly positioned location that allows to study the intersection of how tourism is constructed as a global phenomenon as it evolves through language and communicative practices – thus to provide a connection of how to get from a macro structure (tourism) to a meaningful micro analysis of practice (language and interaction). Establishing conceptual perspectives using available research from different, yet contingent epistemological perspectives may allow providing relevant insights into these concepts (Xin et al., 2013). The social sciences should allow paradigms to work together. A sociolinguistic perspective on a developing concept such as tourism can connect rather than supersede individually established disciplines (Dann, 2011; Günlü & Rahimi, 2012). Abstract concepts and concepts treated as such in the literature have been seen in this chapter to be highly connected to what constitutes everyday life and how social sciences may address this (Lanfant, 1993). It has been argued that the spatial and temporal constraints present in tourism provide for a particular research environment that addresses some transdisciplinary notions through observing behaviour that may be both classed as everyday life, but different at the same time (Cliff & Ryan, 1997; Rojek, 1993; Ryan, 1997a, 1997c). Tourism may be said to provide particular opportunities

and challenges for society and as an industry, but tourists and their behaviour can also be viewed as connecting global mechanisms with local contextualisation (Pearce, 2005). It has been suggested here to use conventional situations to describe the macro structure of society and situational conventions to link to the micro analysis of talk as a method to engage with multiple definitions and address some concepts of the literature to be reviewed for this study. Communication across countries, cultures and individuals benefits from an approach that can provide a voice for the contexts in which conversations occur (Milliken, 1999).

# Chapter 3: Literature Review

## 3.1 Introduction

The aim of this study is to describe interaction at the hotel front-line. The research investigates naturally occurring conversations between hotel guests and receptionists in different countries. Communication in this area has been addressed in the literature from a variety of different angles and disciplines. The review first considers communication and social issues. The later part integrates notions of communication, culture into the realm of service encounters and CA, concluding with future directions for research in the area.

This review addresses recurrent themes in the literature and aims to establish a common ground for the present study, pertinent to how mundane and institutional interaction is portrayed. Although there is a certain argument being made throughout this text that the project is of an interdisciplinary nature, it has to be kept in mind that any scientific discipline exists in its boundaries only because it has been declared to be so by past, present and future writers (Nerlich & Clarke, 1996). As such, this study subscribes to the principle put forth by Brown and Levinson (1987) that there are universal aspects in regards to polite interaction – and as such, robust features that can be observed in a service encounter context. Starting from the initial concept of politeness as a universal component of human interaction which has been described from diverse perspectives in research, the literature around linguistic politeness has evolved and matured since Brown and Levinson's seminal work. As such, this project embraces a postmodern approach to politeness. While the study does not focus on politeness, the notion is recognised as an approach in the literature to describe aspects of social interaction which constitute part of expected behaviour in institutional interaction. For this study, the concept of politeness is understood to support related concepts, such as affect (Holmes, 2012) in social interaction. The analysis is concerned with understanding how guest/receptionist interactions are structured. In this regard, the question extends to "what" interactants do with linguistic realisations of their social reality in these situations. Herein lays the project's conception of rapport[6]. Rapport in this sense is used as a concept that to connect to adjacent disciplines and seemingly different epistemologies which forms part of other forms in which interactional engagement takes place in conversations over time and communicative instances. This concept is not entirely new; Placencia (2004) has addressed rapport building in corner shops from a linguistic politeness perspective. Having a

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[6] Here, one might expect rapport to be synonymous with the understanding put forth by Helen Spencer-Oatey (cf. Spencer-Oatey, 2008b). However, as Holmes (2012) notes, Spencer-Oatey does not have the same understanding that postmodern politeness puts forth. In this sense, it might be understandable why Spencer-Oatey's approach to rapport as detailed in her theory is acknowledged, but does not form the basis for this project.

layered conceptualisation of these concepts is important to situate the project in its host academic environment, and at the same time to demonstrate where and how literature connects with other disciplines (cf. also Hernández López & Placencia, 2004).

The present study is situated in a particular social context: tourism or hospitality. Politeness as a concept has been made relevant in the concerning disciplines, but with different methods and for a particular, discipline-bound, purpose. The overarching projection that governs the selection of literature is the concept of "courtesy". Courtesy is the umbrella term that has been given to address issues of politeness, rapport and other concepts involving personal relationships and interactive situations in the service realm (Buttle, 1996). As such, while the study does not focus on politeness or rapport, it is recognised that they form part of how behaviour in service encounters is done, rated and perceived. Literature is included in this review when it addresses expected behaviours in service encounters.

The focus of this study lies on interactional behaviours employed at the hotel front desk to achieve an interactional goal. Literature pertaining to courtesy in the business and hospitality field of research provides the social context and ultimately the social reality in which the study is situated, and as such potentially the largest body of research. The notion of interactional engagement is used to provide a bridge between the linguistic and pragmatic realm of politeness to the overarching notion of courtesy in business literature. The literature review attempts to show that there exists no simple dichotomy between business studies and language studies. Instead, it is eminent in the literature that approaches are of a much more gradient nature and flow between various paradigms. As such it is notable that there are a number of dedicated scholars in sociolinguistics and pragmatics who have investigated as well as theorised about communication in organisations and in business. It remains observable however, that one approach is treated as superior over another. Yet in proclaiming "a bias for communication" (Weick, 2004) research that is being produced seems to lose some of the relevance that it could have if the social reality and context would be thoroughly acknowledged.

## 3.2   Effective communication

Albeit the apparent fragmentation visible in the literature, scholars from various disciplines who are interested in advancing the knowledge about communication have proposed conceptualisations to encapsulate what should constitute the realm of "communication". However, such endeavours usually fall short since the definitions are usually bound to reduce communication to a most linear model of information exchange (Coïaniz, 2005; Gudykunst & Lim, 1986; Haslett, 1987) (Interestingly enough, Gudykunst (1991) explains communication

transmission on a very linear level, using a model similar to Shannon-Weaver's seminal work). Whatever way one chooses to define communication will have profound effects on the knowledge that is being contributed to (Dance, 1977). First and foremost, the aim of any communication n is understood to be in line with Habermas' (1998b) assumptions: social actions are about reaching understanding between two parties. To Habermas as well as to this study, this observation is fundamental and extends to other social interactions as well; thus, any interactions, including misunderstandings and conflicts are treated as "derivatives for action oriented toward reaching understanding" (p. 21). The tool for reaching understanding is reported to be language. Actors are seen as using linguistic utterances strategically and cooperatively. As a result, conversations appear to have a distinct organisation that is used for the analysis in this study (Coïaniz, 2005; Geis, 1995; Habermas, 1998a, Haslett, 1987 #180). Or as Jackson (1977) poetically remarks:

> Communication is like a piece of driftwood on a sea of conflicting currents. Sometime the shore will be littered with debris; again it will be bare. The amount ad direction of movement is not aimless or unidirectional, but is a response to all the forces - winds, tides, and currents - which come into play. (p. 86)

In order to coordinate understanding, actors need shared knowledge or use communication to establish shared knowledge (Haslett, 1987). While social groups employ particular rules to co-ordinate behaviours, communication between different groups allows for insights in how tasks are dealt with when the rules of one's own group or even society are not applicable without some form of adaptation. However, what is done in particular to organise a communicative task is rarely visible, thus interactions with strangers are bound to create some degree of uncertainty between interacting parties (Berger, 1986; Cushman & King, 1986; Haslett, 1986). The communicative context under examination in this study exhibits such characteristics. Yet, there are more considerations to be made that not only link the following literatures together, but already propose some implications to be found in the later analysis. One reoccurring theme in communication research is the question of effectiveness - a competent speaker should be able to deduce from situational implications the most effective manner to proceed in the interaction (Berger, 1986; Brislin, 1986; Detweiler, 1986; Furnham, 1986; Gudykunst, 1991). Miscommunication in an initial interaction, according to Detweiler (1986) has the tendency to multiply "like rabbits" (p. 72), and might explain why much of the literature, no matter from which area of communication research, have dedicated so much attention to. For this study, the focus lies on how interactants make their way through an interaction in a particular context. Thus, instead of anticipating misunderstandings, coherence as a competent speaker means to ensure

consistency in understanding of the situation is used to make sense of the situation (Sanders, 1986).

Attempts for coherence can be made in two different manners. Participants can use what they believe to know about a stranger based on a categorisation into a social group (Brislin, 1986; Detweiler, 1986; Hewstone & Giles, 1986). However, such an attempt can become polarised, in that interest for the individual is lost (Gudykunst, 1991). Gudykunst (1991) suggests that interactants also have the option to "decategorise" a member from their social group and communicate with them on a personal level. There are a large number of variables that influence the outcome of conversations. When it comes to developing relationships with people that are strangers to the communicating parties Gudykunst proposes that the success rate is reciprocal on both speakers: how satisfied is party A with the communication? How satisfied is party B? This literature review brings together what has been identified to be of importance when looking at this question.

For the purpose of this review, communication is to be understood as follows:

- contingent on language (language as essential in structuring social encounters)
- shared activity to co-ordinate behaviour (participating parties hold each other accountable)
- multi-modal (verbal, non-verbal) (communication extends past linguistic components)
- goal directed with effects and consequences in social reality (communicative action has implications for wider social reality)
- highly organised and standardised to particular situations, must be constructed and understood in context (communication establishes and re-establishes social contexts)
- used to form and maintain social relationships and ultimately society (communication and language used to construct interactional rapport)
- share and construct knowledge (common sense, cultural, interactional, linguistic)
- used to (de-) construct social groups (gatekeeping and maintaining of social boundaries)

(Geis, 1995; Gudykunst & Lim, 1986; Habermas, 1998a; Haslett, 1987; Nerlich & Clarke, 1996)

These understandings guide the literature covered in this chapter and are central to addressing how communication is structured in a specific context, the service encounter at the hotel front desk.

## 3.3   Communication and social considerations

Culture and communication are highly interconnected and constitute a base concern in literature related to communication in societies. Culture has an effect on how individuals communicate across a wide array of different contexts, including interpersonal, intergroup, and organisational (Gudykunst, 1997). Communication is not necessary connected to a communicative outcome, but can instead be described as a "process" that involves not only that a message be exchanged, but that meaning is created between two parties (Gudykunst & Nishida, 2001, p. 60). Brislin (1983) speaks of "obvious complexities" (p. 390) associated with interacting in a foreign culture. Such difficulties also affect research designs and researchers which need to be addressed. (p. 390). Brislin notes that cross-cultural research has and will make valuable contributions in dealing with issues that may arise. Communication literature is often being described bed as "an enormous, interdisciplinary, and terminologically fragmented domain" which might impede scholarly advances in the development of theories and understanding (Spitzberg, 1989, p. 242).

Piller (2007) points out that that ubiquitous term "culture" should not be used to explain or account for every breakdown in culturally related interactions, but to acknowledge instead that misunderstandings can simply be of linguistic nature. On the other hand, however, it can also occur that communicating parties orient in their speech towards culture, but never refer to it explicitly. She concludes that "the frequent overlap between the voice of the researcher and the discourses in which it is embedded also make it a deeply problematic field" (p. 221). She suggests that intercultural communication as a field would be advised to discontinue to treat cultural difference as the main component of interactions, but to rather use it in the way that is made relevant by communicators in interactions.

Sociopragmatic considerations for communication at the work place have received only sparse attention in the literature (Holmes & Riddiford, 2009). But whatever the situation, communicating in an increasingly multicultural society bears a number of new challenges – although it appears that language is often just perceived as the most basic way of human expression that cannot cause any harm. Fluency in a language does not guarantee a smooth communication, but can instead cause even more pronounced misunderstandings that participants can not necessarily spot easily in an intercultural interaction. Even though sociolinguistic rules of speaking lay beneath any conscious level of awareness, and native speakers might not be able describe those rules, they are still very well able to judge both correctness and appropriateness of a particular speech act (Stoińska, 2001; Wolfson, 1990).

Scholars now ascribe more interdisciplinary involvement to a term like 'discourse'. In this sense, the study of organisations has become to be viewed as a mere sub-discipline of communication studies, further demoting from a study across disciplines (Schmisseur, Jian, & Fairhurst, 2009). Discourse remains more interested in linguistic resources that are used by interactants, rather than what can be observed in the social interaction. This means that communication and its study is used for investigations in a range of (con)textual concerns (Louhiala-Salminen, 2009; Schmisseur et al., 2009). The context that may be identified in a study oriented towards a discursive approach can then become the point of study or focus in a communicative approach. This is what can also be observed for the present study and explains an approach to CA that acknowledges its ties to ethnomethodology (Schmisseur et al., 2009). More concretely, Schmisseur et al. suggest that organisational communication addresses a number of concerns, including issues of meaning, relational over individual units of analysis, process over static forms of human systems, context seen as multi-layered and dynamic, discourse as operating on more than one level (p. 258). New and evolving disciplines are known to be involved at least for some time in a struggle for acceptance and status within the realm of academia. Changes on a massive scale in technology have further contributed to discussion on said boundaries, especially in areas of organisational studies. Business structures have changed and globalisation has been claimed to affect societies as a whole, but business on a more specific level. New challenges have arisen that dictate how communication flows, media is used, how culture is being perceived and constructed - but mostly has had an effect on language (Louhiala-Salminen, 2009). Developments and shifts in disciplinary boundaries and definitions such as can be observed in sub-areas of communication literature are likely to be due to bodies of literature reaching a critical level of maturity (Reinsch, 2009). It is also the maturity in the other areas of literature that are relevant for this study that ultimately allow for the project to become feasible and a valid contribution to the existing body of literature. A concept that is visible at the hotel front desk; effective and efficient communication is made possible in this "polyglot dialogue" through both active and receptive linguistic competences (Johnen, 2010; Roelands & Thije, 2006; Schmitt, 1985).

## 3.4 Disciplinary boundaries and interdisciplinary opportunities

The Social Sciences have demonstrated an interest in the concept of interpersonal relations, but different areas of research and discipines have fairly diverse interpretations of the concepts. Holtgraves and Yang (1990), for example, identify Brown and Levinson's theory as "clearly a social psychological theory of language usage" (p. 719). As a result, their empirical study employs methods relevant to research in Social Psychology. Using undergraduate American and Korean subjects for their experiments, the authors have a 7-point scale to rate

politeness in the categories proposed by Brown and Levinson. In their results, they report partial support for Brown and Levinson's theory, which is replicated by other authors that engage in mere quantitative testing of the theory. Researchers continue to find ways to partially support Politeness Theory. Research conducted by Johnson (2007) provides a clear example of this. Published in a communication journal, her article disregards completely any scholars working outside the communication discipline. Examples like this portray the boundaries that still seem to exist between disciplines. In the case of politeness as a research context which produces large amounts of literature, such disregard of findings in other disciplines might well impede the advancement of research as a whole. Albeit Johnson (2007) constructs a number of scenarios to test Brown and Levinson's premises, she adds the additional concepts of perceived appropriateness and effectiveness of potential face threats. She proposes that "effectiveness is a relatively concrete judgment of the degree to which a refusal inhibits or encourages continued pursuit of interaction goals. Appropriateness, by contrast, requires evaluating a broader social context" (p. 200). This wider social context of individual interactions is where this study is situated and describes the contribution that is attempted at being made to existing literature which may have previously taken a rather narrow approach to interaction, as described in the examples in this section.

## 3.5 Service encounters: studying organisations

Studying what happens in an organisation provides a specialised lens on society. Grey (2013), however, notes that much of what happens in an individual's life in modern societies takes place in organisations. Organisations therefore matter, Grey argues. However, there is strong evidence in the literature suggests that research into organisation does not develop the connection between individual and society as a whole (cf. also Grant, Hardy, Oswick, & Putnam, 2004). Research into organisations is traditionally associated with perspectives on management, "one of the great success stories of the modern world" (Grey, 2013, p. 51). Implied in this is that humans, their behaviour and their values and beliefs, can be managed and controlled. However, Grey laments that mainstream theories and approaches to addressing and researching organisations have developed a one-sided interpretation of what constitutes an organisation. While it was proposed earlier on that communication is concerned with effective speakers, organisational theory revolves around the question of efficiency. The position of said efficiency is built into organisational processes and not effectively co-constructed in context. Here, Grey uses automated phone lines as an example - an efficient process for the organisation, but not (necessarily) for the customer.

### 3.5.1 Communication in service literature

Management is highly concerned with making organisations more productive, a higher economic success. Proposing and implementing change in both material and people is common, but often (or always) bound to fail (Grey, 2013). Imposing behavioural standards is likely to not generate desired results, since often any changes are only executed at the most superficial level (e.g. Ogbonna & Wilkinson, 1990). I argue that effective and efficient communication are best understood as contingent to each other which will be demonstrated throughout this study and empirically defined in the discussion chapter. This is not a new notion, but scholars have been rather successful in keeping emerging research apart by employing discipline boundaries. Grant and Idema (2004) note that there is a very clear distinction between literature concerned with discourse and communication that has developed from within organisation and management theory and literature that has addressed conversations from within a sociolinguistic framework. Grant and Idema identify this distinction as one of the main reasons for what they call the "limited cross-fertilisation" between the two paradigms. The authors urge scholars to take a "hybrid" approach to studying organisations and its discourse; they propose that communication needs to remain situated in the organisations to address the environment with all its restrictions and dilemmas that are characteristic to the workplace and its actors' everyday experience holistically. In this review, considerable attention is therefore given to literature that can explain how the social context of hotel front-desk interactions was formed, since it is practitioners that have shaped it into what can be observed today. In order to make sense and explore how participants in the interactions perform effective and efficient communicative actions, both types of literature are used.

### 3.5.2 Organisations and services

Services have attracted a large amount of attention in research over recent years. Its contribution to the GPD in countries like the USA and Great Britain can account for as much as 80% (Bitner et al., 2008; Ogbonna, 2011). Services have been investigated in great depth in discourse oriented literature. However, it seems that those investigations neglect what a company is attempting to accomplish with the provision of a service. For a company, people are a complication for selling, but it is distinctive for services that they cannot occur without their presence; people and services are inseparable. Still, for companies and customers are often unclear about the distinction between a product and a service. A product is tangible and can be possessed (Fließ & Kleinaltenkamp, 2004; Shostack, 1982, 1983). A service, however, is a process that is "provided for and/or co-created with customers" (Bitner et al., 2008, p. 3).

Although this study is concerned with communicative behaviour, it is to be acknowledged that conversations are not the only aspect of what makes a service encounter. A service, according to Bitner, Ostrom and Morgan (2008) contains: customer actions, *onstage/visible contact employee actions*, backstage/invisible contact employee actions, support processes, and physical evidence (p. 6). While the analysis is strictly focused on *one aspect*, the knowledge and social reality in which the participants communicate remains implied. The argument is put forth that while it may be true that academic disciplines are conservative with little desire to change (Fisk, Brown, & Bitner, 1993), research is conducted with particular goals in mind. As such, it must be paid heed to the fact that research in management has focused on the business aspect of why service encounters exist primarily. Literature relevant in this area is often only on a secondary note concerned with the interdependencies between the organisations and the actions of their staff (Bitner et al., 2008; Jackson, 1977). Communication is still observed to be the principal activity in an organisation (Boden, 1994; Klemmer & Snyder, 1977). Yet, the review of the literature rooted in discourse also demonstrates that a complete and sole concentration on visible ("frontstage") behaviour is equally biased (Sarangi & Roberts, 1999).

### 3.5.3 Service encounters and the notion of culture

Culture for this study is not understood as necessarily intercultural, but rather as a form of social organisation from global to national, to organisational and finally group cultures (Leung, Bhagat, Buchan, Erez, & Gibson, 2005). Johnson's (2007) introduction of "effectiveness" and "appropriateness" could provide a useful way to link research with applied disciplines. "Effectiveness" is a common form of assessing in business and management, together with the related term "efficiency" (Hsieh, Wang, Huang, & Chen, 2010). Being effective is a competency, meaning that it is very important for organisations to have people do their jobs effectively to be successful (Siu, 1998). This link ties well with the concept of service encounters, because services can be distinguished to other operations by identifying them as processes instead of "a thing" (Grönroos, 2001).

The review of the relevant literature shows that even though there is a great interest among scholars in investigating service encounters and front-line staff in the hospitality industry, most scholars content themselves with Hofstede's seminal work and his findings in discussing aspects of national and corporate culture (e.g. Ang & Massingham, 2007; R. Bell, 2006; Craig & Douglas, 2006; Dastmalchian, Lee, & Ng, 2000; Johns, Henwood, & Seaman, 2007; Morden, 1999; Mwarua, Sutton, & Roberts, 1998; Rashid, Sambasivan, & Johari, 2003), thus, mimicking tendencies in politeness research. Furthermore, business research on front-line staff is mainly focussed on the standardisation of behaviour that will lead to satisfied customers. The impact of

change management and the general improvement of the corporate culture in an organisation has therefore received more attention than the investigation of the role of national culture in guiding employees' behaviour in and outside the work place (Craig & Douglas, 2006; Luk, 1997).

The specific behaviour of individuals in corporate scenarios has been investigated by both researchers and practitioners in the business field since the 1980s. Over the years, corporate culture started to be seen as a major contributor to the success of any company (Wilson, 1997). As a result, researchers have developed an interest in how corporate culture can aid in guiding employees' behaviour and lead the organisation to increased performance and success (Rashid et al., 2003). Communication research by scholars like Ladegaard (2007) speaks of a general friction that can be caused by different nationalities that work together in the same organisation. Even though business culture is a well-established concept in the corporate world, business scholars have often "dismissed (it) as vague, undefined, and dis-connected from day-to-day business affairs and as having little impact on the bottom line" (Want 2006, p. 83). Ogbor (2001) highlights that corporate culture is a socially constructed ideology which can even be used to control individuals in the company, thus, not only regulating behaviour, but in some cases undermining the beliefs held by the individual. Still, Ogbor suggests that corporate culture is necessary to create a harmonious work place.

### 3.5.4 Service quality in service encounters

Staff behaviour is researched from a number of different viewpoints, or rather in different categories that appear to be measurable in some sense. For this study, politeness and rapport constitute the relevant key terms. In this section, it is constructed how service quality is treated as an example of these terms in the literature. The majority of the research is concerned with customer satisfaction or the improvement thereof (cf. also reviews by Buttle, 1996; Nitin, Deshmukh, & Vrat, 2005). For the purposes of this study, a number of sub-categories have been devised to identify areas where the importance of the expression of culture and politeness becomes apparent: service quality (e.g. Atilgan et al., 2003; Buttle, 1996; Maxwell, Watson, & Quail, 2004; Nitin et al., 2005); staff training (e.g. Garavan, 1997; McColl-Kennedy & White, 1997); and stereotyping (e.g. Osland & Bird, 2000; Paraskevas, 2001; Solnet, 2007).

Clark (1993) finds that staff has to be trained to develop a "sixth sense" in order to apply social skills appropriately. Yet, she noted that many managers seem to think that the desired "nice personality" in their staff is a trait that people are "born" with and nothing they could acquire through training (p. 57). According to Osland and Bird (2000), general cross-cultural training and research is mainly based on what they call "sophisticated stereotyping". Even though they agree that this framework is helpful, they, like Hall (1990), strongly suggest that students and trainees

have to be made aware of the complexities of their own culture first, before they can attempt to understand a different one. Stereotyping can be described as "a perceptual and cognitive process in which specific behavioural traits are ascribed to individuals on the basis of their apparent membership in a group." (Cox, 1993, p. 88). Cox notes that "stereotyping" might sometimes be regarded as close to "prejudice"; stereotyping can be described as "a process by which individuals are viewed as members of groups and the information that we have stored in our minds about the group is ascribed to the individual" (p. 88), whereas prejudices are focused on attitudes towards a group of people and the assumed traits that they embody. He suggests that one explanation for why people stereotype might be related to visual and mental efficiency.

McColl-Kennedy and White (1997) indicate, however, that it is possible training at the front-line in hotels might not necessarily understand the needs identified in hospitality research. They note that the relationship between service provider and customer interaction has also received little attention from scholars. Still, branded service organisations specifically are designed to promote and ultimately sell a particular form of standard in service behaviour to their customers (Ritzer, 1993, as cited in Lashley, 2002, p. 255). As a result, these organisations rely heavily on corporate training to provide employees with the knowledge that they sense as being indispensable for their daily work. A strong service culture is therefore understood to be the key in providing the basis of a successful organisation (Lashley, 1999, 2002). It is observable in the literature that management cannot simply rely on feedback from customers in order to judge perceived service quality. If a guest does not complain, it does not automatically mean that the service rendered was satisfactory. Indeed, the politer a customer, the less likely it is for this specific person to voice a complaint. Yet customer feedback is invaluable for the development of the organisation, therefore it is imperative for the management to create suitable channels of communication that can be used for customers to voice their opinion, without necessarily focussing on minute detail, but also providing a way, so that customers do not have to return the written suggestion directly to a staff member (Lerman, 2006).

The service provider is usually the "first point of contact" with an organisation for any customer. Although the scripts that define the encounter are not necessarily identical between organisations, the goal for the staff member is to ensure that the customer has a positive impression of the organisation – the customer is the very core of the interaction. In today's highly competitive business world, customers demand more sophisticated service. Standardised scripts are no longer sufficient to create benchmark service. Thus, a service encounter is comprised of two components: a technical part that describes the "know-how" of the service provider, and a functional part that indicates "how" this service is provided (Barker & Härtel, 2004; Kim, Cha,

Knutson, & Beck, 2011; Ng, David, & Dagger, 2011; Prebensen, Larsen, & Abelsen, 2003). Schneider (1989, as cited in McCarthy, 2000) studied small talk during hotel registrations and discovered that the interaction is used to define identities for the individual guests. The goal of conversations in these interactions is relationship building, and used to construct a social identity that will govern which linguistic strategies will be utilised in the future interactions. Goal oriented - or transactional talk might resemble social – or interactional talk, but it is not the same. Yet, even in institutional talk, it is often possible that a 'real' conversation can ensue after the task or goal of the commercial aspect has been completed (Cheepen, 2000).

In service-based industries, the literature seems to conclude that customers establish rapport and relationships with personnel as opposed to the organisation itself. Research suggests that as a result, service encounters might be characterised by lower levels of politeness during the interactions to describe what has been described as a commercial friendship (cf. also chapter 2 for specific notions of interactions in the tourism context) that develops between guests and front-line staff in the hospitality industry (Butcher et al., 2002). Lashley (2002) calls this type of behaviour in service encounters "Have-a-nice-day" (HAND) culture. Lashley explains that today, this also means that staff are usually required to wear an ever-present smile. This type of behaviour requires not only a disciplined management of emotions by front-line staff, but also might go against the employee's actual feelings. A corporate dictated behaviour can equally be at odds with the customer's requirements during the service encounter. As a result, both the linguistic and nonverbal cues and actions could be a source of misunderstandings (McKechnie, Grant, & Bagaria, 2007). These "peculiar characteristics of host-guest interaction" are therefore more likely to be an attempt to accommodate a great variety of stereotypes, instead of providing a personalised service (Pearce & Stringer, 1991, p. 144). Overall, it has been observed that there are only very few requirements that the tourist is required to learn to succeed in their touristic environment. It appears that is assumed to be the service provider's role to ensure a smooth and successful communication (Berno & Ward, 2005). There seems to be an agreement in the literature that service provider in the tourism industry will indeed learn more about the national culture of their guests than the customers will learn about their holiday destination. However, as a result, just learning facts about a particular culture might lead service personnel to develop a highly stereotyped and skewed picture of their tourists' cultures instead of furthering a true intercultural understanding (Hofstede, 2001).

### 3.5.5 Customer-employee relationships
The literature acknowledges that relationships between customers and employees exist but that they have not received a great amount of attention from scholars, especially in respect to

rapport (Gremler & Gwinner, 2000). Even though it appears that the success of a business can be strongly related to positive relationships with customers (Butcher et al., 2002), management practice usually discourages a development of closer relations with a single service employee (Bove & Johnson, 2006). This type of personal loyalty is said to have an impact on customer retention should the employee leave the company, and a strong binding to a single employee could also impact efficiency, as customers might feel that it is more appropriate to wait until the service provider they are acquainted with is available (Beatty, Mayer, Coleman, Reynolds, & Lee, 1996; Butcher et al., 2002). The literature fails to agree as well on *how* to measure customer-employee relationships; researchers have employed measures of relationship closeness, relationship quality and relationship strength at different rates (Bove & Johnson, 2001).

Even though research has dealt with service quality in service encounters extensively, little attention has been given to what these terms actually mean to the customer or consumer, thus, failing at least to a degree to explore what customers want service providers to do in service encounters. Also, not a lot of research has covered how consumers in different cultures and countries evaluate or experience service interactions (Winsted, 1997). In her study, Windsted concludes that what makes a good service is dictated by different behaviours in different cultures and countries. This finding, she continues, means that it has serious implications for research design, and presumable pose challenges that have seen to present problems when addressed within a singular disciplinary context. Winsted notes that it is difficult to find or develop measures that are general enough to span cultures, but at the same time are specific enough to be implemented through managerial practices. However, she points out that other comparative studies have had to deal with similar limitations and therefore have had to develop specific scales for different countries, detailing a preference for a positivistic approach in research on business and hospitality. Winsted also highlights that prior research on service interactions has found that service encounters are mainly, and even mostly and foremost, social encounters (see also Czepiel, 1990). Butcher et al. (2002) develop this thought and point out that if there is indeed such a social aspect to the service encounter, there will be certainly opportunities for genuine relationships to be formed between the employee and the service receiver. And yet, the authors find that scholars have not even attempted to investigate whether these relationships are "real" or "artificial" and have made do with terming friendly, but commercial relationships "commercial friendships". Blue and Harun (2003) point out that "tourism" is a form "commercial hospitality", a concept that deviates strongly from the traditional understanding of hospitality between friends and family. As a purpose of social interaction, "traditional hospitality" does not require payment, but "commercial hospitality" is focused on satisfying a paying customer, Blue and Harun explain. The authors foresee that travel is likely to gain even more importance and become even more

commonplace and they urge researchers to consider that "a greater need will arise for hospitality personnel with a thorough knowledge and understanding of host-guest communication" (p. 90).

Trust has been identified as important and common occurrence in institutions and their interactions (Clark, Drew, & Pinch, 2003; Gremler & Gwinner, 2000; Hultgren, 2011; Kuroshima, 2010; Placencia, 2004; Ryoo, 2005). Trust is here understood as a way in which participants decide their actions based on expectations formed about other's future actions that will prove correct after the interactional sequence has completed. Decisions on own actions are displayed without being able to monitor the evaluated parties prior to their decision. Trust in this definition is closely related to expectations about reputations and (moral) obligations (Dasgupta, 1988). Although familiarity with an organisation may be represented in the formation of service relationships (Gutek, Bhappu, Liao-Troth, & Cherry, 1999), trust is established in a familiar environment, but a choice as a propositioned solution for an interactional problem at hand (Luhmann, 1988). Trust, as it is achieved in singular episodes of interaction, thus ultimately is related to the construction of social order within an institution that allows for effective and efficient communicative actions (Gellner, 1988). Trust has been said to be of importance in human interaction when there is a possibility for one party to disappoint the other, thus a form of interdependence exists between participants as well as a need to depend to people in order to achieve goal oriented interactions (Gambetta, 1988; Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 2006). At the hotel front desk, guests negotiate their trust of an organisation with front line staff, frequently at the hotel reception desk, thus with employees that act as agents as well as gatekeepers to the institution (Holmes, 2007; Kerekes, 2007; Strong, 2001; van De Mieroop & Schnurr, 2014). In this role, it becomes apparent that there exist different motives for establishing trust in a service encounter: on one hand, trust renders a communicative interaction more effective, on the other, the organisation stands to gain an increased economic performance through the behaviour of its employees (Dyer & Chu, 2006; Sako, 2006). Being able to establish trust with hotel guests thus quickly becomes a desirable trait for employees (Meyerson, Weick, & Kramer, 2006). Trust may thus not present itself as a purely rational concept as might be identified by common sense notion. The interactions appear to be bound on notions of trust as it relates to trustworthiness in the interactant, and thus the organisation as a whole, a notion that is calculated into managerial prepositions in institutions (Hardin, 2006; Williamson, 2006).

## 3.6   Interpersonal behaviour and courtesy in service encounters

Many researchers (e.g. González & Garazo, 2006; Kong & Jogaratnam, 2007; Lee, Nam, Park, & Lee, 2006; McColl-Kennedy & White, 1997; Nickson, Warhurst, & Dutton, 2005) name courtesy as one of the key essentials for the interaction between employees and customers.

Bargiela-Chiappini and Harris (2006) also note that interpersonal behaviour in the workplace and the nature of politeness are posed in direct relation to specific situations and their respective institutionally observable norms. Traverso (2006) distinguishes ritual acts that occur in a social encounter from other acts by attributing them a pure symbolic value that does not serve a pragmatic value. In a service encounter, Traverso says, a request would have a functional value, whereas thanking for a favourable outcome would have a symbolic one. However, she says, ritual sayings like "please" can also be used to express a functional value.

In interpersonal interaction, building rapport is usually considered to be an important skill and of great consequence for the overall encounter (Clark et al., 2003). This makes research on politeness distinctively relevant when contemplating rapport-building interactions (Ädel, 2011) and shows how engagement can be used as a bridge to research in applied disciplines, here notably business and tourism. Linguistic relationships has not only been identified as relevant for everyday interactions, but has also been investigated in the workplace. The front-line division of any organisation has some unique characteristics that make the work environment different to challenges an employee might face in a management role (Robertson, 2003). As a result, service encounters have been the subject of a large amount of research and have been treated differently to communication between co-workers. Language usage and the establishment of relationships, however, have not received a lot of attention from scholars. One example of research that has looked at the importance of relationship in service encounter has examined the use of phatic communication that aids in building rapport and making service encounters a pleasant experience (Placencia, 2004). Placencia's study is set in residential neighbourhoods in Quinto, Ecuador and, thus, provides additional information to the body of literature that is usually situated in English speaking settings, although it remains a monocultural study. Her study focuses on existing relations and familiarity between customers and shop owners, investigating the development of positive rapport in an institutional setting.

### 3.6.1 Language in service encounters

Blanton (1981) observed that training in tourism had been focused solely on vocational and technical skills. Blanton laments that education programs fail to consider the potential problems and risks in social and cultural areas that the front-line worker is exposed to in communication with the guest. He concluded that programs should be developed that "create an awareness of the rationale for the industry, the influence of culture on behaviour, the logic behind rules, and the ethics behind responsibilities." (p. 129). And yet, vocational training remains steadfast at the very centre of a typical hospitality curriculum (Knowles, Teixeira, & Egan, 2003). Employees in tourism have been ascribed these particular vocational identities based on the

notion that work in tourism is different to other lines of work in regards to aspects of ownership, organisation, training requirements, duration of employment to the level of salaries – with additional discrepancies between contexts and countries. Duncan, et al. (2013) report on the common and widely held perception that work in tourism is characterised by an unskilled and transient workforce that nevertheless must meet an increasingly complex construction of consumer demands – demands that extend from issues of increased global mobility of individuals to cultures as a commodity and source of miscommunication to providing service and adding value to an institution.

Holmqvist (2011) observes that up to date very little research has been conducted focusing on the personal interaction between customers and service providers. This includes differences between language groups, as well as a particular ability or lack thereof to speak a particular language and the effect on the perception of the service encounter. Holmqvist suggests that in his study the opportunity for customers to use their first language was very important to participants, no matter what cultural or geographical differences they may have had. The importance was even higher in "high-involvement" service encounters (p. 188). Moreover, he found that language carries a "sense of personal identity" and that customers can display an emotional attachment to what constitutes their native language to a degree that surpasses by far what may be practical in a communicative context. The lack of a common language in which both customer and service provider can "interact at full ease" instead of relying on a language that only allows for practical matters of communication could therefore influence a customer's perception of the service received and even influence in choosing one service provider over another (Holmqvist, 2008, p. 147). Fernandez et al. (2004) had already noted in medical encounters that the communication process that attempts to overcome language barriers appears to lack a precise description or understanding. Fernandez et al. report that physicians who speak Spanish fluently are not only likely to have better interpersonal connections with their patients and are more successful in eliciting concerns from their patients, they also note that physicians are usually quite accurate in how effective their communication is with various and diverse populations. Interestingly enough, other studies have found generally that especially low-involvement services (e.g. mainstream dry-cleaner) benefit from targeting particular ethnic groups through hiring of ethnic personnel, whereas this seems to be less important for high-involvement services (e.g. lawyers) (Donthu & Cherian, 1994). Choices in personnel at the front-line may thus have been described by a direct effect on the customers' perception of a service situation.

Blue and Harun (2003) approach hospitality language in front-line service encounters in the sense of it being a professional skill. Blue and Harun note that this distinctive 'hospitality

language' has not received a lot of attention from scholars albeit a growing need for front-line staff to communicate with guests effectively. However, they describe that hospitality research agrees that host and guest engage in a certain form of predictable behaviour which is also an indicator for politeness. The authors indicate that English has the status of lingua franca among travellers worldwide (This is widely proposed in the literature; it is not necessarily true for the corpus in this present study. Details on this can be found in chapter 4). Blue and Harun comment on how their own experiences in travelling in Europe, Asia and Latin America shows that English is a language that is widely spoken by employees at the front desk. The authors note that English is spoken "to our embarrassment, even by employees in very lowly positions, presumably with fairly limited education." (p. 77), denoting their perception of the skills they would usually expect at the front desk. They continue to identify a list of minimum language skills that front line staff need to be proficient in when dealing with customers: (a) how to address a person; (b) how to solicit and give the necessary information; (c) how to respond to questions/requests; (d) how to use prompts; (e) how to use gestures; (f) how to deal with difficult customers; and (g) how to appease complainants. Yet, the authors found that that hotel training does not cover skills to aid new receptionists interact with guests. This is an observation which is shared by researchers across the tourism field. On language usage, Blue and Harun's case study found that receptionists often employ informal language when talking to guests, but at the same time they use a 'staged' language that is specific to hospitality and follows its own rules.

## 3.7    Service encounters in CA literature

Service encounters have received some interest from scholars in CA. Usually such encounters are easily dismissed as frequent, yet unimportant communicative situations. However, it is indeed that particular understanding of scholars, practitioners, and lay persons alike that makes them a fascinating study to some researchers (Brown, 2004). Service encounters must be considered of high relevance to an organisation, because "the guest is irrefutably a hotel's *raison d'être"* (Ogle, 2009, p. 160). Communication at the front desk is thus important but also subject to the hierarchical constricts in business.

Service encounters involve that the concerned parties understand what participation in the conversation looks like (Schmitt, 2012). Interactions however, are not rigid or homogeneous. Instead, variations are usually observable on a number of levels (Traverso, 2001a; Zimmerman & Boden, 1991). This quality of service encounter, of following a more specific agenda than ordinary conversations, may well be what has drawn researchers into analysing service and their language. As a result, studies concerned with what is orderly in a service encounter have not been able to produce a simple representation of a "generic" service encounter. Félix-Brasdefer (2015)

most recently has attempted a complex "flow chart" of how a service encounter unfolds. For the purpose of this study, the overall structure of the interactions is presented as a basis for the analysis, and also as a means of addressing and comparing structural similarities and differences across the analysis chapters. It has to be pointed out that there exists a fairly extensive body of research that addresses service encounters. Félix-Brasdefer's recent book on the language of service encounters has been addressed in chapter 3. It was noted that, approaches to how to best describe the service encounter can vary greatly, even if they are based around the central theme of "language" or use the same framework, here CA. In regards to structural organisation, this study follows what has been proposed in seminal CA literature, and more recent studies that follow the approach in organising sequences established in seminal studies (e.g. Szczepek Reed, Reed, & Haddon, 2013). Traverso has published numerous studies about language in service encounters, using CA as a framework. Her work is often exploring aspects of encounters that have not been addressed by fellow researchers. As stated earlier, this study follows the established CA terminology. Traverso, however, utilises the term "script" quite regularly in her studies to describe the structural sequencing of service encounters (cf. e.g. Traverso, 2001a, 2001b, 2001c). The idea of employees using scripts is widely referred to in business, management or hospitality literature (e.g. Gustafsson, Edvardsson, Nickson, Warhurst, & Dutton, 2005; Hubbert, Sehorn, & Brown, 1995). Moreover, employees themselves may make reference to their own script[7]. Ultimately, however, despite activities in arrival sequences commonly occurring at the same time in the interactions, the agenda and its order is still co-constructed and achieved locally and at the moment the interaction takes place (Boden, 1994; Gülich, 1980; Schegloff, 2006b; Ten Have & Psathas, 1995). Consequently, the notion of highly ritualised behaviours and organisational agendas is used in this analysis. At the same time, it is still acknowledged that talking about language in everyday life is not a prerogative of the scientist, but can be described by any competent user of that language, be it a layperson, a practitioner, or a scientist in any given discipline (Clayman & Maynard, 1995). But lending insight and comprehension to how interactional collaboration is achieved in a specific setting has been described as central to social science, and especially to how sociology views human society (Zimmerman & Boden, 1991). Observing the overall structural shape that communications take is not only central for the subsequent analysis in the respective chapters, but the notions of how topics are organised and introduced, is also vital for the entire analysis, in describing how rapport, and ultimately social relationships can develop over subsequent interactions (Button, 1991).

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[7] During my data collection, employees have talked about role play activities for which they had to write a script; at other times staff new to working at the reception were (verbally) given a list of subjects that they needed to communicate to the guests; cf. also Anderson (2006).

Kuroshima's (2010) account on ordering in service encounters takes a very literal approach to the topic. Kuroshima addresses specifically the activity of ordering in her analysis, however she also explores sequence organisation in CA from a slightly broader concept. She observes that "ordering" as a particular component in service encounters has not received much attention; scholars may have investigated only interactional aspects, but have omitted the details of the interaction. Ordering may appear quite procedural, but the process is more complex that it may seem at first glance (also, cf. Ehlich and Rehbein (1972) for a somewhat unsuccessful description of ordering sequences in restaurants). Kuroshima (2010) explains that the goal orientation in an ordering sequence which may be prone to contractions demonstrates participants trust in human communication, even if it still carries the possibility of a subsequent misunderstanding. Thus, although a task in a service encounter might be relatively simple for an employee to master, the underlying interactional mechanisms are highly complex. This is also true for interactional order for different activity types in service encounters at the hotel front desk. The literature shows a clear interest in differences between mundane and institutional interactions. Yet a more complex corpus reveals as present in this study may show that structures in institutional interactions may not be as rigid as it would appear in the literature, e.g. a service encounter may take a more distinct order than a singular terminology lie "service" would allow for. The problem of disregard for interdisciplinary usage (and understanding) of relevant literature in different fields seems to perpetuate lack of advancement in either field. Hsu and Chiang (2011), for example convert Kuroshima's (2010) detailed account of structural organisation in a service encounter into the basis for a standardised script, without providing empirical evidence for the suitability.

A shift to linguistic observation could also provide a different explanation of the perception that the service provider should bear the majority of the linguistic success of the encounter could be the specific institutional set-up of the interaction. Kerbrat-Orecchioni (2006) describes interactions in shops as "specific work interactions" that are asymmetric and different to other work situations (e.g. work in offices), because the employee, or shopkeeper, is "at work", but the customer or client is not. Therefore, she explains, interactions are characterised by the presence of an "expert" and a "non-expert". The expert (employee) controls the script in the interaction, but the interaction is not "unequal": the author points out that "the customer has other reasons for being superior: he is up to a point the "king" and the salesperson is at his "service" (p. 81). Service encounters, she suggests, are dependent on cultural conventions and knowing "*with whom* and *in what situation* it is normal to be polite" (p. 100). Traverso (2006) expands on this thought and suggests that "conversational routines and ritual acts [...] are important in any service

encounter as a means by which participants come to an agreement on a frame for the interaction" (p. 105. 106). Traverso summarises the findings in her comparative study of French and Syrian service encounters and concludes that these communicative practices are almost non-detectable to the members of a particular culture, but are spotted at once by non-members of the community. Yet while a shift in focus towards an approach integrating language may be useful to a certain extent, neglecting the reality that the conversations take place in might be equally problematic in advancing research and may well propose such drastic accounts as put forth by Kerbrat-Orecchioni and Traverso. So a focus on one aspect in service encounters, such as the perceived gate keeping role of a front-line member of staff can be taken rather far by any discipline. In hospitality literature, scholars have gone as far as to suggest that front-line employees are meant to exert a moderating role in their communication with customers. Front-line personnel in hotels are described to have a great effect on their guests' behaviour in general and should make 'proactive efforts' to attempt to manage and control the behaviour of the guests. (Wu, 2007, p. 1526). Wu suggests that the employee is in a way even responsible for communication and understanding customer to customer interaction, and not just his or her own understanding with the guest. This moderating role appears to suggest a stronger asymmetrical relationship in regards to presumed conversational hierarchy and power. Here, it is necessary that managers "provide adequate discretionary power for their staff", so that employees can communicate efficiently and goal-oriented with their customers (Gill, White, & Cameron, 2011, p. 162).

## 3.8   CA and communication literature

The notion of a possible inclusion of CA into the realm of mainstream communication methodology is not new. Dervin, Grossberg, O'Keefe, and Wartella (1989) collected alternative approaches to the prevailing paradigm in the communication literature. Here, Goodwin (1989) provides an account of how the study of conversations can generate insights on how participants construct social order and how such an approach can "constitute a crucial locus for the study of human communication" (p. 100) as a whole. In the same volume, Frank and Beckman (1989) contribute to the collection with a more specific example of CA. Frank and Beckman present a micro-interactional investigation of medical care encounters. Using the principles of CA, they present a number of explanations of why patients may or may not heed a doctor's recommendations. Thus, they present a number of communicative strategies which are present during the encounter and which lead to a very specific outcome in this institutional setting. With this, they provide an example on how CA can aid in producing goal oriented outcomes within the research. Thus, the methodology of CA may lend itself to not only describe in detail a particular communicative situation, but to also point towards potential recommendations that professionals

in an institutional context may find beneficial to adopt. Drew, Chatwin, and Collins (2006) begin to develop possible applications of CA research in the investigation of medical encounters. The authors describe that certain communicative practices may encourage patients to participate more in the encounter; that communicative practices can influence the health care process, including unnecessary prescriptions; and that these practices can have an impact on issues of patient satisfaction. Hewitt, McCloughan, and McKinstry (2009) provide a (adapted) CA study which focuses on describing a particular goal. Although based within the realm of medical encounters, the authors emphasise that it is the first corpus based study on interactions between patients and general practice receptionists. In this study, the focus lies on divergent perceptions of the encounter between patients and receptionists. They situate their findings within the body of research which investigates the role of GP receptionists from different methodological frameworks. Their findings are not as concrete as may be possible within a CA based approach, however, the authors suggest that in order to interact effectively with patients, receptionists must not only complete administrative routines, but "careful listening and some level of personal attention" is also highly recommended (p. e265). Van de Mieroop and van der Haar (2008) present intercultural service encounters and how identities are constructed within a Dutch social work setting. They find that the client in this setting will usually cooperate with the agenda which the social worker puts forth. The client, however, can interrupt the pattern by making explicit cultural and religious matters. McPhee (1989) investigates vertical communication in organisations. McPhee discusses contexts in which employees utilise "I" and "we" when talking about their work. Although he investigates a particular aspect of language, he does not use a CA (or otherwise linguistically inclined) approach and argues that positioning through the lexical choice is an individual's way of how they interpret and respond to the organisational structure of their work environment by means of theoretical reasoning. Cameron (2008) takes a CA approach in her interpretation of top-down communication that she had noted of increased frequency in service encounters. Cameron demonstrates a theoretical approach to institutional interaction can eventually have. Cameron displays how communicative protocols which have been devised at the "top" of an organisation can cause communicative difficulties in the everyday interactions. She shows that the abstract agenda which some companies construe for service encounters effectively disregards how natural communication flows, or as it is expressed in the classic CA question "why this now?" (p. 154). Fujio (2004) approaches silence in business communication in a meeting between US American and Japanese participants using a CA approach within the realm of mainstream communication literature. Fujio concludes that within the concept of intercultural communication competence, all of the participants (native and non-native speakers) in an intercultural encounter are accountable to collaborate in the interaction, thus, it is not the native

speaker who serves as the standard for the interaction. Kidwell (2000) describes intercultural service encounters in front desk service encounters. From Kidwell's research, it becomes apparent that participants can use the institutional setting as a form of shared background which can help interactants to overcome and render unimportant linguistic difficulties.

## 3.9   CA and the order of service

CA is focussed on describing patterns in communication that are apparent in communicative practices or devices. Service encounters are repeatable interactions, similar between doctor-patient and conversations in a shop. It has been described as a "ceremonial order" (Strong, 2001). Construction of speech is designed to be meaningful and participants are accountable (and held accountable by co-participants) for their communicative actions. In this sense, the basic premise of what is referred to as adjacency pairs that communicating parties rely on can be seen as a normative framework for speech. This understanding is further aided by concepts of (a) turn taking; (b) turn design or construction; (c) sequence; and (d) action. Together, research into these concepts describes and defines a situation while it is co-produced by interactants. The understanding that CA brings to an analysis is thus locally produced and not reliant on third party observations (Drew & Heritage, 2006; Heritage, 2006d). The production of speech implied in the concept of adjacency makes the co-production of first and seconds in conversation conditionally relevant (Heritage, 2006b; Schegloff, 2007). This detail oriented approach to interaction makes the framework useful for investigations in various contexts. Furthermore, although communication in organisations occur in a particular environment, CA maintains the position that context is created within the situation and not superimposed by an external body; interactants create relevance turn-by-turn (Heritage, 2006b). However, talk here is recognised to be (1) goal oriented; (2) constrained by communicative business at hand; and (3) partial to specific inferential frameworks (Drew & Heritage, 1992b).

In some scenarios, the overall structure is highly regimented. A very distinct example of the structure in institutional talk is the area of police and emergency calls that have been demonstrated by CA scholars to be ordered in a very precise way to ensure that the task is completed as fast as possible (Drew & Heritage, 1992a). The phases of activity in such calls can be broken down into five specific phases: (1) opening; (2) request; (3) interrogative series; (4) response; and (5) closing (Heritage & Clayman, 2010, p. 57). Although this basic pattern might be observed most easily in emergency calls, this structure can be present in any situation that involves a request, even in ordinary talk. Heritage and Clayman (2010) refer to this organisation as a mark to orient to the "business" nature of the interactions. This pattern and observations have also been confirmed in CA research on service encounters (Kidwell, 2000).

The advent and increased usage of technology has also seen advances in CA and its methods and subjects of study. In current research, this can be seen in the interest in aspects of multimodality within the study of social interaction (Mondada, 2014). Knowledge about the organisations in service encounters is co-produced by participants not only in talk (Heritage, 2006b), but also in multimodal aspects, such as the use of artefacts (Brassac, Fixmer, Mondada, & Vinck, 2008). Service professionals become adept over time in dealing with their costumers and the associated tasks (Heritage & Clayman, 2010). Negotiating needs at the front desk is subject to shared understanding or, rather, common ground (Drew & Couper-Kuhlen, 2014). Social actions bear interactional consequences which is how conversational topics move forward (Heritage, 1988). Social interaction in service encounters have been described as having a specific order (Kuroshima, 2010). This type of interactional agenda (Hazel & Mortensen, 2014) allows service encounters to be reproduced by both service provider and the consumer.

Accounts in institutional interactions used to develop topics in interactions are normally volunteered, rather than elicited (Fisher & Groce, 1990). Interruptions in conversation are a commonplace event, and may seem relatively simple to describe (Roger, Bull, & Smith, 1988), but it has been demonstrated in this spectrum of service encounters that they can both further and hinder an interaction. Interactions are mutually coordinated by conversations (Quinn & Dutton, 2005). Coordination in service encounters is then dependent on assuring that individual news items are transmitted between interactants (Mondada, 2011). As such, institutional interactions are highly similar to everyday conversations in which a preference exists for an offer to be made, rather than for a request to be formulated (Kendrick & Drew, 2014). Interactions in service encounters involves engagement with tasks at hand, including managing artefacts and an element of narration, including storytelling (Charles Goodwin, 1984). In addition to multimodal aspects and the manipulation thereof (Mondada, 2011), other nonverbal aspects of communication, such as gaze (Heath & Luff, 2013; Kendon, 1990, 2004) and gestures (Hindmarsh & Heath, 2000) are utilised by participants to construct a service encounter. Accomplishment of a service encounter along with all its components is also based on an element of trust (Kuroshima, 2010; Sako, 2006). Interactions do not solely address spatial aspects in terms of surroundings, but further develop a more abstract sense of places (Sacks, 1995a). Participants in a service encounter construct a cooperative environment through their interactions (Akman, 2007). The routine business of the service encounter is construed through the use of routinised procedures (Kollock, 2006). Transitioning between topics is accomplished through verbal and nonverbal mechanisms (Drew & Holt, 2006). Interactional resources, such as politeness and rapport between parties, further aid in maintaining congruence between topics and goal orientation of the encounter. This is also reflected in epistemic knowledge and access thereof by the individuals partaking in the

conversation (Lindström & Sorjonen, 2013). Any asymmetries in knowledge are addressed cooperatively between interactants (Guttman, 1993). Participants in a frontline interaction need to be able to establish the service encounter quality of their conversation through their social actions and orient to it for the duration of the interaction (Heritage & Robinson, 2006; Nielsen, 2015). Conversational situations may be comparable across institutions, but at the same time are relevant for interacting parties at a specific time within a specified company setting (Orthaber & Márquez-Reiter, 2011). Behaviour relevant for the interactions is learned and applied in appropriate societal contexts (Reed & Szczepek Reed, 2014). Understanding and partaking in a service encounter is ultimately not solely based on comprehension of individual utterances and turns, but by being able to place it in and understand the overarching social context (Harley, 2014). This understanding has been promoted in CA as the idea of subsequent interactions forming a larger interactional project (Robinson, 2006) or intra-sequentially (Orthaber & Márquez-Reiter, 2011).

## 3.10  Literature frame

Research into hospitality and applicable contexts, such as tourism in general can provide a wider reflection of society, or, as Bell (2012) notes, act as "a social lens" (p. 137). Tourism is commonly portrayed from two different sides: one side focusses on economic aspects, thus, tourism as a money generating industry; the other side addresses people and their motivations for engaging in touristic endeavours (McCabe, 2009). As such, tourism is nestled between managerial aspects (prescribing communicative action) and interpersonal expressions (reflexive communicative action) (cf. Otto & Ritchie, 1996). The present study's design has allowed generating insights into a point where both of these aspects interconnect on an interactional level as they develop. This approach generates meaning while it is developed in interactions, and does not need to rely on feedback mechanisms based on perceptions (managers or guests) (Obenour, Patterson, Pedersen, & Pearson, 2006). It is recognised here that tourism is more than an important economic factor in today's world, but that it has other contributions to modern societies, including social, cultural and also environmental influences (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2006). Service encounters have been described as an important source of knowledge for the operating institution (Sørensen & Jensen, 2015).

Studies set in the realm of touristic endeavours are able to address a specific component of human interaction. Routines in conversations are not taken for granted by people, but need to be achieved through interactional collaboration (Schegloff, 2006b). Manifesting routines in conversations is important to maintain cohesiveness in interaction (Bladas, 2012). Tourism addresses the "constancy of human change" (Pearce, Moscardo, & Ross, 1996, p. 6) where familiar communication patterns are transposed into a new environment. Over the period of a

guest's stay away from home, the excitement associated with the unfamiliar gradually become routine interactions again, and promote a sense of safety found in familiar places (Pearce et al., 1996). Interactions ultimately affect the production of meaning and social habits (Boden, 1990).

## 3.11  Social structure, communications and organisations

Organisation and organising are understood for this study to be highly interrelated. Communication is a form of organising social activities that render life not only more predictable, but also effective. Organising is the same process, whether it occurs within an institution or in personal life. However, even if social activities are organised, they may not be particular orderly and in non-work life may be characterised by conflicts and other forms of unruliness. Organising in an organisation at the front-line operates under the premise that the customer can be assured that the institution get their requests done without much detour (Fineman et al., 2010). Organisations then face the problem of managing behaviour of staff and providing individualised service. Research in this area often portrays an institution as static, an unchanging entity (Fineman et al., 2010; Jehenson, 1973). At best, communication in an organisation can be described as an idealised system, created by the groups that form the institution (Jackson, 1977). In this sense, it has been argued that communication holds together socially constructed groups, such as an organisation (Sarangi & Roberts, 1999). Communication is then also used to analyse how individuals construct their own identities in relation to an institution (Hall et al., 1999; Holmes et al., 1999). Silverman (1999) however also observes that the social sciences have a long standing history in segregating one approach from another. Looking at identity and thusly incorporating matters of context into a conversational analysis can be seen as "muddying the water" as Silverman puts it (p. 410). Yet, this study is not concerned with what may be described as political differences in the different approaches. Instead, the study follows an integrated approach to research on conversations and dialogues. In order to describe social order at the hotel front desk, this study uses what social science has to offer to further scientific inquiry (Clayman & Maynard, 1995; Techtmeier, 1984).

Human agency and action in this sense is how business interactionally and socially is accomplished. Although the analysis of talk is usually associated with a micro level of investigation, this is not to say that an organisation is "macro", even though especially the management literature may seem to suggest this (Boden, 1994; Komter, 1995). Instead, social structure is something that humans do through their actions and that is not only oriented to, but that social actors hold each other accountable to (Zimmerman & Boden, 1991). In an institutional setting, this is made apparent in repeatedly and routinely reproduced interactional agendas (Boden, 1994; Wilson, 1991; Zimmerman & Boden, 1991). Common knowledge as constructed

through social interaction situates individual conversations into an organisation (Mehan, 1991; Wilson, 1991). Through this interface, the study addresses how interaction connects to a wider social structure and enables interactants to establish relationships (Button, 1991).

## 3.12  Implications for research into communication in service encounters

Although from a business point of view, communication is first and foremost needed to be effective in service encounters at the hotel reception, tourism research appears to also see the need to incorporate methods that allow for an approach that can study behaviour of customer and service provider at the same time (Czepiel, 1990). Czepiel explicitly addresses short-run and long-run effects of service relationships, and he points out that there is little know how an organisation and/or their customers describe the strength of their interrelationship and he continues to say that to no research had yet been interested in addressing the construct of service relationships in this particular phenomenon (p. 18). Butcher, Sparks, and O'Callaghan (2002) have attempted to fill this void by addressing what they called social relationship as expressed in "quasi-friendship versus commercial relationship" (p. 299), but as the authors note that they are the first to attempt to conceptualise this idea, their findings remain somewhat sketchy.

The purpose of this literature review was to demonstrate that there is no simple dichotomy in investigating and describing social realities with a specific focus on asymmetric interactions in service encounters as observed in international hotel front desk interactions. It has been developed that a focus on a singular aspect – be it a focus on language or a particular disregard with language brings methodological projects. Chapter 2 and 4 further address the concern of interdisciplinary research as well as considerations of the researcher conducting research that leads outside the host discipline. In these chapters, it is demonstrated how and why there has been particular emphasis on interdisciplinary concerns. Some recent research has shown that a disregard for particularities of another discipline can render results of a study rather questionable. Hernández-López and Blitvich (2014) used questionnaires to report on perceived impoliteness at the hotel front desk by Spanish tourists in English speaking countries. In their findings, the authors report that tourists judged actions, such as their child receiving a juice box before a day trip as polite. However, in light of the literature incorporated in the present review, it appears that Hernández-López and Blitvich understand a managerial decision to a problem or common problem as polite behaviour[8] Schwab and Rosier (2014) at the other end of the

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[8] In my own data collection, a similar situation was detailed by a senior hotel manager: in a German hotel, it is traditionally unusual to find coffee or tea making amenities in a hotel room. The premise being, that food and beverage are not only available in particular establishments in the hotel, but they are also services to be paid for. The hotel received a substantially large group of English tourists every week, and after the tourists complained every week about the lack of a kettle in their room, the hotel management implemented a policy to give any

spectrum, approached politeness from an economical background. The authors devised a statistical approach to measure how customers perceived company's responses to complaints. They concluded that customers are able to judge whether a letter is polite or not. As such, it seems that much remains to be investigated to address the disjointed approaches to communication in professional contexts. It has been argued that the literatures contingent on each other have reached a level of maturity over the past decades. Thus, research may breach out across disciplinary boundaries. It seems that recent textbooks aimed at students and those new to the area of approaches to intercultural communication have been designed to cater for a new generation of researchers even if they can but introduce individual notions[9] (cf. e.g. Kádár & Haugh, 2013; Schnurr, 2013; Spencer-Oatey, 2008b). In addition, it remains that the majority of research on the service industry and tourism is conducted in regards to English as the main vehicle of communication. The present study utilises natural interaction in the language in which they occur at the front desk. It can be seen that the location and marketing of a hotel influence where guests travel from to the establishment and thus the language spoken at the front desk. Chapter 4 provides a detailed account of the participating hotels in this study. Still, unlike previous studies, the present study provides a view beyond communication in English in service encounters, grounded in a particular sociocultural context. While the focus is not on German, a considerable amount of interactions were conducted in this language and the study thus contributes further to the literature describing service encounters in languages others than English in a study written in English (unlike examples such as Ehlich & Rehbein, 1972) .

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British traveller a kettle for their room upon their arrival. This decision was made because the hotel stood to lose a substantial amount of business if the British guests were to stay at a different hotel instead.

[9] However, it is somewhat questionable how a transition between an old and a new generation of research on politeness will proceed. Reportedly, the third postgraduate conference on politeness in 2015 did not receive a single abstract proposal and had to be cancelled (Mills, 2015).

# Chapter 4: Methodology

## 4.1 Aim of the chapter

A research design for a study should provide a convincing framework for both collection and the subsequent analysis of the resulting data (Bryman, 2001). In this chapter, strategies and decisions for what has been conceptualised and carried out in terms of collecting data for this to substantiate the research premise with highly convincing evidence. Data in this study is characterised as qualitative and the iterative processes of both reflective practice in data collection and implications for analysis are developed here (Dörnyei, 2007).

The graphic below illustrates the hotel front-desk as a research space, tying together the site of knowledge under investigation and methodological considerations for the present study.
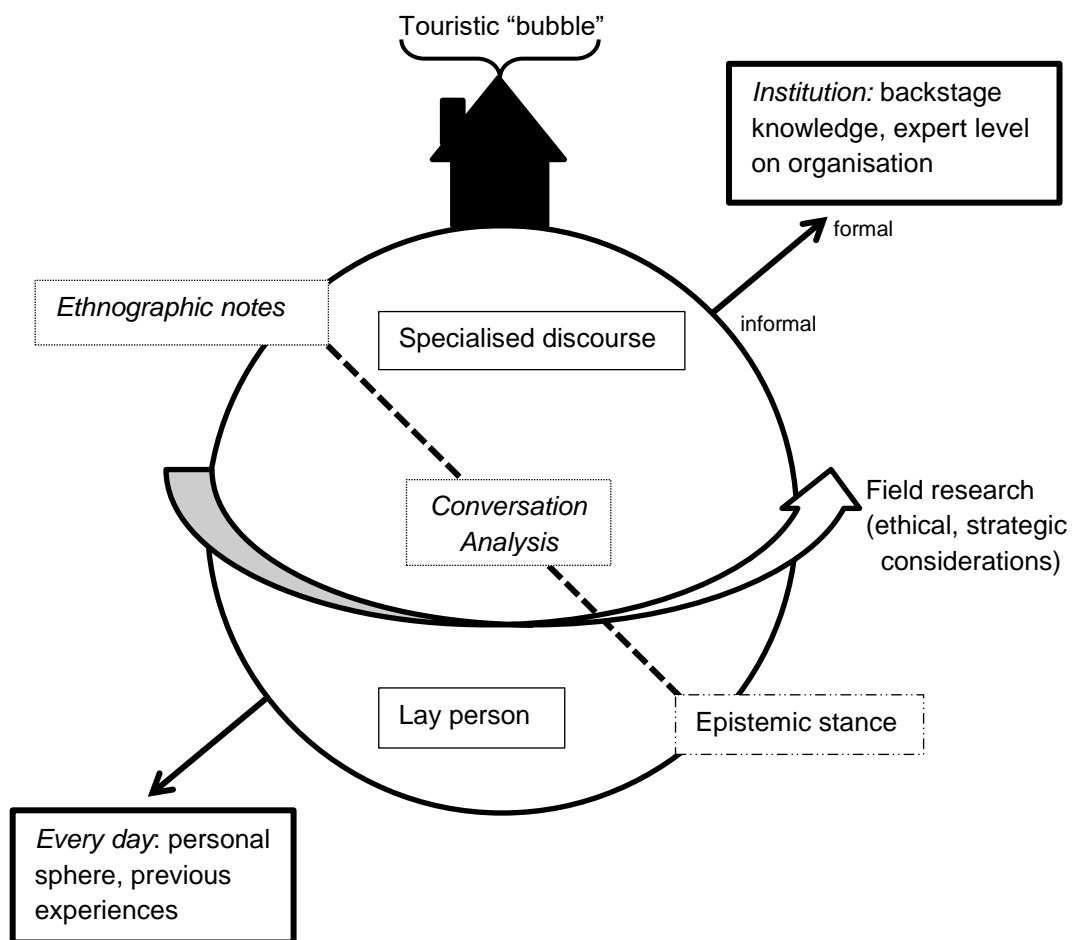


*Figure 3: The hotel as research space and research framework*

The hotel as a naturally occurring laboratory provides an interactional space for the user (guest) and the service provider (receptionist). Receptionists act as gatekeepers between the organisation (specialised discourse) and the lay person. In a hotel, the gatekeeping is done across a physical barrier, the front desk. Conversation Analysis is used to access the interaction and provide access to the content in real time. Epistemic knowledge asymmetries are addressed within the interactions. These do not occur without context, but are rooted to equal parts in mundane and institutional interaction. Knowing and not knowing is managed at within conversations. Here, ethnographic notes can aid in discovering ties between 'formal' and 'informal' displays of culture and organisation (Fielding, 2008). The overall design of the study is then subject to strategic and ethical considerations.

### 4.1.1 Motivation of study and research questions

Originally, the study was motivated to understand intercultural aspects of the recorded interactions. This assumption was based on the original review of the literature, and the assumptions presented within. The data obtained for the present study, however, demonstrated that the notion of intercultural is not of analytical importance; the data was collected in an environment where quite frequently the participants of conversations had different native languages, so that at least one of them would switch to another language. The analysis has shown that the participants do not render this aspect of interculturality relevant in the interactions. As a consequence, the focus of this study is placed on the interactional order of the encounters, while intercultural considerations are not at the centre since they are rarely made interactionally relevant in the conversations. The resulting overarching research question was:

*What is the overall structure of interactions at the hotel reception that establishes the institutional character of a service encounter?*

A number of subordinated questions guided the analysis:

- What are the sequential structures that coordinate the overarching intra-sequential project into individual encounters?
- What are the main sequence types in the individual phases (arrival, stay, departure) of the overarching interactional project?
- What are the main communicative behaviours that accomplish the encounter structures?
- What are the particularities in communicative behaviour and how do they progress in engagement over the course of the total stay?
- What are emerging patterns of interactional engagement in the language that are not bound by individual hotels, cultures or border boundaries?

## 4.2    Conversation Analysis (CA) as a framework (Methodology)

## 4.3    Analytic frame

Conversation analysis as an analytic frame allows an investigation of conversation in real time, providing access to the same information that participants have during the interaction. However, while it is an approach that has been chosen for its suitability for this study, methods have inherent weaknesses. Moerman (1988) extensively describes some of the limitations of conversation analysis and the possibility for ethnography to extend CA's application to complex social reality. Discussions of communicative conduct may be seen as incomplete if they are not linked to a broader analytical frame (Chriss, 1995). CA's structured approach to data allows for a disregard for context. However, social phenomena as described in the study are complex and the overall context in which the analysed interactions occur provide valuable insights to the social construct (Roberts & Sarangi, 2005). Data collection in an organisation gives a researcher time to familiarise themselves with the institution and gives rise to rich and in-depth knowledge about the agents as well as its protocols, written as well as implied. Both angles, CA and ethnography, allow for a distinct engagement with prior literature to produce a novel angle on a well-researched area. It allows for investigation of how social cohesion is established among interacting parties which, according to Kasper (2009), a "key topic in CA's project" (p. 25).

The analytic frame employed in this study allows for the investigation of a particular interactional project where beginning and end of the relationship are pre-determined by external factors. As such, the hotels have indeed acted as naturally occurring laboratories. The findings have been shown to be process oriented and not significantly different in individual data collection sites. The hotel with its actors has been established as an integral part in modern society (Bell, 2012) in which (maybe surprisingly) complex interrelations can be found between guest, receptionist and the hotel. An integrated analysis has used language as a means to address this complexity (Maynard, 1988), or what might be termed "a cluster of interrelated puzzles" (White & Hanson, 2002, p. 298).

CA has been built on the paradigm that social reality in mundane interaction is orderly and can be described by a detailed turn by turn analysis (Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1974). More recently, specific structures have also been acknowledged to exist in institutional talk and Sociology has demonstrated to have become increasingly interested with studies that specifically address the workplace (Drew & Heritage, 1992a; Heath & Button, 2002). The maturity of the

literature observed in the previous chapter thus provides a solid framework for investigations into communicative practices in highly specialised settings.

As a methodological approach, CA has been shown to deliver particular insights into studying interactions between professional staff and consumers of a service (Kerekes, 2007). In particular, to identify patterns of behaviour for staff to be more conscious about interactional strategies to help facilitate communication between professional and lay person (adapted from Robinson, 2006). In institutional settings there is an asymmetry between the experience of the professional and the customer: the professional is dealing with the particular encounter many times every working day, whereas the customer, or lay person is said to have a significant lower level of experience and knowledge of the situation (Heritage, 2006b; Heritage & Clayman, 2010). Institutional interactions are generally said to be rather robust in their overall organisation (Drew & Heritage, 1992a; Heritage & Clayman, 2010; Kidwell, 2000). A notion that presumes service encounters to routinely have the same goals. This is not necessarily observed in this corpus. For the purpose of this study, an activity in an interaction shall be understood as "the work that is achieved across a sequence or series of sequences as a unit or course of action – meaning by this a relatively sustained topically coherent and/or goal-coherent course of action" (Heritage & Sorjonen, 1994, p. 94).

The potential involvement of the researcher in collecting data for a CA based study appears to be hardly considered in any textbook. No consideration seems to be given to the role of the researcher in the study environment for the collection of data in the field for CA studies. A notable exception for this is the work by Moerman (1988) who directly integrates ethnographic fieldwork into CA-based investigations. While it may be possible to collect data without being personally involved; for this study, I became part of the organisation for the duration of my stay. Data collection in an overt role is subject to the construction of the researcher as an "acceptable marginal member" (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p. 68) within the organisation. The researcher must maintain a balance between being an observer, a member and an external actor. This requires personal reflexivity in navigating representing the organisation, interacting with participants and utilising an object, a video camera, to preserve data (Mondada, 2006). The multiple reasons will be addressed in detail in this chapter and relate to: access to the organisation; negotiated code of conduct for research in the hotel (e.g. dress code, times for access); work environment of receptionists; obligations of organisation to their customers (guests). Since the data collection proved to be more complex than what Levinson (2003) once referred to as "taping whatever we could get access to" (p. 25). Some ethnographic considerations are developed and the resulting ethical issues and concerns for the data collection. Furthermore,

differences between the quantitative measures researching communicative events regarding the doctor-patient interactions (Silverman, 2013). This is also due to what has been described as *communality* which develops between service provider and the receiving party, as well as interaction customer-to-customer (Goodwin, 1996). Conversations between receptionist and guest have been treated for the reasons developed in this chapter as *semi-private* (Kerbrat-Orecchioni, 2006). The literature treats service encounters as either *public* (Félix-Brasdefer, 2015), or at last *semi-public* (Placencia, 2005) (see chapter 2.6). This, however, was found to be insufficient for the corpus at hand. This observation is made to how interactions are treated by the participants, based on ethnographic observations on site. As such, the defining factor for the interaction is here the *space* in which the interactions are taking place (Urry, 2003) in conjunction with the high *emotional involvement* displayed by hotel guests related to the motivation of a satisfactory realisation of the stay at the hotel for both the guest and the establishment (Ryan, 2000). Thus, guests at a hotel transpose all of the interactions that they would be able to conduct by themselves at home to a temporary, secondary space where all affairs are handled through a gatekeeper.

The present study utilises videotaped naturally occurring interactions as the primary data source. Videotaped material allows for different aspects of the interactional data to be analysed which has specific implications for how the overall analysis is integrated. Conversation analysis constitutes of a fine-grained analysis of speech; newer technology, however, have made visual aspects of interactions more readily available to be included into the analysis and have been addressed in the literature as multimodal forms of study (Mondada, 2006; 2008; 2011)

Multimodality is treated by researchers differently and is subject to the overall research aim. For the present study, three areas of specific non-verbal behaviour have been included into the analysis of speech: gaze (Heath, Hindmarsh, & Luff, 2010), gestures (Kendon, 1977; 2004) and artefacts (Hazel &Mortensen, 2014). Together with verbal utterances, these elements are understood as describing the relevant context for the study and constitute the social realm, or *social structure* (Boden, 1994) for the social situation under investigation. Gaze, gestures and artefacts were seen to carry extensive communicative functions in the interactions in the corpus. Integration of the different multimodal elements was facilitated through the use of extensive ethnomethodological notes (Clayman & Maynard, 1995) to ensure that the analysis constitutes a cohesive whole.

In order to describe the social context, speech was analysed in the present study according to CA conventions and focuses on elements such as the structure of the interactions, the organisation of turn taking, and turn design. The analytic chapters describe how interactions at the hotel front desk contain elements of both institutional and mundane conversations and as such

additional analytic prominence is given to lexical choices participants make and aspects of asymmetry in the interactions between lay person and expert. Overall, these aspects are understood to comprise the action or activities agenda carried out at the hotel desk (Heritage, 2006).

The focus is put on describing the ordering of interactions in the analysis. Here, the study addresses three particular notions found in the literature: (a) interactions are chronological ordered events in time (Ryan, 1997); (b) the ceremonial order of interactions forms a "cycle of hospitality" (Blue & Harun, 2006); and (c) interactions at the hotel front desk form a coherent whole large scale communicative structure, or an overarching "interactional project" (Robinson, 2006).

## 4.4    Premises for CA in service encounters in hotels

Interaction between hotel guests and receptionists was seen to occur in difference distinctive phases ('arrival', 'stay', 'departure') that are elicited and managed in particular ways by the participants, but that have yet to be described by the literature. It is thus proposed that these phases are somewhat similar to what Robinson develops for medical interactions. Robinson (2006) proposes the term 'large-scale structure' to describe an interactional project in patients' new medical problems. Although the context is different in Robinson's work, he uses *project* to distinguish "a coherent package of social action, (which) contains multiple activities" (p. 53) from CA's activity sequences (cf. also Schegloff, 2007). In this sense, the analysis chapters in this project are organised according to the different structures or project pertaining to individual stages of a guest's stay in a hotel. In this first part, initial service encounters in the hotel check-in are addressed. It can be noted that the interactions which occur during the registration process of a hotel guest are highly structured. Still, in naturally occurring conversations, there are always variations, even in routine communications. However, they are similar enough, and follow a structure which is overall recognisable, so that inferences can be made about this particular type of service encounter (Ford, 2004; Levinson, 1983). What matters then, is to remember that conversational actions are accomplished in an interaction in turns which follow each other and take a particular shape (Schegloff, 2007).

Consequently, this analysis of the data focusses on sequences that have been gathered in different cultural contexts and feature native and non-native speakers both on the guest and receptionist site. The collections in the analyses attempt to demonstrate the robustness of the discovered patterns across various establishments and cultural contexts. Doing "arriving",

"staying" or "departing" is a distinguishable situation to other service encounters at the hotel front desk. In this sense, the target language is not the main concern, but rather the discovery of overarching patterns (Hymes, 1971; Kankaanranta & Louhiala-Salminen, 2010; Kidwell, 2000; Kurhila, 2004a; Psathas, 1995b). The selected examples in the chapters demonstrate not only what has been discovered in the collection of data, but also respond to some of the misalignments between sociolinguistic understanding of communication and practitioners perception (e.g. Cameron, 2008; McColl-Kennedy & White, 1997; Price, Arnould, & Tierney, 1995). As such, the analysis focusses on three key issues in the interactions: (a) turn-taking and lexical choice; (b) sequence organisation; and (c) non-verbal communication (gaze and gestures). Together, these three elements are used to describe the social reality that can be observed in hotels and their front-line communication.

Turn-taking and lexical choice is seen to clearly anchor the interaction in institutional interaction, and more precisely in the tourism sector. Sequence organisation is another very important factor for effective and efficient encounters and can demonstrate a mismatch between a guest's needs and the preferred order of information of a receptionist. Non-verbal communication ties the interaction together and can be seen as indispensable in building rapport and establishing politeness in the conversations.

## 4.5    Ethnographic considerations: data collection and development of study
Data collection in a hotel in my experience means becoming part of the community that constitutes the organisation (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; Van Maanen, 1979). Although CA and its accompanying seminal literature prides itself in minimising bias by not focusing on context, the process of data collection means being immersed in the culture, at least in a hotel context. As an industry, tourism and leisure are noted to still lack the established theoretical foundation found in other social science research (cf. also chapter 2), which raises a number of conceptual as well as tactical problems for conducting research in this area (Finn, Elliott-White, & Walton, 2000; Hall, 2005; Veal, 1997).

## 4.6    Data collection as a journey
Careful plans were made regarding not only the methodology to be used, but also possible sites for data collection. Thus, it was assumed that a singular, carefully chosen site would provide sufficient data to uncover observable behavioural patterns in the interactions. In hindsight, even though it appeared near impossible to gain access to a hotel that allowed me to collect data for the study, the process has enriched this study on multiple levels. It not only made literature that may

have been treated as irrelevant become more salient in ways that are still being overlooked in the literature on service encounters (e.g. Félix-Brasdefer, 2015; Hernández-López & Fernández-Amaya, 2015), but also allowed an extensive range of multimodal resources to be employed in the study. The data collection had a natural order that has ultimately shaped this study (Marcus, 1995). In qualitative studies, the researcher is commonly associated with the data and forms part in its contribution (Gray, 2014).

### 4.6.1    Stage Zero: in search for access

Although some text books address difficulties in gaining access to organisations, advice on how to overcome these are commonly kept brief and nonspecific (e.g. Finn et al., 2000; Gray, 2014; Silverman, 2013; Veal, 1997). For this study, documents in to gain access were prepared according to information found in the literature on research methods. Collis and Hussey (2003) provide some practical information for what they call "cold canvass" firms, that is attempt to gain access to an organisation without prior connection or other form of introduction. Richardson (1990, as cited in Creswell, 2007) suggests that a report presented to a trade audience will contain "literary devices such as jazzy titles, attractive covers, lack of specialized jargon, marginalization of methodology, common-world metaphors and images" (p. 181), a notion that was incorporated in the introductory information material. However, in line with ethical requirements of conducting research, questions of access that extend to legal and moral concerns in the data collection process were also explicitly considered (Heath, Hindmarsh, & Luff, 2010). These documents were meant to overcome what the literature has called 'external gatekeepers' (Reeves, 2010). In the case of this study, data collection was situated at the lowest hierarchy level within the hotel as an organisation. To obtain access, I needed to approach members of the highest hierarchy level, such as hotel managers, boards or other governing bodies and convince them of the validity of the study. Gatekeepers are present at various levels during the research. They influence the initial access negotiation and the relationship with gatekeepers present during data collection (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007).

Sampson and Thomas (2003) compare gaining access to an organisation to a full-time job, a notion that I can relate to for this study. In all of my negotiations and "house calls" to the hotels, I often found that receptionists expressed a sincere interest in the study, and confirmed that they would ensure that the information is passed on to the right person. I concluded that almost-access to organisations may to stem from gatekeepers' ultimate concern regarding public exposure of institutions' practices, despite the assurance of an ethical conduct of the study (Alcadipani & Hodgson, 2010).

Gaining access to video tape interactions in a hotel through formal channels was unsuccessful for my study. Instead, I decided to change my random purposeful sampling strategy to a purposive sampling to attempt to gain access through 'informal gatekeepers', that is, personal connections that ultimately led to convincing the formal gatekeepers of my expertise in the area and decision to become involved (Gray, 2014; Reeves, 2010). From personal contacts I secured an observational opportunity in a German hotel and subsequent sites for data collection in England, Germany and Spain (Rapley, 2014). Over the course of my communicative activities with diverse agents, I began to understand that I needed to sell my research project to prospective hotels on their terms, instead of merely presenting an academically contrived research proposal. When I began to make these changes in my negotiations, I also began to receive more favourable responses from approached parties. Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) describe the connection between theoretical knowledge of an organisation and a practical understanding as "native wit" (p. 41) which I used to overcome obstacles to access.

| Researcher-as-salesperson | Sales professional |
|---|---|
| Focus on research gaps | Focus on organisation's problems |
| Tendency to tell | Expert at asking questions |
| Detail oriented | Supplies details when required |
| Lexically dense | Reformulated into target language |
| Difficulty unpacking complex concepts | Simple everyday examples |
| Focus on research findings | Focus on solution |
| Research and identity interrelated | Research as product |

*Table 1: Researcher vs. Sales professional (adapted from Brady, 2009, p. 170)*

Brady (2009) describes the differing orientations a researcher and a sales person have towards a research project and suggests ways in which these can be translated and situated into the organisation's social reality. Academic research is linked to gaps in the literature, yet should be reformulated to incorporate the organisation's problem. The researcher's theoretical background knowledge should still allow the organisation to act as the expert. Research is formulated to investigate a particularity within the organisation, where these are frequently of little consequence to them. Complex academic concepts are expressed as what constitutes relevant everyday examples for the organisation. Findings in research may not necessarily be directly applicable to an organisation. Organisations, however, focus on getting things done, thus to produce solutions which needs to be accounted for in the communication between researcher and potential participant. Lastly, Brady (2009) notes that research and researcher are deeply connected; for an organisation, research constitutes a product.

Knowledge about the organisation and the associated roles facilitates the construction of the research identity, especially during early days of the data collection process. At this stage, the

researcher's know-how is comparable with that of a layperson or a new recruit to the company (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Goffman (1952) suggests in this thesis proposal that both participants and observers can become conscious of behavioural expectations through engagement within a social situation. Analytical problems in social science must be constructed by interactants turn-by-turn, and also accessible to the observer/analyst (Silverman, 1998). This development in unpacking different identities has been a crucial step not only in creating data collection opportunities, but also to inform the overall study (Laws et al., 2006). The strategies developed for a successful data collection also demonstrate how knowledge can and needs to be transferred between academia and practitioners in order to create understanding (Ren et al., 2010).

### 4.6.2    First stage: observation, "internship" (Germany; 4 star hotel, 63 rooms)

It proved difficult to gain access to a hotel to film interactions for the study. However, as a first form of access, one hotel in Germany invited me for a short "internship" into their organisation. The hotel caters for both business and leisure tourists. The restaurant and café are also available for people not staying at the hotel. Although I did not receive clearance to film interactions, this was the first time that I had access to the social site where I wanted to situate my study. Findings from this phase were implemented in later stages of interacting with institutions, both for negotiating access and communicating with employees at their level, within their context and from within their domain (cf. also Fishman, 1972; Sacks, 1972). I learnt to be part of a hotel, and learnt "the language", (Calvi, 2001) to communicate with actors at various stages of the internal hierarchy (Muñoz, 2005). This learning experience also extended to physical attributes of being present as a researcher in at a particular site regarding personal presentation, comportment and attire (Chilton, 2014). The experience was humbling: I began to understand that I learnt form the hotel, and was not teaching the organisation. It also made my own role as a researcher clearer, and where I naturally fit in within the existing hierarchy: one employee enquired about my own professional experience, what trade I had learnt; engagement in academia and the position of this study within an advanced programme of study does not necessarily mean very much in an industry where employees commonly progress through the ranks based on experience, not on degrees.

Despite my unequal status given my lack of a completed apprenticeship, I was given extensive opportunities to make notes on interactions between receptionists and their guests, and even though I was well aware that these notes were not suitable as a source of primary data for a study using CA as a framework, they confirmed my choice of the hotel front line desk as a suitable location for the intended purpose of the study (Rosen, 1991). This experience also helped

me to gain mutual understanding of the hotel front desk as a study environment, which made subsequent efforts in building rapport and being immersed in the culture of a hotel much easier (Gray, 2014).

### 4.6.3   Second stage: Hotel A (England; 3 stars, 26 rooms)

Hotel A, a small hotel in the countryside of North England proved to be a good starting point for the data collection. The hotel is frequented by both business and leisure travellers and offers a Sunday roast in the restaurant popular with locals. I understood that I had to learn how the hotel operates in order to be able to collect the data without causing disruptions for the organisation and its guests (Fine, 1993; Rosen, 1991). I was allowed to spend several weeks on site and in this time was able to develop a first step in "best practice" in regards to how approach guests as prospective participants for the study ensuring to stay as unobtrusive as possible. This involved learning about how interactants organise their encounter, including the expectancies by both parties revolving around this (see chapter 3 for further details on "organising" in organisations and communication). Although I did not wish to intrude on the conversing parties' interactional ground, I discovered that guests were startled if a request for participation in a study was initiated from outside their field of view, thus, from outside the reception area. Consequently, I found it more suitable for both recording purposes and engaging with participants to situate myself as an observer behind the reception desk, a practice that I maintained for hotel A, B and C. As a result, I was considered part of the environment by the guests. However, this also meant that I was held accountable for being in this position (see also notes on this for the remaining hotels). Thus, in absence of recordable situations, guests would place requests on me if they judged them as being appropriate knowing that I did not work at the hotel. Here, the usefulness of strategies I had learnt in my brief internship became apparent as I had learnt to decipher hierarchies and essential communication strategies between different areas of front and back channels in a hotel – processes that may have eluded me if I had not become immersed in the organisation since they are kept outside what is observable in the organisation (Bitner et al., 2008; Rosen, 1991).

### 4.6.4   Third stage: Hotel B (Germany; 3 and 4 stars, 65 and 15 rooms)

The second hotel in which data was collected is situated in a historical town in Northern Germany. The hotel caters for both business and leisure tourists. Restaurant and café are equally frequented by locals and hotel guests. The hotel also caters for business events (e.g. conferences), private events (e.g. weddings), and also hosts events for the public (e.g. hosting local artists). Considerably larger than the first, I found that most of the techniques I had developed for successful approaching prospective participants were appropriate for this context, but were often magnified. In a busier environment, I had to adjust to when it was appropriate to approach guests,

and when it was best to remain observant (Clark, 1993): the requirements and needs of the hotel and its guests trump the study conducted within.

In a larger hotel, matters of hierarchy were also far more important to members of the organisation. This put me in a delicate position since I was on one hand reporting directly to the hotel manager, and on the other hand spending considerable amount of time with front line personnel (Rosen, 1991; Tedlock, 1991; Thomas, 1993).

### 4.6.5 Fourth stage: Hotel C (Germany, 4 stars, 154 rooms)

The third hotel was again larger than the previous ones. It caters for both business and leisure guests and provides amenities similar to Hotel B, albeit on a larger scale (e.g. dedicated conference centre). Guests can use the spa facilities, but casual and membership use is also available to local residents. In this hotel, my presence in the organisation was highly formalised. I was granted only a three day access over a weekend which was regulated by a formal internship contract. While the other hotels did not provide me with a formal dress code, other than being appropriately dressed for the environment, Hotel C insisted on me being dressed in accordance with the personnel at the front desk. Although the hotel does not have a uniform for their employees, it is prescribed what to wear. Thus, my attire was not necessarily uniform, but "uni-form" with the receptionists. This provided me with an interactional challenge as I was not optically distinguishable from the other employees. The reception would become very busy at times and it was, thus, not possible to record interactions due to ethical concerns (informed consent). In these situations, however, it became very difficult to convince waiting guests that I was not available to serve given my non-working status at the hotel. Commonly, guests were not interested when I claimed unavailability and persistent with their queries. Albeit these were usually assumed to be due to my presence in the service area, at other times, regular guests who had already participated in the study and returned to the reception at a busy time seemed to build their requests on the notion of reciprocity in terms of helpfulness; in these instances, the guests knew the organisation's protocol for their query, but did not have access to the resources. Thus, they used my access to the required items and filled in my lack of procedural knowledge (e.g. deposits, signing out items) (Johnston, 1989; Swan, Goodwin, Mayo, & Richardson, 2001).

### 4.6.6 Fifth stage: Hotel D (Spain; 3 and 4 stars, 220 and 65 rooms)

The last hotel was by far the largest in which data was collected (1000+ beds) and is situated, as per the original plan of this study, in Spain. This seasonal establishment caters mainly for guests travelling for leisure and vacation purposes, and, as can be gleaned from the number of beds is highly frequented by families (The separately marketed four star hotel only allows adults). Hotels of this type may be classified as a holiday resort for the primary and secondary amenities

they provide (cf. Brey, 2011). National law requirements in addition to ethical consent from the university and dealing with serious situations rendered the data collection more complex. The hotel director was quite adamant about protecting his guests' privacy in accordance with the Spanish law on data protection ("*Ley Orgánica 15/1999, de 13 de diciembre, de Protección de Datos de Carácter Personal* (LOPD)"). In accordance with this law, even people who drop off their CVs at the hotel are required to sign a form informing them of the use of their personal data. Further, the data protection agency responsible for the law sets recommendations and regulations for aspects of video surveillance, international data transfer and special considerations for individual public sectors, including tourism ("Reglamento de la LOPD," n.d.).. Thus, data collection without informed consent from the participants would have been impossible. The hotel as well as the guests insisted on discretion (Goodwin, 1996). While it may be true that guests are frequently "listening in" on guest-reception conversations in progress while waiting for their turn, the communality of guests with other guests and/or the institution was especially observable in this hotel (Goodwin, 1996). In cases of aggravated guests, bystanders would frequently remove themselves physically from the immediate surroundings; in cases of emotionally distressed guests, bystanders would frequently do the same, but would also often display ways of tending to perceived communal bounds, e.g. by ensuring the safety of small children that may be left somewhat unsupervised by a distressed parent. These action notably occurred without inference into the interaction in question between guest and receptionist, thus, supervision children was done without invitation nor permission from the parent, but constitute evidence of relations as they emerge between strangers (Goffman, 1963; Mondada, 2009; Wu, 2007).

While it may be assumed that in a very large hotel, anonymity between guests as well as staff would constitute the norm, my observations are somewhat different, and seem to demonstrate that both guests and employees are very attentive and selective as to whom they constitute as being part of the hotel. In all of the hotels included in this study, guests quickly became accustomed to my presence and would frequently claim an insider status by inquiring about the progress of my data collection and other aspects of the study[10], which also shows how a relationship between me and the hotel guests was established and constantly evolving (Ntseane, 2009). Being perceived as part of the hotel in this particular organisation and thus as a party accountable for "onstage behaviour" and available for interaction (Goffman, 1963) was not limited to guests who had interacted with me and participated (or not) in the study. Although I was not behind the reception desk for the collection of the data in this hotel and not wearing

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[10] While there are some instances of this type of small talk preserved in recordings when they occurred during an interaction that was a service encounter (Speer & Hutchby, 2003), the majority of these interactions were personal conversations I had with guests. Notably, all of these instances were instigated by guests (compare with observations in analysis chapter 2).

clothing akin to the attire of the staff, guests would still recognise me when they encountered me in other areas of the hotel grounds and even outside the establishment, a notion that is connected to perspectives of emotional labour in front line areas of work (Anderson, 2006) and maybe an instance of why the literature has found it so difficult to indicate how and why customer in the tourism industry are loyal (and arguable, to whom they are loyal) (Hanefors & Mossberg, 2000). In such instances, I was held accountable for producing signs of recognising a greeting party as sharing co-membership in the hotel (Kerekes, 2007). Furthermore, guests I had never spoken to would sometimes proclaim the existence of an implemented service relationship by invoking perceived knowledge of my role and attributes in the hotel by proclaiming, for instance, that they "missed me" if they had passed by the reception desk and I was absent.

## 4.7    On the data collection process

Each hotel provided a unique context and unique considerations for the data collection process. In this aspect, the process was probably different to some other instances that have been described in more depth in the literature regarding the recording of service encounters (e.g. account by Kuiper & Flindall, 2000). Here, it becomes apparent that sampling is an important aspect to be considered in the undertaking of research, even when the details remain frequently glossed over (Rapley, 2014). In this particular study, the notion of maintaining and portraying an insider and outsider perspective at the same time was necessary for successful data collection (Ntseane, 2009).

Due to the nature of interactions at the hotel front desk, it was frequently not possible to record interactions for various ethical or simply practical reasons. This was especially evident in situations when groups or buses arrived where ensuring the obtaining of consent was impossible without recording a vast amount of by-standers. I still was able to observe the interactions which has led to a more thorough understanding of the site (Silverman, 2013) and added internal validity to the corpus (Weinberg, 2006). The self-reflective criticality thus was co-constructed through frequent checks of the social interpretation of the data collection. Recording on multiple sites and using the data as a holistic corpus can be seen as one part of ensuring external validity of the findings (Gray, 2014).

Furthermore, reliability of what otherwise might be considered a somewhat fragmented corpus can be seen in the use of different forms of data sampling: (a) time triangulation: same phenomenon observed and recorded over a period of time; (b) space triangulation: data was collected from multiple sites; (c) multiple triangulation: the video recording of conversations was supplemented by field notes; leading to (d) methodological triangulation: ethnomethodological observations were combined with CA and emerging trends in multimodal analytical concerns

(Gray, 2014; Mondada, 2006; Silverman, 2013; Weinberg, 2006). Ethnographic observations allow an approach to address practical, philosophical and epistemological problems in social research (Van Maanen, 2011). Video recordings, thus are treated in this study as an important aspect, but are not understood as representative of the notion of social interaction in the studied sites (Pearce, Arnold, Phillips, & Dwan, 2010). Negotiating access, recording natural conversations and gathering sufficient interactions to uncover underlying patterns is difficult and requires a highly reflective and reflexive approach (Holmes, 2014; Kasper, 2008; Marra, 2008; May & Perry, 2014). However, as is apparent in this study, the journey to authentic data is not only rewarding, but also shaped the study and enriched it immensely. The overall premise in CA that the sequential analysis of interactions does not rely on a focus on context still remains unaffected since the analysis of the data emphasises how participants in an asymmetrical knowledge situation demonstrate know-how to each other in a turn-by-turn unfolding conversation (Halkowski & Gill, 2010; Psathas, 1995a).

## 4.8    The data corpus

I recorded on 12 days in Hotel A and10 days in Hotel B over a three week period in each organisation; Hotel C only granted me access for three consecutive days. I collected data for 10 consecutive days in Hotel D. The following tables provide some overview about the data in the corpus. Detailed information regarding the interactions, including purpose of interaction, interacting receptionist, details about the guests and any other comments were recorded during the data collection process and recorded, coded and annotated in Microsoft Office Excel.

|  | **All hotels** | *Hotel A* | *Hotel B* | *Hotel C* | *Hotel D* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Total* | *09:21:41* | **02:16:35** | **04:12:23** | **01:49:14** | **01:03:29** |
| *Mean* | 00:02:11 | 00:01:46 | 00:02:05 | 00:02:57 | 00:01:56 |
| *StDev* | 00:00:51 | 00:02:23 | 00:02:00 | 00:00:24 | 00:01:44 |
| *Max* | 00:15:56 | 00:07:12 | 00:14:16[11] | 00:15:56[12] | 00:07:42 |
| *Min* | 00:00:05 | 00:00:13 | 00:00:05 | 00:00:17 | 00:00:14 |
| *Median* | 00:01:31 | 00:01:31 | 00:01:29 | 00:01:32 | 00:01:29 |

*Table 2: Recording times*

Conversations at the hotel front desk are usually rather short in duration. This is not necessarily true for staff in managerial positions that often only speak with selected guests, and are less involved in the day-to-day activities done at the front desk. Normally, conversations at the reception deal with a particular task that needs to be resolved immediately. If a task is contingent on the completion of another activity (e.g. correction of an error made by the hotel, provision of item by guest, unavailability of a product or service at that moment), receptionists often ask guests to return to the reception desk for completion of the activity at a later date; guests

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[11] Group (wedding party arrival), multiple conversations
[12] Departures, multiple departures occurring simultaneously with guests recorded previously (two receptionists)

may also offer to return at a later date. Thus, even tasks that take longer and may involve additional staff from the hotel are interactionally packaged into rather short bursts of activity.

| | Total | Hotel A | Hotel B | Hotel C | Hotel D |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Total* | **259** | 75 | 117 | 34 | 33 |
| *Number of repeat recordings with guests* | **60** | 15 | 29 | 14 | 2 |
| *Intercultural* | **44** | 5 | 10 | 1 | 29 |

*Table 3: Data corpus*

The total number of recordings that have been made is 259, amounting to 561 minutes of data. This, however, is not an accurate reflection of the amount of actual conversations that took place. Some recordings contain more than one interaction. There is one such case in Hotel A, five in Hotel B, and four in Hotel C. As might be expected, the larger the hotel, the busier the reception can become. Especially in Hotel C, it is quite frequent that multiple guests are served at the same time at the reception. While this usually had an impact on the recording, on occasions where people arrived staggered, but belonged to the same group, or when guests I had previously recorded, it was possible to obtain consent.

| | Hotel A | Hotel B | Hotel C | Hotel D |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Total count:** | **4** | **4** | **7** | **6** |
| Female/male | 3/1 | 2/2 | 6/1 | 4/2 |
| Apprentice: | 1 (f) | 1 (m) | 2 (f) | 0 |
| Manager: | 2 (m/f) | 1 (m) | 1 (f) | 1 (f) |
| | | | | |
| *(other receptionists have completed their apprenticeship, but do not hold a managerial position)* | | | | |

*Table 4: Demographics of participating receptionists*

Since hotels usually have a shift system in place regarding the working hours of many of their employees, the presence and variety of receptionists during the recording periods depended on whose schedule coincided with my arranged times for data collection. All receptionists who were available for participation in the study provided their consent. I ensured that they knew that none of the recorded material would be made available to their superiors and that I also would not talk about any observations I made on site to their managers (Collis & Hussey, 2003). Experience in their current position ranged from one week to several decades. I also ensured that neither my general presence, nor my recording had an impact on the receptionists' work. Receptionists reported that they were used being filmed and working under (somewhat) public scrutiny: Hotel A's reception area is under constant security camera observation, Hotel B reported on filming each other in role play activities, and Hotel D's reception is frequently recorded by their guests as keep sake. Being used to working in an open and observable environment may have aided in

making participants forget that they were being filmed at all (Dörnyei, 2007), although especially through the obtaining of informed consent care had to be taken in order to minimise "contamination" of the data (Speer & Hutchby, 2003). In order to ensure that I was unobtrusive, I spent some time observing and noting down receptionists' personal working patterns and preferences before recording them for the first time. I also asked them after the first recording how they felt and if I needed to make any adjustments in my filming practice. This also was a strategy of becoming further engrained in the scene. Although for practical reasons I did not have the same access to hotel guests, they quite frequently expressed a general interest in the study and often came to talk to me at a later time to talk to me about their own observations and being part of the hotel – a possible indicator for how otherwise "strange" experiences, much like being filmed during a conversation, can be normalised in tourism settings (Podemski, 2005).

## 4.9    Recording/data analysis technology and conventions

### 4.9.1    Video recording in qualitative research – practical considerations

Video recordings are capable of preserving much more details of an interaction that allows these details to remain available for a later analysis, albeit it does not substitute for detailed descriptions and transcriptions of the data (Mondada, 2006; Peräkylä, 2006b). There are, however, a number of concerns of how video is produced that have an effect on a later analysis. Although there may be an ideal format of recording, this is not always possible on site. Thus, although it may be preferred for the researcher to not be on site, this cannot be avoided in all cases (Parry, 2010) and was not plausible for this study. The granting of access to the sites was strongly based on the understanding that my presence would be non-disruptive and would not cause extra work for the receptionists, a key factor in gathering data in busy work environments (Marra, 2008). Thus, approaching the prospective participants as well as manipulation of consent forms and the recording equipment had to be handled by the researcher. Mondada (2006) suggests that one part of the detail that can be preserved in video data is achieved through shooting continuously, allowing the analysis of aspects in regards to pre-openings, as well as after the interaction has terminated. However, in my case I needed to obtain consent from each prospective participant before starting to record. Pearce, Arnold, Philips, and Dwan (2010) note that video recording of interactions is commonly well perceived and subsequently tolerated by participants in a study. My experiences were similar; the majority of guests that I approached agreed to participate. While every guest invited to participate agreed to do so in the smallest hotel, non-participation became more frequent the larger the hotel. Still, the participation rate even in the largest hotel remained over 90% of all individuals approached. However, respecting the guests' privacy and obtaining their trust, I learnt, was largely dependent on me *not* presuming

that they would agree to participate. Thus, by showing that I respected that they had not had initiated being part of a study, but that it was something that was being superimposed on them through my request for participation (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004). It has to be kept in mind that travellers, regardless of why they sojourn to a place, are usually rather busy – even if the sense of urgency is related to arriving and doing nothing – and also frequently combined with a lengthy voyage to the destination, making guests often irritable and short tempered (Marriott Jr. & Brown, 1997). Travelling between places has been said to not only cover a physical space, but also a cognitive distance that can render even a short trip seem a lot longer than it is (Walmsley & Jenkins, 2000). In order to be successful in gaining consent, I needed to demonstrate in my approach that I understood that contemplating taking part in a study was likely to be perceived as a serious imposition which had to be carefully negotiated, ensuring that all requirements of the stakeholders (guests and receptionists) were protected (Carrigan & Kirkup, 2001). Given that I had no way to record continuously, the equipment also needed to be handled in a way as to not obstruct the day-to-day business at the front desk. Reception desks in hotels are curious places which have rigorous rules about what may reside on them for any length of time. Recording equipment is, in my experience, not one of the permitted items, despite some claims that video has become "omnipresent" in the social world (Knoblauch, Tuma, & Schnettler, 2014). Even just leaving the microphone or the (non-recording) camera on the desk when no one seemed to be around would yield a query or even concern from members of staff passing by; guests would also respond concerned when they approached the desk and saw recording equipment, even if it was very clear that it was not working.

I discovered that the most successful point to ask for consent from prospective participants was after they had approached the reception desk and an opening for the interaction had been produced. After the guests had provided their name on arrival, a naturally occurring "space" in the conversation, in which the receptionist would look up the booking details on the computer, proofed to be the first possible point at which guests' would humour an interruption. In my experience, any attempt to speak to guests before they arrived at the desk was instantly rejected (cf. also Marriott Jr. & Brown, 1997). Thus, consequently, the recordings collected do not contain the openings of the interactions. While this may be considered a definite flaw of the corpus, it can at the same time be considered proof of a respectful conduct of the study; video data is, after all, highly personal data (Parry, 2010) and should be treated as such. One participant, for example, asked the video recording to be stopped half way through the conversation, because she felt uncomfortable being recorded with "travel hair", even though she knew that the data would be anonymised (Speer & Hutchby, 2003). Being in the field thus also means becoming involved in power relations that exists in the context being studied (Funder, 2005) which means

that being able to relate to the issues and concerns that may hinder participation in a study need to be addressed through constructing dependable interpersonal relationships between the researcher and – in this case – two groups of participants (guest *vs*. receptionist) (Crow, Wiles, Heath, & Charles, 2006; Guillemin & Heggen, 2009).

While it may sound like an arbitrary approach to approaching prospective participants, it is not. Sampling from within an ethnographic setting arguable requires that some selection is made regarding prospective participants (Knoblauch et al., 2014). Furthermore, from its conception, CA has argued for an observable structure in human interaction, with covers not only spoken interaction, but also rules for other areas of society, including traffic rules or games (Sacks et al., 1974). Following this turn after turn construction, behaviour at the front desk also becomes "decipher-able" by competent observers. Thus, what guests do or should not do in non-confrontational interactions becomes available at some level. I would argue that it seems that experienced receptionists are highly capable of anticipating the kind of interaction they will have with a guest, based on certain observable behavioural traits. Physical as well as social surroundings – both expected an real - in relation to the guest's overall emotional display, thus, provide important clues for the social organisation at the front desk (Decrop, 2000; Gnoth, 2000).

I noted that guests upon arrival routinely display a certain unsettledness, along with an urgency to retreat to their rooms (Marriott Jr. & Brown, 1997). This hurriedness seems to disappear once the check-in formalities are completed. Any subsequent interactions, even if they are projected to occur in the near future during an arrival sequence (e.g. parking spot, Wi-Fi password, safe rental), commonly happen during the guest's own time, after the guest has settled in. Complaints and confrontational behaviour (e.g. dislike of room, medical issues), however, are of a more urgent nature and will usually take place as soon as they are noticed, placing these events on a (observable) different timeline than requests. Requests are usually attached to other activities; they occur when guests are "*en route*" to other places (or returning from) (e.g. dinner, sightseeing), while complaints appear to have a tendency to warrant a dedicated trip to the reception desk. These observations are largely anecdotal and based on my reflection on my extensive engagement with the data as well as on my time in the field and the disengagement from the participants (Gray, 2014). Working from the results of the present study, it may well be possible to substantiate my personal observations and comments from the receptionists in a future study.

### 4.9.2   Audio and video recording equipment

Since no recording device was provided by the university, I purchased adequate equipment, which I chose to suit the needs of the particular recording situation present at the hotel front desk.

Recording for qualitative research is subject to a number of external factors, including the surrounding and background noise, and equipment needs to be selected to be fit for the purpose in which it is to be used (Creswell, 2007). The video camera for this project, a Kodak PlayTouch model, was chosen for a number of reasons. Firstly, the size of the device is rather small, roughly equivalent to a smartphone, making it as unobtrusive as possible in the recording process. The camera also allows for a tripod to be attached, which helped stabilising the image where space allowed it to be positioned on a flat surface, but also proofed useful when space requirements called for holding the device in hand. Video was recorded in 1080p HD at 30 fps. Most importantly, the camera contains an audio jack to connect an external microphone to help with ensuring high quality recordings, a feature which is notably absent from most affordable camcorders. Background noise can be a problem in recording service encounters. The microphone was connected to the camera with an extension cord, so that there was no violation of the personal space of interactants (Ventola, 1987). The microphone utilised was an AudioTechnica ATR97, an omnidirectional condenser (or capacitor) boundary microphone. Small in size, a boundary microphone uses a flat surface, in this case the reception desk, to record the direct sound and prevent interference with the delayed sound reflected from the surface to produce a phase-coherent output signal and a natural sound. A condenser microphone allows sound to be picked up without the participants having to speak directly into it. Combined with the omnidirectional mode of sound pick up, this arrangement allowed for participants to move through the interactions freely, towards and away from the microphone, without sacrificing the quality of the recorded audio (Wells, 2012). The low profile design also ensured that participants were not disturbed and prevented it from being knocked over accidently.



*Figure 4: Recording equipment*

The small size of the equipment allowed for it to be cleared from the desk when not in use. The positioning of the camera was largely dependent on space available in the reception area. The

camera rested on a shelf in Hotel A, C and D; in Hotel C, it had to be held in hand at times as placing the camera sometimes interfered with the receptionist's work (Heath et al., 2010).
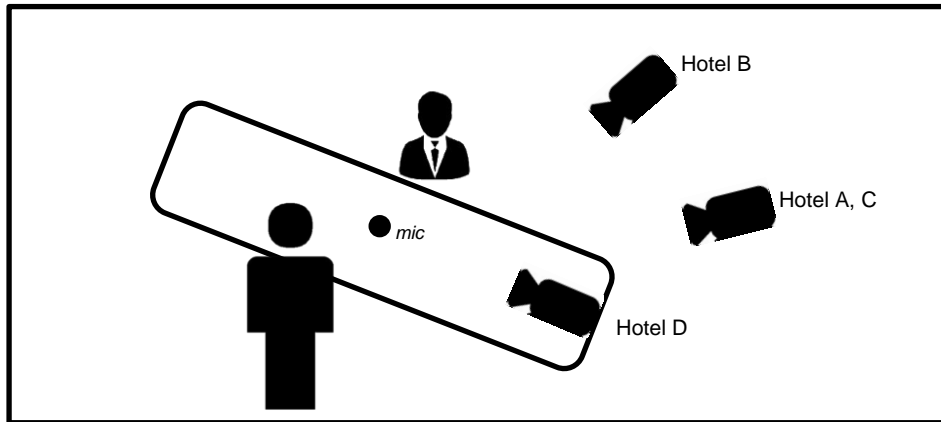


*Figure 5: Recording set up*
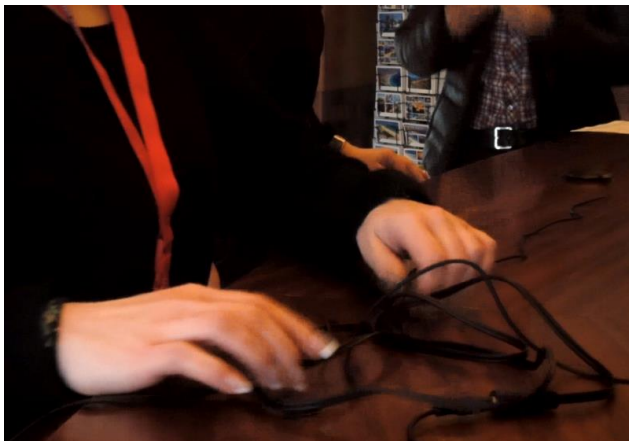


*Figure 6: Camera view of setting up equipment*

The camera was set up with the main goal to not hinder the receptionists' work and the guests' experience with the service encounter. With CA as the primary method of analysis, sound recording was prioritised and the video capturing adjusted whenever necessary after.

### 4.9.3   Software for transcription and data manipulation

Transcriptions were created solely by the author of the study, not least since it is acknowledged that the transcribing party will influence the outcome of the study (Tilley, 2003). The transcripts were created using CLAN (MacWhinney & Wagner, 2010) and ELAN (Wittenburg, Brugman, Russel, Klassmann, & Sloetjes, 2006) software, before being transferred to a word processing programme. The use of specialised software allows the audio visual material to be analysed, depending on the detail necessary for a particular passage, e.g. by slowing down

the overall clip, or investigating analytic instances frame-by-frame (G. R. Gibbs, 2014; Knoblauch et al., 2014). For analysis preparation, the audio was cleaned up using Adobe Audition CC, e.g. to remove background noise (e.g. baby crying), hissing or humming where necessary since service encounter sites are prone to noise around the interaction under observation from various sources (Ventola, 1987).

To comply with ethical requirements, stills used in the analysis of this study were anonymised using Adobe Photoshop CC (video extracts used in conference presentations and data sessions with individuals not directly related to the execution of the study were manipulated to protect participants' identity using Adobe Premiere Pro CC) (cf. also Wilson, 2004).

### 4.9.4   Transcription conventions
For the purpose of this study, the transcription tradition known as *Jeffersonian* (Jefferson, 2004) was adopted (Kowal & O'Connell, 2014; Toerien, 2014). The full notation for transcription, glossing and representation of non-verbal communication can be found in Appendix A. However, variations are likely to occur since the written version of a conversation is never complete and is based on the transcriber's own understanding of a language, or multiple languages if applicable (Bolden et al., 2015; Mondada, 2007; Roberts, 1997). The transcriptions are naturalised, thus, for the most part, they follow the rules of written discourse (Bucholtz, 2000). In line with the aims of the research, the level of detail to be described was decided upon (Bailey, 2008). A large portion of the corpus is in German and has been translated for the examples included in the study. Two lines of transcription were deemed as sufficient detailed for the research aim. However, since some pragmatic differences have been described between German and English (Auer & Günthner, 2003; Köpcke & Panther, 1989), such instances have been glossed in the translation (e.g. modal markers, tags, markers of politeness). With advances in technology, visual images are now frequently used to complement an analysis (Newton, 2009). Following this development, this study also incorporates the use of visuals in combination with an adapted version of Heath's (1986) transcription system for gestures and nonverbal behaviour (Heath, 1986; Heath et al., 2010; Heath & Luff, 2013). In addition to individual pictures of token moments, sequences of frames are used to depict key moments in the analysed conversations. In this way, it is hoped that a combined transcription system represents the most appropriate way to show details in talk under investigation in this study (Roberts, 1997).

### 4.10   Ethical considerations
The research design and execution of data collection was approved by one of the University of York's ethics committees (Economics, Law, Management, Politics and Sociology Ethics Committee (ELMPS)) and granted on the grounds that data collection would be conducted

in an overt fashion, including obtaining informed consent from every participant. Although providing information and obtaining consent from prospective participants is largely considered to be an important aspect of ethical conduct of research, regulations set by a committee can potentially influence the outcome of the data collection – and in some cases may even have the potential to alienate potential participants (Crow et al., 2006). Public spaces are constructed as such by a display of lack of engagement among potential communicators (Goffman, 1963). At the very least, obtaining informed consent was seen to have an influence on the establishment of recording opportunities and approaching hotel guests. Although it has been suggested in the past that observation in tourism may accept covert approaches to data collection, since the membership of the prospective participants in a community is seen as temporary (Finn et al., 2000), this view appears to be somewhat dated, especially with the prominence of the internet. Hotels often expressed concerns about my presence that would lead to unfavourable reviews on the internet. Thus, approaches to data collection as in Shively's (2008) doctoral dissertation that involve that at least one side of the participants remains uninformed about the research was deemed inappropriate. In her study, Shively instructed students in a study abroad programme to record their service encounters with a recording device hidden in their pockets, making the shop keepers oblivious to the study. The argument here was that speaking in a public place can be overheard by any bystander, and was deemed to be to "not carry the same risks to the speaker as does private speech" (p. 128). However, given the premise that speech in the hotel is semi-private, potential risk that may be present in "private talk" was assumed.

"Knowing" in the context of data collection in a hotel was deemed instrumental in making informed choices in whom to collect data from (see also chapter 5, section 5.7 (p. 121)) for an account on distinguishing between new and returning guests and the construction of "knowing") guided by reflexive, ethical decisions in the field (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004). Commonly, service encounters are categorised as public encounters (Félix-Brasdefer, 2015). This notion is somewhat different in the context of hotel interactions, where the notion of "home away from home" is realised in a semi-public environment in the sense that interactions can be overheard, and the treatment of the interactions as semi-private in the establishment. Collecting data at the hotel front desk, I would argue, comes with an ethical responsibility that exceeds what a board of ethics will or can cover (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004). Guests in a hotel bring with them their private lives and front-line staff throughout the establishment are usually well informed on their guests through the act of service and trust between parties (including an external body of research) is vital (Carrigan & Kirkup, 2001). Streams of backchannel information commonly flow to the front desk which constitutes the principal form of gate through which guests and the organisation interact. The hotel industry refers to this inbuilt channel as the "heart of the house"

(Marriott Jr. & Brown, 1997). This knowledge may be used among staff to position boundaries between guests and employees (Sherman, 2005), but in my experience is used by receptionists to predict interactions with their clientele. Since I was in all hotels under constant observation by the hotel managers, it was necessary for me to act according to the role definition inherent in the trust provided by the establishment in me for allowing the recording to take place in the first place (Brannick & Coghlan, 2006; Rosen, 1991). Thus, it was a collaboratively produced understanding with the receptionist that I would not attempt to approach certain guests.

Hence, data was not collected from:

- Public figures, like actors and those travelling with them ("VIPs"), also local politicians
- Emotionally distressed guests (e.g. upset people making serious complaints or accusations against a hotel)
- Known issues (e.g. repeated interactions with receptionists for medical reasons; overbooking of the hotel)

Although this might seem like a great sacrifice regarding the authenticity of the corpus obtained (Rosen, 1991), it has to be kept in perspective that the research was sanctioned (or, one might say "humoured"), but *not* encouraged by hotels. This notion may be explained by the inductive nature of qualitative research which means that a latter usefulness to the organisation can result at a later stage of the study, but does not address a specific problem to be solved for the institution (Brady, 2009). All of the participating hotels made it abundantly clear that I would have to stop my data collection immediately should there be a single complaint either by a guest or an employee about my presence. Thus, I chose to make the executive decision to honour receptionists' explicit requests to not engage certain guests (e.g. public figures; informing guests of overbooked hotel) as well as situations that were more implicit, but would have led in my perception to an instant termination of my data collection (e.g. distressed and agitated guests). Guillemin and Gillam (2004) observe that ultimately, ethical behaviour in the field is up to the researcher; an ethics committee cannot anticipate nor help when unexpected situations occur and which require immediate decisions on part of the researcher to minimise risk to the participants or the researcher. In my experience over the process of the data collection, conversations at the hotel front desk are often emotionally charged and guests can become uncooperative or even threatening to the establishment and the gatekeeping receptionist in an instant (Reeves, 2010). The respective service literature (see also chapter 3) has spoken of the notion of "tact" as an intangible dimension of service quality (Buttle, 1996; Nitin et al., 2005). It would seem that people in situation in which they are removed from their familiar surroundings often

overdramatise certain situations that then need to be redirected by the receptionists (Lee et al., 2006; Lerman, 2006).

Further, it should be noted that some guests who were recorded returned to the desk on multiple times. Some of the interactions were carried over multiple conversations at different times, even days. On some of the occasions, I was recording the beginning of such conversations and would also be present in the subsequent interactions which would often continue with different receptionists. Much like participants in other conversations, hotel guests demonstrated that they could also hold the recording party as an observer accountable for providing information that was missing from the interaction (see analysis chapters for premises of efficient and effective communicative behaviour at the hotel front desk) (Pearce et al., 2010). Marriott Jr. and Brown (1997) observe that the level of service at a hotel front desk should be dependable; a premise that is arguable broken if one party, albeit an observing one, is not abiding this practice, resulting frequently in an emotionally influenced response on part of the guest (Decrop, 2000).

## 4.11 Conclusion

Feasibility of a research study, especially one situated at the intersection of various disciplines is rarely considered in the literature, although some books like Finn, et al. (2000) will provide a short gloss. Just how difficult organisations can make an approach and granting access to particular contexts and purposes does not seem to be commonly articulated. Barriers to access do exist however, and provide particular challenges to the researcher (Holmes, 2014). Thus, it was discovered in this project that the success of a study can depend to a large extent on the resources available to the researcher. Still, I would argue that creative approach to resources and ensuing opportunities can greatly increase the chance of viability of a project, even if it is by funding bodies or other involved parties as unfeasible. It should also be noted that throughout the field work, the researcher is subjected to stress associated with managing their position between research and the social reality. The stress factor is increased when the researcher is not able to leave and physically disengage from the site of study (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Despite the lengthy collection of the data, the process which had naturally evolved over time yielded more results than what was expected or anticipated at the conception of the study. It should also be mentioned that after the data collection process was conclude, two more hotels (Germany and Spain) had agreed to allow me to record interactions for the study. However, it has to be acknowledged that various resources available for a doctoral project are limited, both time and otherwise. Since time in an organisation always needs to be negotiated with what best suits the organisation (Collis & Hussey, 2003), further recording sessions could not be scheduled. The experience gained through the data collection process taught me in depth how to communicate

between academia and industry and how to articulate research to a wide range of potential audiences (Brady, 2009). In this respect, reflecting on the process of the data collection and the resulting analysis has also provided insights for possible applications of this study's results.

In this chapter, it was developed how the data collection process is instrumental for any subsequent analysis (Knoblauch et al., 2014). Moreover, this account presented here is also to be understood as a differentiation between being indoctrinated into organisation and part of an institution for the purpose of data collection, and biases in the observation and resulting analysis. While the collection of the corpus has been seen to have been supplemented by ethnographic observations and general fieldwork (Knoblauch et al., 2014), I would argue that this does not extend to the actual data collected. While I recall some conversations at the hotel front desk, the vast majority has been obscured by the time spent collecting the data and only become available at an analytical level during the process of fine grained analysis. The overall routine nature of the interactions at the hotel front desk and the created mundaneness by competent interactants quickly renders purely observational characteristic of individual conversations mute. This, I believe, is not only true for a researching party, but also for receptionists: e.g. I asked a receptionist to listen back to her own recording of an interaction with a guest to clarify what she said since it was unclear in the audio, and she was not only unable to tell what she had said a couple of days earlier, but did not recall the interaction or the guest. From my observations, I would argue that any observational detail of interactants at a hotel is timely and maintained only for a limited period of time, namely the length of a guest's stay. While it may have other reasons for hotel receptionists, remembering details about guests I had interacted with, those who did not wish to participate and those who were explicitly excluded from the study was a crucial skill that I needed to master in order to avoid any situations that could have led to complains about my presence in the hotel. Forgetting, however, was equally important, since it would otherwise have been impossible to keep up with hundreds of new guests being introduced into the hotel over the course of data collection on any given site.

It is proposed that the methods employed as well as the resulting corpus, including ethnographic observations, provide an adequate collection to address the overarching research aim. Conversation analysis as a primary means of analysis was chosen because it treats language as more important than a mere vehicle to pass information between two parties (Wooffitt, 2008). Reflective anecdotal evidence has been offered to further provide evidence for the overall suitability of a multimodal CA framework for this study, but has also indicated areas in which a CA approach may be limited. Social science may be constructed as a project (Silverman, 1998). The methodology for this study attempts to combine methods strategically to employ them as a

framework for social science research, or an "*aesthetic* vision for social life" as Sack's (in Silverman, 1998, p. 57) describes it.

# Chapter 5:    Analysis I: Arrival sequences

## 5.1    Introduction

The aim of this piece of research is to demonstrate knowledge gaps in the existing literature that governs how communication is approached on practitioner level in hotels, but also how relevant skills are taught both at an academic and an apprentice level. The analysis of the data corpus for this research project shows a misconception that the tourism industry has of its communicative needs, but also how a lack of understanding of the underpinnings that govern managerial decisions can be misinterpreted as a communicative strategy by researchers that investigate hospitality from outside the field. The previous chapters have developed a theoretical conceptualisation of how interdisciplinary understanding could be employed in order to describe the social reality in hotels adequately.

In this analysis, it is shown that initial service encounters at the hotel front desk possess an inherent structure that clearly marks them as interactions in an institutional setting. It has been proposed, however, that the routine hotel-check in has a structure which is unique and differs from patterns that are usually observed in service encounters and related to request situations. Participants in these interactions co-construct these situations by orienting to the institutional setting which allows them to move efficiently through the encounter and the activities contained within. Engagement and rapport activities in a hotel check in are situated on a spectrum. Or, as Bilmes (1988) phrases it: "An utterance does not necessarily mean what it might mean or what it seems to mean at the moment when it is uttered" (p. 174). It is developed that a canonical interaction is treated as efficient and effective by both the guest and the receptionist. On this spectrum, and interaction may also be treated as being characterised by a lack of engagement or too much of it.

## 5.2    The media and representations of ideal encounters between hotel receptionists and their guests

Tourism and with it communication in hotels is not only of interest to academics and practitioners but is also made relevant to the consumers of the service via relevant marketing channels. Such visual representations of a prospected service quality give a good idea of what the industry deems desirable in interactions for their customers. Research on gaze, gestures and movement of the body has often drawn from historical sources, such as art (Heath, 1986; Kendon, 2004).

The modern equivalent for more recently developed social interactions, such as service encounters might be found in marketing material and stock photography on the internet. Such

staged moments of an encounter bear striking resemblance to what occurs in the canonical conversations as demonstrated in this piece of research.
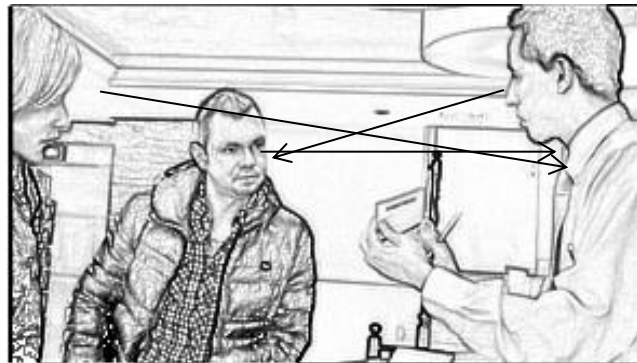


*Frame 1*: Gaze orientation in staged hotel check-in    *Frame 2*: Gaze orientation in naturally occurring hotel check-in

Stock photography depicts situations that show shared positioning and gaze orientation that are common in the marketing materials. Investigations into interactions have developed over the past decades not only to generate insights into institutional interactions as subject, but research has increasingly created applications for the outcomes of a CA investigation (Stokoe, 2012). In this sense, comparisons between ideal encounters and deviations thereof that happen in naturally occurring interactions are subject to shared understandings between different disciplines, as elaborated in the methodology in chapter 4. Multimodality has become of increasing interest to researchers interested in social interaction (Mondada, 2014), however it should seem that this interest has so far not been extended to include what participants display as expected behaviour in an highly ritualistic interaction. However, an anecdotal observation as depicted in gaze behaviour between staged and naturally occurring service encounters serves as a natural bridge to remind that even if different disciplines may have very diverse paradigms that guide research behaviour, the desired outcome for an observation can be still quite similar as is the case in this example.

## Part 1: Canonical service encounters: a description of the hotel check-in

### 5.3    Sequences and structures

Service encounters share a number of observable features. Routines in the interaction are codified into what can be described as an agenda that guides the interactional items. In this sense, actions are linked in a specific that is routinised fashion. This agenda, even if not presented in a written form to participants, specifies topics and behaviours that are acceptable in a service situation. It also serves as a means to hold interactants accountable for topics that are addressed

(and not addressed) in the conversation. The agenda is thus used as a means to co-ordinate participants behaviour in a complex social situation to accomplish a mutual interactional goal. Thus, the agenda in a highly ritualised interaction also means that the topics are decided on in advance (Boden, 1994; Deppermann, Schmitt, & Mondada, 2010; Svennevig, 2012; Traverso, 2001c). In the analysis it is demonstrated how interactants use an implicit agenda (e.g. company policies, or customers' prior experience) to orient to the specificness of "doing hotel receptionist/guest" interactions (Filliettaz, 2007). In the first part of the analysis, observations on the sequential structure the interactions are presented through the use of examples from the corpus. The latter analysis is concerned with the multimodality of what happens in interactions and presents additional excerpts in further depth to demonstrate how these sequences occur in interactions.

### 5.3.1 Sequential structure of arrival sequences

Checking-in as an activity in a hotel is based on a number of tasks which need to be completed in the interaction. This order may be described as an interactional agenda. An agenda is understood here as an overarching orientation for the communicating parties. An agenda or specific order in a conversation creates particular interactional constraints for the participants that interactants are being held accountable to. Establishing an interactional agenda is thus not sufficient for ensuring that the goal of the encounter will be achieved. Agendas can place different types of constraints on participants at different times during the conversation. A receptionist is commonly establishing a *topical agenda* which inherently carries an *action agenda* for the hotel guest/respondent (Boyd & Heritage, 2006, p. 156; Heritage, 2006e). The individual sequences of activities are thusly important to describe the actions that are observable in a conversation (Levinson, 2013). As such, activities emerge across several sequences of actions (Robinson, 2013). The outcome of the interaction is then directly related to the roles that participants take in the interaction, and their adherence to the role requirements (Rossano, 2013).

Communication is orderly which allows participants to make interactions meaningful. Interaction in an institution is also subject to its organisational context which in turn is subject to particular organisational rules and conventions (Gülich, 1980). The following analysis shows how the structure of an interaction, and of individual activities, action sequences and ultimately the design of individual turns is dependent on "where in a sequence a turn is being taken, and what is being done in that turn, to whom the turn is addressed" (Drew, 2013, p. 145).

Two key words are used to describe the desired level of engagement in polite interaction in this context: effectiveness and efficiency. Characteristics of an effective encounter include that the interaction is conducted efficiently, but without being hurried. This requires that both parties

fully engage in the interaction and attend to the goal of the encounter. At the same time, however, the level of engagement must be at a particular level to satisfy both parties. An ideal, or canonical, encounter in this collection contains a very specific level of politeness and rapport building activities as will be investigated using the CA framework as described earlier. Overall, an effective encounter serves two purposes: (1) the receptionist is able to address all items on their/the hotel's list of tasks; (2) the guest receives all of the information they require. This particular distinction has been found to be very important in understanding what is happening in the corpus. In this sense, engagement and rapport at the hotel desk occurs on a spectrum which is clearly identifiable from the collected data corpus. The chapter investigates what is identified as "the spectrum of rapport" and engagement by identifying trouble sources on both ends of the spectrum – too much and too little engagement. Interactants use forms of polite behaviour to express attitudes and concerns for their relationships (Koike, 1989). To conclude the chapter, some examples are provided for how participants negotiate behaviour that deviates from the institutional agenda.

## 5.3.2   Structure of arrival sequences

*Arrival sequences*
- Opening
- **"Check in"**
  - Information ("Orientation")
    - Receptionist to guest
    - Guest to receptionist
  - Interaction with objects/artefacts
    - Presented by receptionist to guest (to be kept or be returned)
    - Resented by guest to receptionist (to be kept or be returned)
- Pre-closing
- Closing

Arrival sequences begin with an opening. Although the methodology employed for data gathering has had the effect that the initial opening was not recorded, it can still be noted from ethnographic notes that an arrival at the hotel front desk does not necessarily start with a greeting. Often, a guest will only produce their name to initiate the interaction. A receptionist will subsequently routinely produce a minimal response token and/or look up the booking on the computer system. With this activity, the process of "checking in" is regarded by both guest and receptionist as officially initiated. In the following interactions, receptionists and guests cooperatively negotiate the process of "checking in". The following examples demonstrate how these arrival sequences are achieved interactionally.

*Extract 1: Shared construction of "check-in-able" Shared arrival:*

*200 (M1/F1 and Bo native German speakers)*

```
3    Bo:  Schmidt und Huber?
          Schmidt and Huber?
4    M1:  [Genau!]
          [Exactly!]
5    F1:  [Genau] ∘Das ist richtig∘
          [Exactly] ∘That is correct∘
```

At the beginning of the check-in procedure, the claims of the right to do so are established. The process begins to demonstrate how asymmetries in knowledge are constructed and conventions for the stay at the hotel are made interactionally relevant.

*Extract 2: Establishing conventions*

*40 (M1, K native English speakers)*

```
1    K:   What name is it pleas:se?
2    M1:  Um (.) Lucky.
3    K:   What surname?
```

With multiple arrivals pending, receptionists request a name, if a guest does not provide it on their own and instead begin with a greeting, an account (e.g. "I have booked a room") or silence[13]. The example above provides some evidence for how initiating a hotel check-in is based on co-constructed conventions. Here, M1 produces solely their first name which initiates a second round of name asking, this time for the last name. The last name is established as the salient information through K's chosen format. The recycles her previous question and uses the same, yet abbreviated format. No uptake of the previously provided information is provided by her. The premise is established through these formats to continue towards communication necessary to conduct "the check-in"[14].

*Extract 3: Establishing facts*

---

[13] As detailed in the methodology section, the first approach of the customer was not recorded for ethical reasons. The examples here thus provide a secondary notion for arriving.

[14] The findings of this study demonstrate how intercultural features of an interaction are seldom made relevant by participants and thus may not be a reliable indicator of how or why communication works or miscommunication occurs; the examples provided in the analytic chapters aim to represent features of a larger corpus in which intercultural constellations occur (see also Chapter 4 for a breakdown on participants). For reference purposes, speakers and their native language are identified for all of the extracts.

*3 (M1 and S native English speakers)*

```
1  S:    (...) fill in your address just there for me and then I'll fill in
2        the bottom three just there.
3  (2.4)
4  S:    n you're in for two nights is that correct?
5  M1:   Yep
```

Staying at a hotel is co-constructed in the initial encounter through utterances and artefacts made relevant throughout. The example above shows how this is accomplished. S gives an instruction to M1 to interact with an artefact (form) and confirms the information she has about the guest's stay, giving M1 a voice in co-establishing facts in a dialogue format.

*Extract 4: Pre preparation as evidenced in documents*

*120 F1, M1 Swiss German, Sei German native speaker*

```
1  Sei:  So. Können Sie das bitte einmal kontrollieren und da unterschreib'n?
             Now then. Could you HON please PRT check that and sign there?
```

The example above extends a typical handling of relevant documents for the corpus. The hotel provides a registration form that already contains the guest's information. The guest is only required to confirm or amend their personal details. Arriving at the hotel is shown in this part of conversations to be dependent of preparation for the stay by both parties.

*Extract 5: Giving details*

*165 (M1/F1 Finnish, Sei German native speaker)*

```
3  Sei:  um (.) you have (.) an komplett address?
4        (1.0) (( F1 looks expectantly at Sei))
5  M1:   °hum° (.) Okay
6        ((begins writing))
7  (2.5)
8  F1:   Is-ti okay if I > do a business card so < is ea:sier (.) °so instead
9        [of ↑WRIte,°
10 Sei:  [YES (.) yes, okay=
```

In pre-booked stays, hotels across the corpus have the guests' information printed out on the registration form. The amount of information provided can vary and receptionists request missing information during check-ins. This is accomplished in a cooperative manner as shown above. Providing an address is treated as an accountable matter. In this example, it is made explicit through F1's offer to provide a printed document containing the relevant information, rather than handwriting it.

*Extract 6: No preparation*

*209 M1/F1, Si, St German native speakers*

```
23   Si:   ((to St)) HAhehheheh ((to guests)) .hhh So::. Einmal komplett
24         ausfüllen, #und unter↑schreiben (.) .hhh
             ((to ST)) Hahehheheh ((to guests)) .hhh Now then:: PRT Fill in
             completely, #and ↑sign (.) .hhh
      ...
89   Si:   ((to St)) Machste ma ' n Zimmerkärtchen fertig?
             ((to St) Could you FAM PRT make a room card?
```

Depending on the type of the hotel, it may be possible that guests arrive at the hotel without having pre-booked. If rooms are available, the receptionist will make an offer to the guest on the spot. The paperwork in these cases is not prepared and the check-in may take longer. In this example, the receptionist asks the guests to fill in the forms completely.

In this example, Si recruits her colleague St to help accelerate the registration process by delegating a task to her.

The corpus demonstrates that hotels may have their preferred order in which the registration process is accomplished, but there do exist observable communalities – and it is these communalities that guests orient to and which receptionists must make interactionally available for participation to the guests (the latter analysis in its focus on politeness and interactionally achieved rapport orients to this notion, both in canonical and trouble examples). In Arrival sequences, the agenda is dominated by activities that define the agenda of "checking in". Activities in a hotel check in are structured around two particular notions: information exchange and handling objects for specific purposes.

The flow of information can be observed in two directions: from the receptionist to the guest, and from the guest to the receptionist. Similar to what is reported in the institutional CA literature, the receptionist commonly elicits information from the guest if required. (Heritage & Clayman, 2010). For the most part, information is presented to the guest (guest's room number and location of room, location of services in the hotel, location and time of breakfast and dinner service, additional services, depending on hotel (e.g. location of supermarket, spa/gym and pool facilities, parking information (if not contingent on additional activities by the receptionist). Indeed, it is noticeable for arrival sequences that introducing or inserting and additional topic is interactionally difficult for a guest. Communicative items that a guest offers at an incorrect time on the receptionist's agenda are usually deflected to a later stage in the interaction, or the receptionist proposes the guest returns to the reception desk at a later time, after the registration process has been terminated (requesting information regarding parking (if contingent on additional activities by the receptionist (exceptions are problems presented as "emergencies", commonly related to information regarding other hotel guests (colleagues, friends or family to arriving party)), Wi-Fi password, rental of safe).

*Extract 7: Adhering to conventions*

*207 (F1, M1 and St native German speaker)s*

```
20   St:   Ihr Zimmer ist jetzt LEIder noch nicht bezu[gs↑FER]↑tig
            Your HON room is now UNFortunately not yet [r↑EAD] ↑y
21   F1:                                                [↑↑Okay]
22         ()
23   St:   Ähm, (.) Ihr Gepäck könn' Sie bei uns im Gepäckraum unter[s↑tellen,
24         we]nn Sie ↑möch↑ten
            Um, (.) Your HON luggage can be [↑placed in our luggage room,
            if] you HON ↑li↑ke
25   F1:                                                [↑Hmhm]
26   F1:   Super. [(.) Dann machen ↑wir] ↑das
            Great. [(.) Then ↑we do      ] ↑that
27   St:          [Dann komm ich einmal kurz mit]
                  [Then I PRT come with (you)    ]
```

*Extract 8: Adhering to conventions part 2*

*61 (M1, M2 Belgian (Francophone), S English native speaker)*

```
4    S:    I do::. (0.8) We have stopped serving food for this evening [now.
5    M1:                                                               [◦No
6          problem◦ [(0.5) It's (0.3) we had our meal in [()
7    M2:            [No problème, we-
```

Checking-in can be accomplished even if other parts of the hotel cannot render particular services. Depending on the guests' arrival times, the room may not be ready or a restaurant still or already closed.

During the registration process, the handling of certain objects also has to be negotiated. Again, there is a dual flow of these objects: from receptionist to guest, and from guest to receptionist. Some of the objects that a receptionist hands to the guest are to be kept by the guest, at least for the duration of their stay (room key and card with name/room number, information brochure or leaflet, vouchers). Other objects, the receptionist invites a guest to interact with and return them (registration form, card reader). The guest will usually present their items to the receptionist to be held for a limited time – the time span may be specified in the interaction explicitly for particular items (credit cards (may be proffered by the guest without prompt, in response to previous experience), passports (legally required in Spain to be photocopied for police records; duration of item kept by receptionist specified in conversation).

*26 (M1, K native English speakers)*
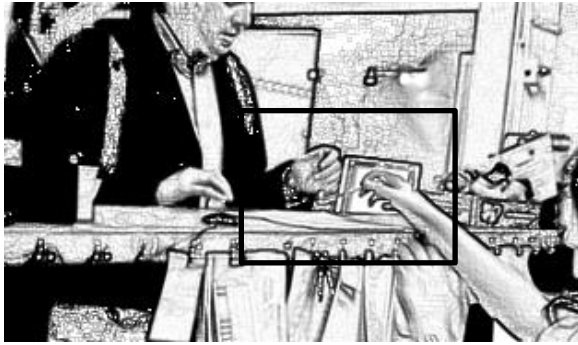
*Frame 3: sharing documents*

In this example, it can be seen how K utilises the registration form during the interaction. She uses a pen to show the guest his required next action. The document is turned, so that the guest is able to read the information. In this frame, M1 is preparing to grasp the pen from K to complete the action. M1's gaze is oriented to the document demonstrating how the explanation and the awareness of required next action is tied interactionally together.

The receptionist closes the process of checking in. In this sense, the process is designed around the requirements of the institution, designed by the individual hotels, according to particular business decisions or strategies that are enacted by the front line. Pre-closings and closings are kept short in these interactions. Pre-closings are barely existent and are produced to allow the receptionist to ensure that they have addressed all relevant items on their agenda (see Analysis chapter III (section 7.2.1, p. 169) for differences in departure sequences). Closings are also short and require little organisation for termination and leave-taking of the guests. Notably, there is a complete absence of farewells in arrival sequences for the collected corpus (see Analysis III (section 7.2.1, p. 169) for differences in closing and leave taking behaviour). In conclusion, the hotel check-in is designed as a provision of information, not a point of request for information/services by the guest (see Analysis II (section 6.3, p. 139) for differences in orientation to requests).

## 5.4 On the orderliness of the event in initial service encounters

Schegloff (2006b) remarks that routine in interaction is not something to be taken for granted, but rather an achievement. As such, a canonical service encounter displays conventionally a routine interaction between two parties that have not interacted with each other before. Participants therefore construct the arrival scenario according to prior expectations or previous experiences. The situations are constructed as similar to something that is known (Akman, 2007). In an interaction where both parties demonstrate a very specific amount of engagement and rapport building in the situation, the order of talk is concisely co-constructed by both parties. The sequential organisation demonstrates that the order of relative speakers as well

as the positioning of particular actions and utterances in the overall speech event is visible in the interactions. As such, the sequence organisation also demonstrates that the parties recognise the meaningful successions of the talk to accomplish the task at hand (Schegloff, 2007). Overall, canonical service encounters appear uneventful and patterns are robust across hotels and interacting dyads as shown in the previous examples. This is rather meaningful, since the literature designed to develop and further "service quality" in what is commonly referred to as a benchmark in service, is often concerned with making a service designated to be standardised across the organisation personalised to the individual recipients. Effective and efficient behaviour observed in the corpus means that participants display a level of mutual trust (cf. Kuroshima, 2010, earlier this chapter) in a mutually agreeable development and ultimately outcome in the interaction. Thus, it is the premise that both parties can use common ground, similarities in experiences to navigate the interaction (Tannen, 2012) and minimise occurrences in which asymmetries in knowledge would impede on smooth advancement of the interaction, regardless of background or cultural differences.

The premise that interaction is orderly can be clearly observed in the corpus. Although it may be argued that the conversations at the front desk are fairly regimented in nature for a particular reason, service encounters are not conducted identically and do not necessarily demonstrate a "perfect" conversation that consists of turn-taking that is not prone to a lot of overlap or gaps/silence respectively (Sacks et al., 1974). In an institutional setting, the interaction is goal and task-related and can consist of a number of specific activities that need to be carried out through the talk.

*Extract 9: Collaboration in speech, example 1*

*237 (M1: native German; Tar: native Arabic speaker))*

```
1   Tar:  Wir brauchen eure Ausweise ↑bitte oder ↓Reise↓pass=
              We need your COLL. ID cards ↑please or ↓pass↓port=
2   M1:   =Ja↑::
              =Yes↑::
```

In correspondence with the goal oriented nature of hotel check-ins, there are a number of activities that need to be accomplished during the interaction. Turn-by-turn production of speech means that speakers and listeners continuously evaluate what is being said in order to respond in a meaningful way. This is important as a second pair utterance might well demonstrate a very different treatment to what was intended by the original design by the first speaker (Goodwin & Goodwin, 2006). In canonical check-ins, receptionists produce individual items that the guest can respond to – and which guests are held accountable to do so by the receptionist. Such action-type sequences can occur in a series (Schegloff, 2007) until the agenda is completed. Talk by the

receptionists is thus constructed in some form of list which allows an engaged guest to orient appropriately to the projected talk (Lerner, 2006). In this extract, Tar requests the guests' passports. As has been demonstrated in the literature, the guest response accepts the requests without any delay (Heritage, 2006e). The requesting turn is constructed in a preformulated format which commonly allows the recipient to correctly identify the possible completion point and produce a latched response, or a response in slight overlap (Schegloff, 2007). Raymond (2006) notes that a question design that displays a polarity for yes/no responses is often not given much thought. However, the particular "ubiquity in ordinary social life" (p. 151) means that they are central to task completion in institutional settings.

In canonical interactions in a hotel arrival, the default response form for such list items is usually a short token of acknowledgement. The use of polar questions that prefer a type-conforming response also allows receptionists to proffer the next item on the list and move efficiently through the interaction (Heritage, 2006e; Schegloff, 2007). In German, *ja (yes)*, is not only used as a response to simple yes/no questions, but it can also be understood as a continuer or a token of acknowledgement (Golato & Fagyal, 2008). In the situation above, *ja* is produced by M1 to signal that he is both granting the request, and also signals that he will comply with the request by handing over his (and his wife's) passports.

This token can serve a similar function as "yeah" in English (Wong, 2000). The offering of single items for the guest to attend to, even if the information provided belongs to a larger sequence is also apparent in the following extract: In this extract, "yeah" is used by both the receptionist and the guest to move through the interaction. K uses "yeah" to affirm her agenda, and F1 uses "yeah" to acknowledge the information received from K.

*Extract 10: Collaboration in speech, example 2*

*16 (K1, F1: native English speakers)*

```
38   K:    >Yeah< .hhhh and the reason for the card details at the bottom, is
39         because Sports Direct pay for your room and your breakfast
40   F1:   Okay.
41   K:    and they give you a fifteen Pounds per night evening meal allowance
42   F1:   Yeah.
43   K:    that does include one soft drink
44   F1:   ((nod)) .hh okay
45   K:    uh, obviously the price of the soft drink will come off the fifteen
46         pounds=
47   F1:   =that's fine, yeah
```

This example also demonstrates how receptionists can act as gatekeepers, not only for the hotel, but in case of business travel also as bearers of good or bad news for the guest (Maynard, 1991, 2006). During the data collection, receptionists often commented on the lack of alignment

between the information that guests had received about their stay in the hotel by their employers and the actual services included (or not) in the arrangement with the hotel – although false expectations would also be sometimes referred to with regards to advertising materials (Baloglu, 2000; Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Walters, Sparks, & Herington, 2007). As a result, the list of information that receptionists take their guests through are as detail oriented as necessary to prevent misinformation or even serious repercussions to the hotel[15], including formal complaints or law suits (Grant & O'Cain, 1995)

In this extract, K provides detailed information to the guest on the meal allowance their organisation gives to their employees. K has an extensive agenda that she needs to run the arriving guests of this party through (information that the booking organisation has either omitted to tell their employees staying in the hotel, or information that is commonly misconstrued by guests). Here, it is demonstrated how important the cooperation between receptionist and guest is for a satisfactory outcome for both participants. It can be seen in the above examples that in order to proceed through the interactions which are led by the receptionist, a token response is all that is required from the respondent guest: In order to signal agreement or acknowledgement, it is even sufficient for guests to produce a minimal response, like an acknowledging sound (R. Gardner, 1997). Although a minimal response is desired in a canonical encounter in situations that require a "verbal contract" to "information received" or "action initiated", this is not sufficient for all situations. As demonstrated in the examples above, items on a list as routinely produced by the receptionist, require a verbal token of receipt and continuation to continue with the registration process. However, speech is accompanied by non-verbal behaviour that can demonstrate the alignment between receptionist and guest. Here, a vocal response is co-produced on one occasion with a visible one, a head nod. This behaviour has been described as a "marker for units in social interaction" (Dittmann & Llewellyn, 1968, p. 82). Such a joint response emphasises the close engagement to the interaction that is displayed by the guest to the speaker. In the following section, situations in which gestures and gaze supersede the verbal rendition of a continuer are explored.

### 5.4.1 Gestures and gaze in canonical hotel check-ins

For the purposes of this study, gaze is to be defined following Cook (1977) as looking at the upper portion or half of another person's face. This can extend to looking at or between the

---

[15] As detailed in the Chapter 4, decisions regarding ethical behaviour were made for this study. As a result, the collected corpus does not feature any recordings of such situations. A number of serious threats to the establishments were overheard during the data collection. Since the interactions were not recorded, there is no claim made that any violent outbursts by guests were directly – or indirectly related to misinformation obtained during arrival. However, it is noted that the gate that a reception presents to the hotel and its managing parties is subject to negotiating such situations as the first port of call.

eyes. Mutual gaze is to be understood as a visible eye contact between two parties. Kendon (2004) uses the term gesture for "features of manifest deliberate expressiveness" (p. 15). In canonical hotel check-ins, gesture and gaze alignment are vital for the achievement of an effective and efficient service interaction – and more globally for social performance which is observable in the relationship between the behaviour of listeners and speakers (Kendon, 1970). In the previous section, it was demonstrated how efficient and effective encounters depend on the co-operation between receptionist and guest by focusing on the importance of the guest's supply of an acknowledgement token. In some situations, displaying understanding is not sufficiently addressed by a verbal utterance. Instead, the receptionist may use a deictic expression like pointing to a specific direction to illustrate some aspects of spoken information. In such a case, it is not sufficient for a guest to verbally acknowledge the gesture, but as recipient of the gesture, the accountable action is to direct the gaze towards the indicated direction. Receptionist and guest do not have a shared understanding of the hotel space. The localities of the hotel are not yet available to the hotel guest. The receptionist is providing information to the listener by using deictic elements to map out an imaginary map. This form of co-operation demonstrates that the response by the guest is produced in response the lack of factual knowledge of the guest (Klein, 1982). The acknowledgement token is placed in this situation after the hearer has returned the gaze to the interaction and mutual gaze is re-established. "Okay" is positioned in a way that feeds forward the interaction and acts a receipt of information (Beach, 1993; Schegloff, 2007). However, it must be placed after the gaze has been completed to acknowledge that a change in knowledge distribution has occurred. Thus, "okay" can also be seen to carry actual conversational implicatures . The terms contribute on a specific level to the discourse at hand (Levinson, 1979) and addresses asymmetries in the interaction. Participants move on what has been described as an "axis of interaction" (Kendon, 1970, p. 114) through an interaction that extends to other parties present in the interaction, even if they do not participate in the interaction via talk. Visual information is used to regulate movement on this interactional axis in a mutual manner. This behaviour allows participants to coordinate expectancies that have been generated or are anticipated in the talk. Kendon (1970) emphasises that moving with someone in an interaction demonstrates that attentions and expectancies are shared with the speaker, acting as a signal that the parties are committed to the interaction at hand, the current speaker, and not available for other interactions with other people. This "interactional synchrony" (Kendon, 1970, p. 104) can be observed in the following extract:

*Extract 11: Collaboration in speech, example 3 (verbal and nonverbal)*

*237 (M1/F1: native German; Tar: native Arabic speaker))*

```
19   Tar:  Das is ∘hier∘ im Haupth<u>AU</u>s auf dritte Eta↓ge. (.)      [Fa  ]hrstuhl
20         ist ∘da∘

           This is ∘here∘ in the main H<u>OU</u>se on third floo↓r. (.)  [e  ]levator
           is ∘there∘
21                                                              ((Tar points to
22         elevator))
                                                               ①②③
                                                               ──────────

           ④⑤
           ────
                             ⑥  ⑦  ⑧  ⑨     ⑩⑪⑫
     M1:    ────────────────────  ,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,, -------

23   M1:                                                      [∘Okay∘]
24   F1:   O↓k[ay.
25   M1:   ((returns gaze to materials))
           ……….. 
26   M1:     [∘alles klar∘
             [∘all good∘
```
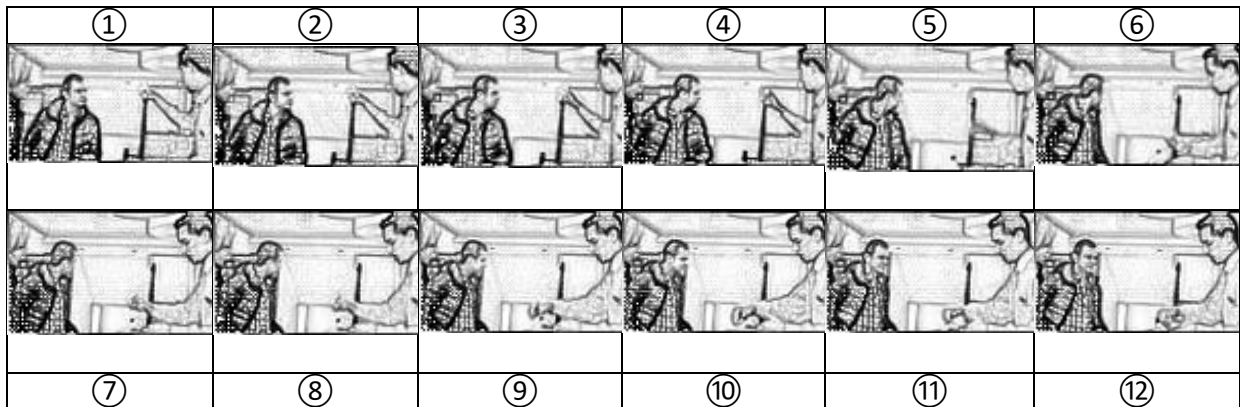


*Frame 4: Non-delayed response and coordination to gestures and held objects*

In this extract, Tar describes to the guests where they can find the elevator to their room. The explanation is rendered with two directives. "Here" in line 19 is what Levinson (2004) describes as a exophoric use of a demonstrative. The room is in the same house as the participants of the conversation. As such, the room is to some extent available in a physical sense to them. The second demonstrative reflects in Levinson's classification as an exophoric gestural; a demonstrative that requires an additional movement like a gesture or pointing of a finger to be understood by the recipient. In the micro pause in line 19, Tar initiates his gesture and points to the elevator, just before enunciating the accompanying "elevator". The overlapping "okay" from M1 is a slightly delayed token of acknowledgement to Tar's previously completed utterance. However, by observing the non-verbal behaviour, it becomes apparent that M1's gaze promptly follows Tar's initiation of his gesture: as soon as Tar has completed the gesture initiation and is pointing to the elevator, M1's gaze begins to shift from Tar's face to the elevator. The responding token is produced after M1 has returned his gaze to the conversation. As such, the response is latched directly after the completed movement. This event demonstrates how important taking

into account visual information in an interaction can be (Heath et al., 2010). Gestures that are "language like" are an integral part of certain linguistic events and have to occur and be attended to at a particular point in the interaction. This is then also true for the analytic interpretation of events (Wharton, 2009, p. 151). Understanding is therefore a local form of interpretation depending on the context in which it is produced (Hindmarsh, Reynolds, & Dunne, 2011; Nunberg, 1993). Participants in an interaction use activities both in speech and movement of the body to interpret deictic reference (Hindmarsh & Heath, 2000). In this extract, the gesture precedes the deictic expression, but instead accompanies the object in reference. Here, it is again apparent that activities can often only be understood by taking visible interaction and context in the conduct into account. For Tar, M1's orientation to his gesture allows him to use the conduct as a resource to change this particular string of talk and topic, even though there has not yet been an audible token of acknowledgement. After Tar has completed his gesture and M1 has shown his engagement with this expression, Tar changes his orientation to the other participants of the interaction and starts preparing for the topic to be addressed in the talk (Goodwin & Goodwin, 2006). The listener's coordination of movement is synchronised to the talk produced by Tar (Kendon, 1970; Kleinke, 1986).

Interaction at the front desk is not just a matter of talk, but also of other social skills (Clark, 1993), however building a mutual feeling of rapport can be subject to such subtle behaviours as shown in this extract (Kendon, 1970). Consequently, it can be assumed that deviations in behaviour to demonstrating alignment using a variety of verbal and nonverbal cues is likely to produce interactional problems, or trouble (Duncan, 1972; Goodwin, 1980; Kangasharju, 1996; Myllyniemi, 1986).

## Part 2: Trouble sources in hotel check-ins: accountability and resulting variations in engagement

Although established in the introduction to this chapter, interaction in institutional settings might be subject to certain restrictions, participants are not obliged to follow the set pattern (Peräkylä, 2006a). Problematic situations may arise in any communicative situation, and of course, miscommunication is not particular to intercultural settings. CA has a rich tradition for describing how trouble is managed in interactions (Jefferson, 1988; Jefferson & Lee, 1981; Selting, 1987). However, culture or linguistic affiliation may play a significant role (Jordan & Fuller, 1975; Schegloff, 1987). Still, the goal orientation in hotel check-ins may minimise miscommunication since both parties have an interest in achieving the communicative outcome (Kidwell, 2000). CA refers to problems in interactions as 'trouble' which is addressed by

interactants through repair mechanisms that are embedded in the organisation of language usage (Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 2006). However, the analysis of the corpus highlights some additional concerns in institutional interaction that do not seem to have been addressed by the literature. Interactional trouble during the registration process is not necessarily linked to miscommunication. The corpus shows that misunderstanding related to linguistic or cultural issues is rather rare. The literature seems to be concerned with identifying elements of miscommunication, especially in international interactions[16]. Instead of focussing on miscommunicating, this analysis is concerned with showing how mechanisms are employed in the interactions to make the conversation effective, efficient, and also friction free. Thus, the next section identifies sources of trouble relating to sources of friction regarding politeness and rapport building. As such, the analysis identifies interactants as competent social actors who use specific behaviours for a particular purpose – a behaviour that is subject to inspection and acted on by both speaker and recipient (Kendon, 1967; Langton, 2000).

## 5.5  Trouble source: Lack of engagement

In the previous part, it was argued that an ideal amount of engagement and attentiveness can be observed in conversations between receptionist and guest. This presumes that this also must be true for situations that fail to adhere to the premise of effective and efficient behaviour. In this section, the focus is on situations in which a lack of engagement between receptionist and guest can be seen to have an impact on the deviance from elements of an ideal canonical interaction. In instances like this, there is a lack of cooperation observable in how turns are taken in the interaction. As was demonstrated, that acknowledgement tokens are inserted by guests at the first possible completion part of an utterance, often latched or in slight overlap. In situations that are characterised by a lack of rapport, micro pauses that can usually be used to order interactions are not sufficient to engage participants. Pauses, however, are still used to hold participants accountable for their participation in the interaction. As a result, miscommunication can frequently still be avoided. These noticeable pauses can be seen to have an effect on how politeness and rapport building are affected. Moreover, the use of nonverbal behaviour in these pauses and at other times during a turn of talk is examined to show how participants and other parties regulate their activities (Ädel, 2011; Kendon, 1967, 1970; Kleinke, 1986; Myllyniemi, 1986; Ryoo, 2005).

The following fragments are taken from the same conversation and provide an example how disaffiliation and perceived disengagement are negotiated by the interacting parties. While the canonical examples were separated into verbal and nonverbal components in the analysis for

---

[16] This approach was also suggested for this study at an early point of data collection and analysis.

structural purposes, the remainder of the analysis builds on this initial understanding and verbal and nonverbal behaviours are examined simultaneously.

*Extract 12: Cooperation as accountable feature*

*126 (M1/F1: native Finnish; Sei: native German speaker))*

```
16   M1:    .h ähum
            Both -----------------------------------------------------------
17   (9.6) ((M1 thumbs through papers on reception desk))
18         ((Sei takes paper from the small pile, M1 still thumbing through the
19         pile, not looking at Sei))
20   Sei:  ∘Das bekomme ich hie:r, (.) das is Ihr's∘
            ∘I take this he:re, (.) this is yours HON∘
            (2.4) ((Sei writing on paper, M1 still holding on to his pile of
            paper on the reception))
            M1 ------------------------------------------------------------
                        ①
21   Sei:  Sie ham ja:: (.)((Gast sieht hoch, und senkt darauf den Blick)) äh::
            M1:---._____
                                        ②   ③ ③  ④▽ ⑤ - ⑨
22         (2.0) ((Gast sieht zu Sei)) das Arrangement ge↑bu:cht
            You HON have (.) ((guest looks up, and down again)) um:: (2.0)
            ((guest looks up at Sei)) ↑boo:ked the package deal
            M1__   ---
            ⑩⑪⑫
23   M1:    >Ja?< ((senkt Blick))
            >Yes?< ((looks down))
```
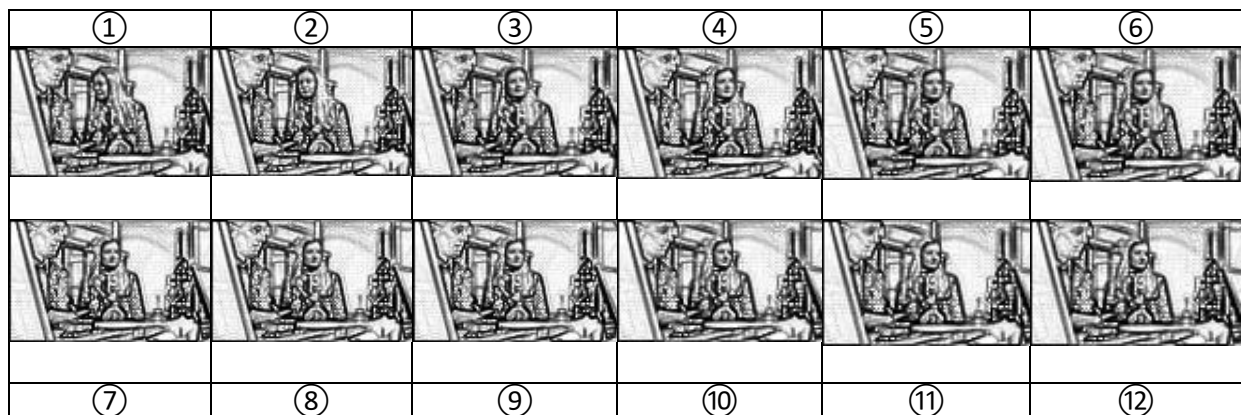


*Frame 5: Achievement of mutual gaze after delay/dispreferred turn*

Although pauses and silences are frequent in service encounters as per their nature, not all of them are perceived as appropriate in their length. In line 21, Sei orders documents into what is to be kept by the guest, and what is to be returned to the hotel. In the first part of her utterance, she produces a sentence to confirm with the guest that she will be taking a document. The part of the turn is followed by a micro pause in which an acknowledgment token should be routinely produced by the recipient. Although this token is not produced, Sei continues with her ordering of the documents. Subsequently, she informs the guest of the document that they can keep. Again, this completed item on the agenda should be followed by a response from the guest. There is no token produced by the guest, and a noticeably long pause ensues. The guest is continuing to be

engaged at a minimal level by maintaining the stance and orientation to the interaction, and by engaging with the paper on the reception desk. Eventually, Sei continues with her agenda. Again, in line 23 starts a turn by addressing the guest, containing another micro pause that M1 acknowledges briefly by looking up at Sei, but returns his gaze down to the documents almost instantly. Mutual gaze, however, needs to be achieved in order for Sei to continue her turn. Consequently, Sei withholds the continuation of her turn, producing a token of hesitation instead, until the guest turns his gaze to her after two seconds, thus withholding the continuation of the activity until M1 displays an appropriate orientation in gaze from the participant (Heath, 1986). Notably, M1 and F1 look at Sei at the same time. F1 does not speak throughout the interaction, and observes the conversation, and shows rarely any engagement with the receptionist. The withheld speech from the receptionist does not only make M1 shift his gaze towards the receptionist, but his wife as well. Unlike M1, F1 breaks of the gaze interaction much sooner than her husband, the primary addressee of both speech and gaze in the interaction. Lack of engagement here is thus not accidental – M1 and F1 clearly demonstrate that they are aware of the required interactional engagement that they should be taken. Their behaviour is thus likely a choice, rather than an incident of miscommunication. Co-participants like M1 and F1 in the present case are create a nonverbal alliance to negotiate their disagreement with Sei (Kangasharju, 2002).

Disagreements or disaffiliating responses conventionally occur late in the interaction (Heritage, 2006e). A marked delay as is present in line 23 can be a sign that a trouble source has been identified. A prolonged silence is marked by no talk where some sort of response is conditionally relevant and its absent is noticeable, rather than by incorporation of some talk that would initiate repair (Pomerantz, 2006a). Sei is holding M1 accountable for an situationally acceptable response, and mutual gaze as a means to judge whether a participant is directing their attention towards the speaking party is an important component that needs to be achieved (Langton, 2000).
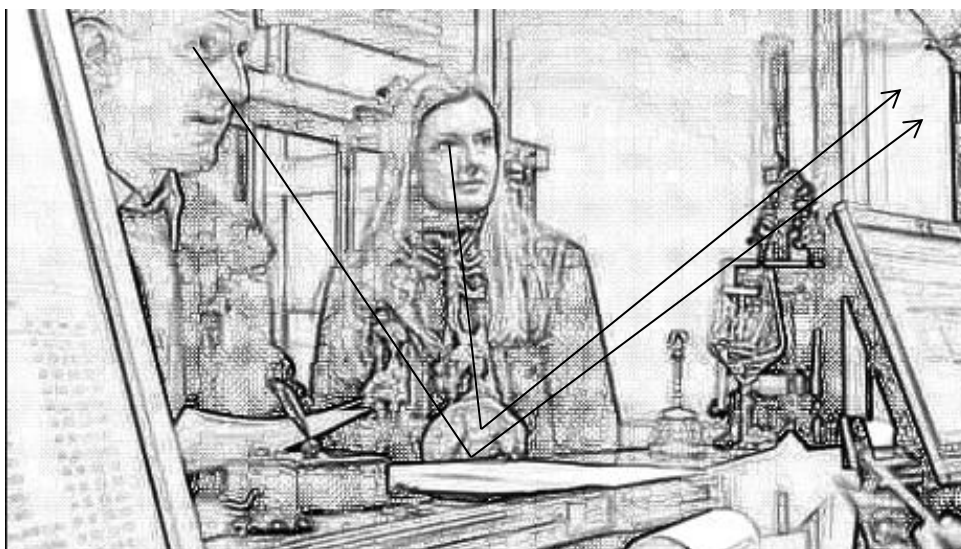
*Frame 6: Token moment mutual gaze, to Fig. 4*

Although mutual gaze is eventually achieved between the participating parties, the orientation between the interactions is markedly different to what was portrayed at the beginning of this chapter in a comparison between staged and naturally occurring canonical gaze orientation. Thus, obtaining gaze is not all that is necessary in an effective encounter. Gaze and other nonverbal signals can be seen as contributing to the vocal content of the interaction and the participants' orientation to it. In this sense, head movements in their relation to the gaze direction are patterned and establish interactive functions (Hedge, Everitt, & Frith, 1978; McClave, 2000).

Somewhat later in the same interaction another example can be found. Here, Sei gives instructions to M1 on how to use the vouchers for the meals included in their booking. As has been demonstrated in the review of canonical encounters, receptionists take their guests through a detailed agenda, providing them with the information relevant to them. In the present case, the guests have booked a special package. The receptionist needs to provide organising information to "deploy" this deal for the guest, since a number of subsequent interactions with other members of staff will be contingent on the internal delivery of the service throughout the guests' stay. In line 36, she introduces the topic, leaving a micro pause after completing the introduction to the item on the agenda which requires attention from the guest. The intonation remains level, indicating that the turn has not been finished. M1 complies with the production of an acknowledgement token. She continues her turn by giving instructions to the guests of what to do with the voucher. The turn finishes with an account of why the guest's action is required in regards to the voucher. Throughout the turn, M1 produces tokens in overlap with Sei's speech. The tokens are produced in rapid succession and not in the relevant turn places within Sei's turn, creating the need for her to confirm that her itemised information has been received by the guest:

*Extract 13: Cooperation an disaffiliation*

*126 (M1/F1: native Finnish; Sei: native German speaker))*

```
36   Sei:  Und das i::st äh das Dreigangmenü,     [(.)] wenn Sie dann äh bei der
                                     ∇
37         Bestellung das dem Kellner mitge[ben, damit der Bescheid ↓weiß.
           And this i::s um the three course menu,[(.)] if you HON then um when
           ordering                          [give this to the waiter, so that he
           ↓knows.
38   M1:                                           [Okay]
39                                    [>ja<, okay (.) okay, [okay
40   Sei:                                                   [Ja?
                                                            [Yes?
41   M1:  Alles gu:t, danke
           All goo:d, thanks
42         (1.4)
```
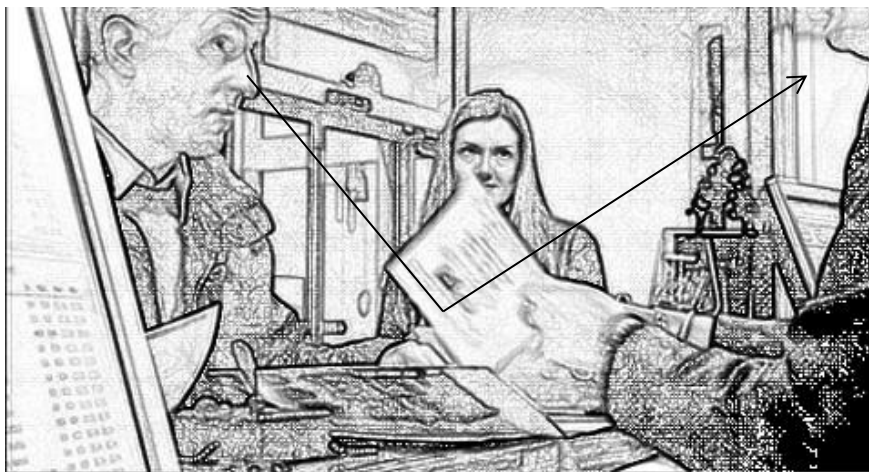


*Frame 7: Gaze achievement to dispreferred action*

Schegloff (2006a) proposes that just having an element that suggests repair (line 26) can have consequences for the continuation of the turn in progress and the order of elements. In line 26, Sei shows a coupon for a menu to the guest, leaving a micropause for the guest to acknowledge receipt of the information which M1 promptly produces. Sei then continues her turn with a second hesitation marker that continues her turn in a rather awkward construction. Even though M1 is not a native speaker of German, he remarks on the disaffiliation from most efficient behaviour with a look at the receptionist (Kendon, 1967; Kleinke, 1986). The shift of gaze in this situation has in this case not been prompted through a prosodic, syntactic or pragmatic cue in the receptionist's speech, but rather by the guest's disapproval of the way Sei constructs her turn and the hesitation present in her speech (Kendon, 1967). As mentioned, the turn consists of three parts that the guest needs to attend to. M1 responds in the micro pause after the topic has been introduced, but his response to the second part is rushed and becomes irritated with the third part of the turn. F1 mimics her husband's shift in gaze, similar to what has been observed in the previous fragment (Kangasharju, 2002). Both M1 and F1 display that they notice not only that

they are being looked at, but also that they are required to produce a shift in gaze to achieve mutual gaze (Kendon & Cook, 1969). M1 does not hold the gaze oriented towards the receptionist, but shifts his gaze down onto the reception desk, similar to the sequence developed prior in this analysis. Although he seems to disengage from the interaction, he produces an acknowledgement token at just prior to a possible completion point (Schegloff, 2007). In response, M1 produces three more acknowledgement tokens while Sei concludes her turn. M1's last production of "okay" is overlapped with Sei's production of an acknowledgment token. With her turn which acts as a continuer to ensure understanding, she holds the guest accountable for another confirmation. As per convention, M1 produces a response, including a notion of thanking to close the topic. This demonstrates how, occasionally, the agenda or simply the organisation of information is mismatched between the needs of the receptionist and the guest. Although guests may not explicitly address the issue in their speech, silences, turn transitions and gaze convey the message. It is herein that lies the inherent problem with the concept of attempts in scripting interactions for the front desk (e.g. Hubbert et al., 1995).

In both examples, it can be noticed that F1 as an observer engages in the same gaze behaviour as her husband M1 who is the main participant in the interaction with the receptionist. So even though she is not directly involved in the production of the service encoutner, she still remains alert and sensitive to what is going on (Heath, Svensson, Hindmarsh, Luff, & Vom Lehn, 2002). In a sense, she monitors what is happening in the interaction from a peripheral point of view, and although she does not speak directly, her non-verbal behaviour clearly makes her a participant in the interaction (Monk & Watts, 2000). Still, it has to be maintained that both M1 and F1 in their behaviour disrespect Goodwin's (2006) rule for a speaker to achieve to obtain and maintain gaze at the appropriate time during the turn of talk which accounts for the friction in the interaction. However, the required behaviour as detailed by Goodwin (1980) is eventually achieved in the interactions which prevents a communication breakdown. To conclude this section, it can be noted that certain behaviours are noticable when absent from an interaction: (a) speaker to obtain gaze of listener during a turn of talk; (b) recipient to recipricate gaze from speaker (Goodwin, 1980, pp. 275, 287).

## 5.6   Trouble Source: Surplus of engagement

While delays and other disaffiliating behaviour have been demonstrated to mark interactions that are in disaccord with canonical communication, too much engagement can also be a source of trouble. There exist similarities as well as differences in verbal and nonverbal behaviours to account for what constitutes too much of an engagement between participants. So far, it has been shown that canonical hotel check-ins depend on the cooperation between

receptionist and guest which is demonstrated in the construction of turns, including adjacency pairs. Efficient and effective interaction depends on prompt attendance to accountable actions by the interactants. However, it also a matter of knowing what needs to be attended and what should not be extended or attended to in talk. In this section, it is shown how rapport building is inhibited by attention to an incorrect part of talk for the attention of goal completion. In this fragment, the speaker and co-participant disengage from a topic at hand through both verbal and nonverbal behaviours. However, here, talk is extended at a point where an acknowledgement token would be considered the preferred turn of action, and not the launch of a story (Boje, 1991; Duncan, 1972; Mandelbaum, 2013; Sacks, 1986).

*Extract 14: Knowledge production and stories*

*204( M1/F1, He: native German speaker) )*

```
22   He:    So. (.) Das sind dann die beiden Zimmer für ↑Sie.
23          Sechshundert[achtzehn] und sechshundertsieb↑zehn
            Now. (.) These are the two rooms for ↑you HON.
            Six hundred [eighteen] and six hundred seven↑teen
                             ①    ②    ③    ④    ⑤      ⑥
24   M1:                [Super   ] Na, das sind ja mal Schlüßel noch.
                        [Great   ] Well, those are still some keys.
            ⑦      ⑧  ⑨ ⑩ ⑪    ⑫
25   He:    ↓↓JA# DAS sin [d Schlüßel, genau, keine Kärtchen
            ↓↓YES# THOSE a[re keys, right, no cards DIM
26   F1:                  [Heheheh
                          ▽
27   M1:                   [Hehehe (sniffs)
28   M1:    Nee. (sniffs)
            NO.
```
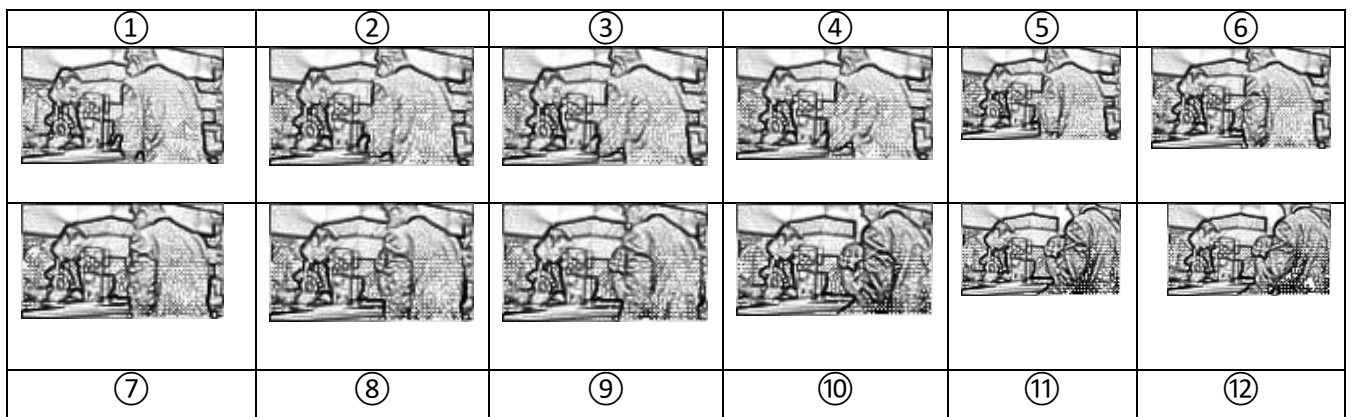


*Frame 8: Gaze orientation to an object and disengagement from topic of talk*

In this extract, He routinely informs the guests about their room numbers, using "so" as a common token to order items on an agenda in German (Barske & Golato, 2010). Slightly delayed, M1 accepts the information about a new topic in line 24. Subsequently, he abandons assessing the subsequent information and introduces a new "twist" of the topic at hand, effectively reversing the preferred order of information production in a service encounter

(Filliettaz, 2007). In line 23, M1 recognises an upcoming possible turn completion and produces an affiliating response targeting the item in question (room number) (Jefferson, 2006a). More precisely, M1 does not only respond with a token of agreement, but he upgrades his response to what might be expected in a canonical mundane interaction (Pomerantz, 2006a). His gaze zooms in on the hotel keys and remains absorbed in them; F1's gaze also focuses on the keys. In doing so, M1 uses the keys as resources-in-interaction to make them relevant for the contextual goals of his turn (Hazel & Mortensen, 2014). Even though M1 in this case uses the production of an acknowledgement token to initiate a side sequence, He continues his turn through the overlap in a form of unmarked self-retrieval, instead of initiating repair (Jefferson, 2006b). Still looking at the keys, he remarks on the keys building his turn to demonstrate "insight" knowledge of other hotels, with a smile on his face (Heath, 1986). M1 uses the routine of being provided with the information to introduce a story line into the conversation, albeit without waiting for being granted the floor for proceeding with the story (Sacks, 1986). Instead, the presentation of the keys is understood by M1 as a form of setting the scene by He to engage with the objects (Heath, 1986). However, in line 25, He does not take up the guest's request for engagement in this topic, which, in a story would require the listener to produce brief and appropriate response tokens (Bavelas, Coates, & Johnson, 2002). Instead, he agrees with the exhibited content of M1's turn and while M1 and F1 start to laugh in anticipation of M1's next turn, the continuation and climax of the story, He continues his turn and pre-emptively concludes what M1 would have said, thus effectively telling M1's story for him (Kendon, 1967).
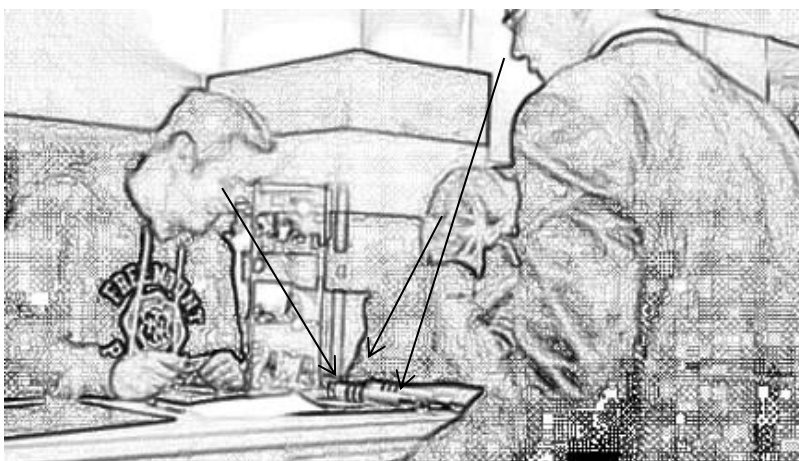


*Frame 9: Token moment of gaze orientation to object*

In the above sequence, the order of the agenda is suspended through the injection of M1's side sequence, or story. M1 remarks on the keys, proffering a deviation from the preferred response in dichotomous questions (Raymond, 2006). In this, he demonstrates knowledge about hotels as a general institution. He remarks on knowledge as is imparted in various places, including communities, organisations (rules/habits), and quite specific in this case, artefacts. Such

a discursive practice is used in an attempt to align talk occurring in a heterogeneous environment (Bruni, Gherardi, & Parolin, 2007). As a participant in the interaction, M1 attempts to orient towards "knowables" (Pomerantz, 2006c, p. 240) by attempting to make a declarative statement about the keys (Pomerantz, 2006b). However, He uses the first possible point of completion of M1's turn to continue the guest's turn. He begins with what might be perceived as a token of acknowledgment that would allow M1 to continue his turn. In anticipation of regaining the turn, both M1 and F1 begin laughing; however He continues his turn and pre-empties what M1 might have wanted to say. M1 as the initiator of the original sequence indicates by initiating laughter that it is appropriate and his wife as one of the recipients of the talk joins in (Jefferson, 2006c). But how talk is produced and how it is consequently treated upon completion can be quite different (Goodwin & Goodwin, 2006). In this situation, since his turn, a "mini story" was completed by another party, M1 produces a "no" as an acknowledgement token to conclude the topic (Mazeland, 1987, as cited in Jefferson, 2002).

The goal of an interaction, in this case the hotel registration, is completed, no matter what route politeness or rapport building are employed, or how they are perceived for that matter (Kendon, 1967). However, implications are being made in the interactions, not only for the present situation, but for the establishment of future relations (Boden, 1994).

# Part 3: Beyond a description of the registration process: returning participants and observations on topic introduction by a guest

## 5.7    Canonical interactions: some notes on regular or returning guests

In this analysis, the focus has been on registration processes with guests who are visiting the hotel for the first time. In this respect, the hotel check-in takes a special place in a series of service encounters. In the hotel context, a registration process can be the notably first time of an interaction between the organisation that is the receptionist and the guest. It is a situation in which it is known to both parties whether it is the first encounter, or if the guest has been to the establishment before. Unlike in other service encounters, this knowledge on the side of the service provider is not dependent on a personal relationship between the interactants. With modern technology, hotels, regardless of their size, use specialised software to manage the interface between front desk and front office (e.g. bookings). But even without the aid of software, hotels prepare for the arrival of new guests commonly the night before, so that the receptionists are prepared for the arrival of their guests (Laws, 2006).

Some observations can be made about guests returning to the organisation. Again, it can be shown that the interactions are governed by the premise of effective an efficient behaviour.

Politeness and rapport building activities are contingent on this premise, but participants must make the decision as to whether they will follow the patterns by invoking the institutional procedures or not (Boden, 1994; Nielsen, Nielsen, Gravengaard, & Due, 2012).

At a first glance, interactions between receptionists and their regular guests seem to sometimes follow an unusual pattern. However, CA demonstrates that in this situation the interactants still respect the level of appropriate engagement and rapport as detailed in the premise of effective an efficient behaviour:

*Extract 15: Invoking routine*

*8 (M1, K: native English speaker))*

```
16  K:    and (.) you- you don't know about breakfast. Is that ∘righ[:t∘?
17  M1:                                                           [I >NEVer<
18        know about breakfast. No. (1.0) ∘See she knows∘.
19  K:    ∘humhm∘
20        (1.6)
          ①                    ②     ③      ④
21  K:    and can you guess which roohom number you're in?=
          ⑤                    ⑥          ⑦        ⑧ ⑨ ⑩   ⑪
22  M1:   =I might go for (.) a random uhum number six shall we?
          ▽ ⑫
23  K:    Tadaaa! ((sings))
    M1:   Ah weah ((laughter, shared with K)
```
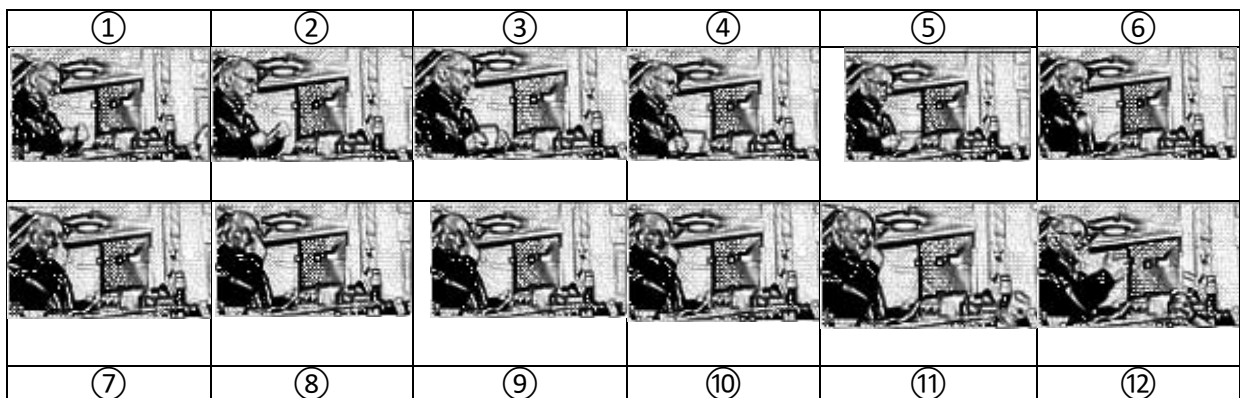


*Frame 10: Rendering a gesture visible, preparatory to a deictic activity*

The guest in this extract has stayed in the hotel for business reasons a couple of days per week over several months. As a result, the overall interaction is light hearted, but still maintains aspects of any other well executed arrival sequence. In line 16, K pretends that M1 is not familiar with the hotel's conventions (here: breakfast times) and invites the guest to play along by finishing the turn with a question. M1 picks up on the banter just before the prior turn is completed. It is usually assumed that information that participants have established is not repeated in an interaction (Goodwin, 1979). However, in a cooperative hotel registration process featuring a returning guest, the principles of what constitutes an effective and efficient encounter

are observed by receptionist and guest. In this example, both participants orient to the receptionist's agenda, allowing the receptionist to ensure that the hotel's information is transferred to the guest, even if it is not necessary on the grounds of factual knowledge. Although they may not need to follow the agenda since the items are already known to the participants, the interaction is structured to allow the interactants to invoke the procedures in a ritualistic manner for "doing checking-in" (Nielsen et al., 2012). In this sense, both parties honour the ritualistic nature of the interaction. The interaction follows what has been described in the canonical hotel registration process: the receptionist works through the items on the agenda, and M1 produces responses in a latched or overlapping manner.

Goodwin (1979) observes that "the turn at talk provides an area where nontrivial social, linguistic and cultural phenomena, as well as such nonvocal phenomena as gaze, can be analysed as elements of a single integrated process (p. 112). A focus on the nonverbal in this interaction demonstrates that the interactants use the same gaze behaviour detailed at the beginning of this chapter. In this case, however, the two participants exaggerate this behaviour. When K invites M1 to "guess" his room number in line 34, M1 shifts his gaze to K to achieve mutual gaze and introduces a theatrical element into his response. While producing his turn, M1 covers his mouth in a gesture locating himself in the interaction (Horowitz, 1935), indicating a noticing that the interaction is an adapted form to what would usually constitute a preferred turn organisation in which a guest is told his room number, not invited to guess it (Notice a similar gestural behaviour in Figure 13 and 14 in introducing a new topic). The uses of gestures by both M1 and the presentation of the object by K coproduce an orientation to the object at hand, without one party being responsible for the accomplishment as would be customary in a true first encounter at the reception desk. At the end of the extract, K produces the correctly guessed key card which M1 addresses with a welcoming gesture. Again, the orientation of the gaze revolves around the object (Knoblauch, 2008). As can be seen in the picture below, M1's gaze is directed towards K, but takes into account the displayed object. Even though the outcome of the interaction is known to the participants, they not only use social deictic elements in the conversation (Levinson, 2004; Nunberg, 1993), but use them in a particular fashion, even if they are repeated (Galatolo & Traverso, 2005).

*Frame 11: Achievement of gaze: showing and pointing at an object simultaneously by both participants*

The knowledge that is shared between the participants regarding the task at hand is reflected in the way that K displays the object, and the gesture that M1 produces in return. K's exclamation in line 50 is perceived and interpreted by M1 as a call for the production of the gesture (Cook & Tanenhaus, 2009; Hostetter & Alibali, 2008). This behaviour demonstrates how interactants can refer to the ceremonial nature of the interaction, by acknowledging that interactions are repeated at the appropriate times of a guest's stay (here: doing "arrival" upon arrival), lending the interaction an almost theatrical touch (Kerbrat-Orecchioni, 1984; Strong, 2001).
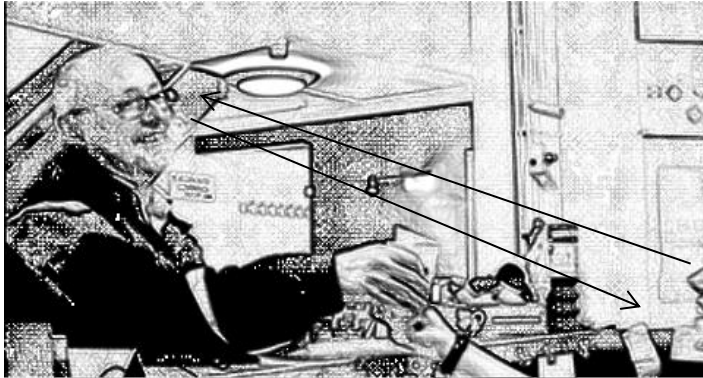


*Frame 12: Mutual gaze and interchange of object; co-production of action*

The display of the key card results in other situations unusual interaction with the object: commonly, keys in the registration process are not "handed over", but are placed onto the reception desk by the receptionist (see also notes on "reception desk" in chapter 4; compare analysis chapter 3). Here, however, K offers the card to M1 with her gesture which affects the reciprocal action, grasping the card, produced by M1 (Cook & Tanenhaus, 2009). Kendon (1967) estimated that looking at the other participant in a conversation occurs about 50% of the total time of an interaction. Gaze length has not been measured for this study, but it is noticeable that participants in examples like the one illustrated here maintain gaze for longer period of times than

they do in other situations which may indicate that they share a feeling of established rapport or liking to the other party (Argyle & Dean, 1965; Kleinke, 1986).

### 5.7.1 Returning guest: lack of engagement

Regular guests do not necessarily have established extensive rapport or "pseudo-friendships" with the hotel staff. In such situations, the mutual orientation to the hotel's agenda and the expected ceremonial order is non-existent. Both parties may display resistance to the communicative behaviour of the other. Notably, the overall goal of the interaction, registering the guests for their stay in the establishment is not affected. However, the behaviour displayed by the guest, e.g. lack of eye contact at the required moments in the interaction, can be considered confrontational and could lead to a conflict, if such behaviour was to be retaliated by the receptionist (cf. also second analysis chapter for complaints and conflict resolving) (Brown & Gilman, 1972; Tafoya, 1983).

*Extract 16: Disaffiliation from routine*

*198 (M1/F1, He: native German speaker)*

```
       M1  ,----------------------,,,,————————————————— ————————

       He  _____,,,,,,,.....
  9  He:  Sie kenn' sich weiterhin aus, [wo   ]'s hin geht? .hh Hier [rechts-
 10       ],zw[eite Eta↑ge,]
          You HON still remember,       [where] to go? .hh here    [right],
            se[cond fl↑oor,]
 11  M1:                                 [JA!  ]

       M1..__▽__,,,----------
 12        [Ja (.) jaha]
                                          [YES! ]
          [Yes (.) yehes]
 13  F1:                                                     [rechts   ]
                                                            [right     ]
 14  He:  ↓↓Wunderbar
          ↓↓Great
```

In this extract, He offers to remind guests about the location of different hotel facilities. He is interrupted before he reaches a possible turn conclusion point. Still, after an inbreath, he attempts an explanation which he abandons after another interruption by both the guests. The participants in this interaction have the same knowledge about the establishment as it relates to information that is usually passed onto to guests. However, in this situation, that common ground that does exist is not invoked in the linguistic rendition of the interaction. In line 9, He attempts to orient to the guest's prior knowledge while also addressing the items on the agenda. However, despite the request for participation to the guest, M1 does not change his gaze, but continues to prepare for taking his leave from the interaction by continuing to shift his body position away from the reception desk and indicating movement away from the conversation (Heath, 1986). The shift in orientation of the different body parts is coordinated in response to the short, clipped

speech (Robinson, 1998). Movement and accompanying gaze behaviour is used by M1 to exert social control in order to persuade He to follow Goodwin's (1979) principle of not reiterating established knowledge (Kleinke, 1986). This premise, however, is here demonstrated to conflict with the job role that the receptionist has, in which this role requires him to produce the information as part of fulfilling the role of a competent employee (Kennelly Isaacs, 2006).
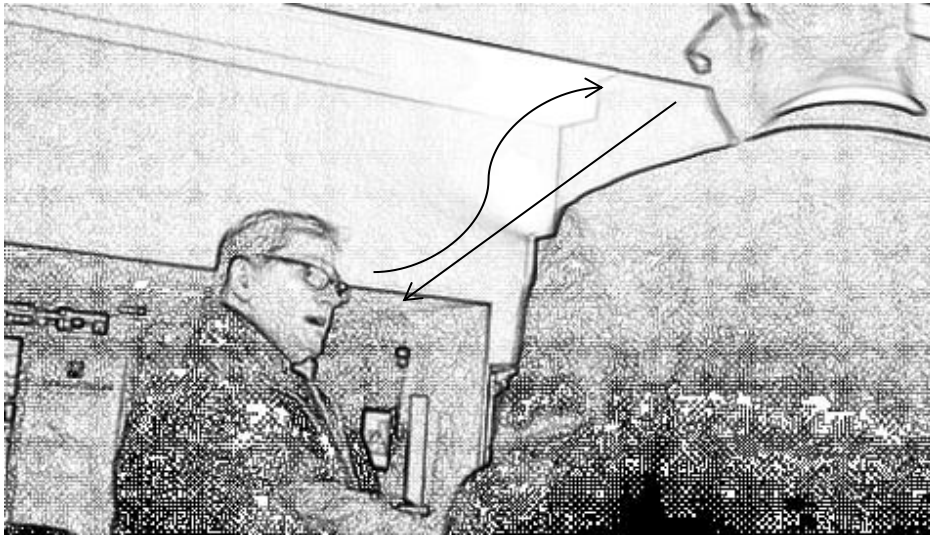


*Frame 13: Elicited gaze orientation, shift in body position*

Leave taking from a hotel check-in is commonly achieved by the guest allowing for the receptionist to close the interaction. In this situation, however, M1 in his body positioning demonstrates a clear initiation to end the conversation (Adato, 1975). However, it remains a request to end the conversation. M1 does not walk away, even though his body exhibits a clear desire to do so. Even though his behaviour, both vocal and nonverbal presumes that he shares all of the relevant information with He, this knowledge is still contextualised to the situation, in which M1 despite the resistance allows He to maintain a certain level of control over the closing of the interaction (Blome-Tillmann, 2008). This type of example also demonstrates some more generic issues that have been of interest to scholars in hospitality and tourism research. Apart from fulfilling a particular goal with a service encounter (which has been demonstrated in this chapter is always successful, despite variations in the interactional approach), a second, less measurable, goal is to represent the hotel according to its mission and set values in a competent, yet friendly manner. This, however, is a matter than needs to be negotiated within each individual conversation and requires competences that are different from performing practical tasks relating

to the requirements of an establishment[17] (Lockwood & Jones, 1989; McColl-Kennedy & White, 1997; Nickson et al., 2005).

## 5.8    Inserted topics and sequences

So far it has been described how participants navigate through the different activities in a hotel check-in and concerns for interactional rapport were explored. This coordination between different phases can be highly complex, and it has been proposed that it is dependent on the interactional corporation between participating parties. Ideally, practical problems of how to move from one bounded activity to the next is accomplished according to the premises of effective and efficient behaviours, but since participants have a myriad of interactional resources (including verbal, nonverbal and artefacts) at their disposition some deviances from the interactional agenda can occur (Hazel & Mortensen, 2014). In this section, it is developed how interactants may deviate from an established agenda and mechanisms for returning to the task at hand.

### 5.8.1    Attempted dislocations in asymmetric knowhow situations

Sometimes, guests do not wait until the registration process has been completed in order to attempt to pre-empt the structure of the situation. In communication, it is not necessary for guests to wait for the termination of a speech activity or phase in order to migrate from the established pattern; the turn-taking system that is central to CA provides other opportunities, like the natural boundaries of completed sentences, for participants to attempt to interject the current topic (Heritage & Clayman, 2010).

This is not very surprising as there are, after all, two parties that negotiate the service encounter. Although participants engaged in the encounter are likely to pursue the same ultimate communicative and physical goal, the concept of context is not static – nor is it one-dimensional (Schegloff, 1997). It also does not take into account asymmetries in knowledge about the organisation (Heritage, 2006b). As a result, the guest may initiate talk on a matter that is highly important to them as an individual. However, this item could be scheduled to arise much later on the agenda, because the routine of the interaction has been structured with the knowledge that the item is in fact not important. Yet, the guests do not know this. In the present data set, one such item occurs with a very high frequency: it is very common for hotel guests in this hotel to enquire about parking as early as possible in the encounter:

---

[17] While the current analysis in this study is not addressing specifically how receptionists learn to interact efficiently and effectively in their line of work, but rather implied in the way that patterns are portrayed, the corpus would also lend itself to explore in more depth what receptionists with various levels of experience do or do not do in order to demonstrate proficiency, both in the tasks they are completing and the language that is used to do this.

*Extract 17: Topic insertion (attempt)*

*154 (F1 Danish, Sei German native speaker)*

```
                          ;;;;;;;;;;;;;;           ∇
  8   F1:    Und wo kann man mit der Au:to: par↑ken? .hh hahuhum hh.
             And where can the ca:r: be par↑ked? .hh hahuhum hh.
             F1_____∇_____
  9   Sei:   Das kann erstmal da stehenbleiben, das machen wir später, das
 10          g-, (.) [immer mit der Ruhe]
             That can stay there for now, we do it later, that
             g-, (.) [no stress]
             F1_____ -------------------------------------------------
 11   F1:              [Okay            ], gut denn  [könn'n wir<
                       [Okay            ], well then [we can<
             F1 ------------------------------- ------∇-------------------
 12   Sei:                                          [Können Sie mir das bitte
 13          einmal ausfüllen?
                                               [Can you fill this in for me,
             please
 14
```



*Frame 14: Gaze at topic introduction for elicitation of talk*

Notably, both F1 and M1 direct their gaze in an attempt at achieving mutual gaze directly at Sei's eyes, even though she is not looking at the guests when F1's turn of introducing the change in topic to Sei is complete (McClave, 2000). Both F1 and M1 direct their gaze to Sei's current eye level, that is, the level that her eyes are at while her head is directed downwards.

*Frame 15: Mutual gaze at topic transition, back to the agenda*

In line 10, Sei gives information on the topic the guests are attempting to insert into the agenda. The turn starts with an assurance that the car can remain at the current location not only for the duration of the current interaction, but for an unspecified time after the registration process has been completed. In the second part of her turn, Sei promises a return to the subject at a later time, at the end of this information sequence, Sei looks at the guests and mutual gaze is re-established. With this, both parties are now seeking affiliation to the topic, signalling that attention is focused on the interaction and can proceed (Argyle & Dean, 1965; Kendon, 1967). Cooperation is thus also established through both parties in this situation displaying appropriate listening behaviour to the concerns of the other party – be it a topic perceived as more important than the task at hand, or the subsequent return to the agenda (McKechnie et al., 2007). Using artefacts has been described as powerful manner in which to produce evidence in a goal oriented interaction, even when the produced document is not the subject of the current item on the agenda (Brassac et al., 2008). Coordinating with her talk, Sei displays a document which is not the one the guests are asked to return their attention to, but which aids in renegotiating the interaction to the goal of the sequence – filling in a registration form available to the guests (especially F1) on the desk.
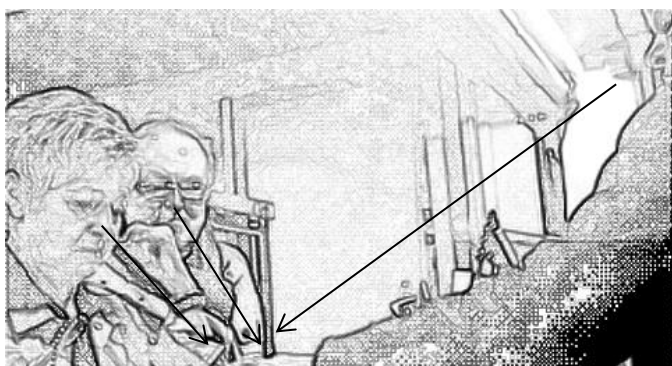


*Frame 16: Shift in gaze to particular object at hand at return to agenda*

Common attention is again focused on the same object and topic as indicated by the agenda (Myllyniemi, 1986). This is achieved both through Sei initiating a request and pointing

out the required action to be performed by the guest (Nunberg, 1993; Schegloff, 2006b). The previously displayed document by Sei was held in her right hand which has now been removed from the immediate circle of attention of the participants, and Sei uses her left hand to point to the document the guests are required to interact with. A "moment-by-moment unfolding encounter" (Hazel & Mortensen, 2014, p. 11) is further organised by notions of movement-by-movement in coordination with the accompanying talk. Accompanying her repair activity in returning to the agenda, also leans forward slightly to order her turn at talk (Rasmussen, 2014).

In the above excerpt, it can be observed that guests orient towards parking before they have even completed the initial task of filling in and signing the registration form. However, receptionists and guests have a different level of knowledge about the subject of parking at this hotel. So when taking into account the external situation in which the service encounter occurs, the interjected talk about parking is not surprising: the hotel is situated directly in the town centre, on the historic market square. There are no apparent parking possibilities nearby, which forces hotel guests to park on the market square when they arrive for the check-in. As a result, guests are worried about receiving a ticket for unauthorised parking. The receptionists at the hotel know of course that the guests will not be fined, and they also know that finding the car parks is somewhat difficult and is preferably dealt with after the guests have not only checked-in, but also checked into their rooms. Thus, this topic is usually adjourned for the duration of the initial service encounter. In all cases in the data, guests are required to initiate a subsequent service encounter, after they have moved their luggage to their room. Heritage and Clayman (2010) remind that the professional becomes skilled in how to deal with recurring issues and problems with their customers by negotiating them repeatedly, so that they learn strategies that will help them in these situations. As a result, hotel receptionists will reassure their guests about their cars and return to the item on the agenda.

### 5.8.2 Successful dislocations in asymmetric knowhow situations

Not every time is a receptionist successful in pre-empting a guest's side sequence. The following example occurs at a similar time during the interaction as extract 8. Again, the guest is supposed to complete the registration form, and chooses instead to deviate from this action. Here, however, it is the receptionist who has provided some grounds for the guest's sojourn away from the agenda and required next action by presenting an account for the guest's required behaviour:

*Extract 18: Topic insertion (success)*

*239 (F1, And: Native German speaker)*

```
29    F1:    [Oh, das ist gut. (.) <WIR ham Ihn'n ja mal> ne, ne (.) Zimmerkarte
30           wieder zurückgeschickt
             [Oh, that's good. (.) <WE once sent> a, a (.) card key back to you
             HON.
31    And:   Ah hh so
32                                                        ①
33    F1:    Per Post. Ist die wohl angekommen?
             Via post. Did it arrive?
                                      ②
34    And:   Bestimmt. (.) Bestimmt
             Certainly. (.) Certainly
35    F1:    Die ham wir irrtümlich mitgenommen (.)
             we took it by mistake
             ③
36    And:   Aber für ne Zimmerkarte (.) Das ist sehr nett von Ihnen, ab[er das
37           wäre nicht notwendig, nein
             But for a card key (.) That is very nice of you HON,      b[ut that
             would not be necessary, no
                                                                     ④
38    F1:                                                          [Nicht das
                    ⑤           ⑥                    ⑦              ⑧⑨
39           Sie immer denken Sie schicken den, [de      ]n ähm Besu::chern was,
                    ⑩           ⑪            ⑫
40           sondern wir haben Ihnen auch mal was zurück geschickt.=
                                                                  [Not that
             you HON always think that you HON always send something to the [to
             the] um visit::ors, but instead we sent you HON something in return
             for one.=
41    And:                                [Tehe: hh] =VIELen Dank.
                                          [Tehe: hh] =THANnk you very much.
```
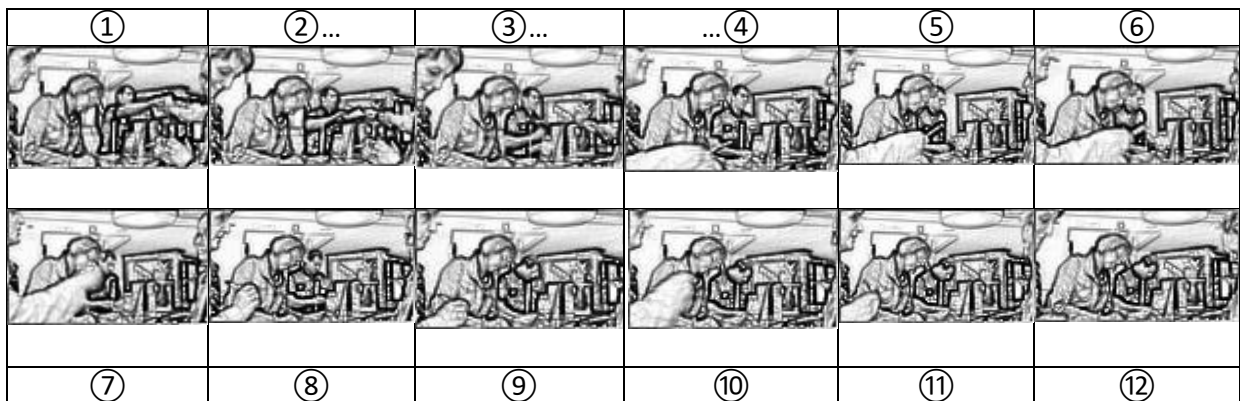


*Frame 17: Negotiating topic through pointing*

*Frame 18: Mutual gaze in negotiating topic, in conjunction with deixis (pointing)*

And has just provided an account for an action to which F1 is asked to comply with (filling in the registration form). And explained to F1 that they require a phone number and home address from guests in case that they leave something behind in the hotel. In overlap with And's turn, F1 aligns herself with the turns validity for her, recognising the relevance of And's turn and providing what appears to be the conditionally relevant type of response (Schegloff, 2007). F1 uses this to commence a side sequence that is contingent on the topic at hand, but does not produce the preferred action in this situation (filling in the requested details). In line 31, And responds disinterested to the account, but F1 is not deterred and continues, eliciting responses and therefore engagement from And. In line 33, And again attempts to close the topic by denying an engaged answer. In line 34, F1 emphasises that the taking of the key card occurred in error. And does not respond to this utterance, but continues to address the general concern of returning the card. She starts her turn with the object of the discussion, the key card, but interjects the turn with a side sequence after having completed the subsidiary clause in which she complements on the guests' initiative and morally correct behaviour. Here, F1 presumes a possible completion point and subsequently, F1 starts a third attempt in line 37. In this account, the actual topic of the F1's account is presented. She expresses a particularly framed argument which presumes that And as a representative of a receptionist assumes that guests are to some extend likely to take hotel property and not return it. This account is produced with two overlaps with And's talk. With the initiation of the turn by F1, And also continues her talk with the main clause to her prior utterance. In line 37 and 38, F1 positions her talk in a manner that makes it finally apparent to And that the topic of this sequence was not so much the returning of the card, but rather a demonstration of morally correct behaviour by a guest that might not be expected or anticipated by the hotel. In her utterance, F1 instructs And to change a presumed thought pattern, which And accepts in the interaction and produces a laughter token produced in overlap and the elicited token of gratitude for the guests' behaviour, not the return of a specific object produced at the end of the guest's turn.

In this situation, F1 successfully manipulated an item on the agenda to use it as the floor for her own agenda, and the telling of a story. Stories, as Boje (1991) emphasises, are a preferred way of interactants in asymmetrical knowledge positions (e.g. external vs. internal) to make sense of a social interaction, as well their standing with each other. In this example, F1 orders her story using pointing to index who she is referring to (Blommaert, 2007). In line 39, F1 refers to "visitors". In preparation to uttering the word, she changes her pointing of pointing at And to point at herself, moving her hand holding the pen in a grand arc to refer to herself. F1 organises her turn at speech using changing pointing between herself and And. The gestures are used here to emphasise, rather than to organise a possible next speaker (Mondada, 2007b), and coordinate meaning (Kapitan, 2006). In this sense, pointing is used to contain what and who is portrayed as the focal point in the interaction (Sonesson, 1995). F1 refers to the object in her talk, rather than presenting an object with her gesture (Perry, 1997). The gesturing activity is used to both reinforce a message, but also to insert some information that was not explicitly mentioned in the speech (Kang, Tversky, & Black, 2012). Notably, F1 uses an artefact (her pen) as a pointing device. This has two effects: on one side pointing here is constructed as insider "knowledge" and on the other side it also displays the item that is contingent for returning to the action of filling in the form (Brassac et al., 2008; Knoblauch, 2008). Thus, the action contains an unspoken promise to eventually return to the agenda.

## 5.9 Conclusion: interactional engagement and relationship building in initial encounters

In this first part of the analysis it was demonstrated how people that are sufficiently committed to the goal of an interaction will act in a synchronised manner over time, over instances, over individual interactions (Hughes, 1971, as cited in Clarke & Gerson, 1990). Although interactions follow routine behaviour, every interaction is coproduced by participants which affects meaning and social habits (Boden, 1990). In the hotel registration process, both hotel guest and receptionist have interactional mechanisms to decide how to operate in the social situation. Social implicature aids in creating the context for the situation (Levinson, 1979). Politeness in its linguistic representation is used to coordinate the interaction (Koike, 1989). Strategies can be employed to build rapport or to desist the notion thereof (Marques, 2007). Notions of polite behaviour have been seen to be conducted less overtly than has been reported in previous research (Kerbrat-Orecchioni, 2014). It has been shown that participants in an efficient and effective hotel check-in need to interactionally produce a perceived and accountable competence to receive and adequately process information (Morrison & Bellack, 1981). Furthermore, it was demonstrated that patterns are observable between interacting dyads, regardless of whether both share a native language or operate under premises of intercultural

communication situation in the registration process. People act accountable and goal oriented in the hotel check-in and use expectations and experiences to guide their vocal and non-vocal behaviours. Support for individuals developing what has been referred to as a "third culture" when conversing across differing backgrounds (Cronen & Shuter, 1983) has not been found. Instead, participants appear to be using information that can be shared between the interactants to enhance mutual understanding and feed forward the interaction by attributing meaning to their own actions and actions by their fellow participants (Barett & Kincaid, 1983; Ehrenhaus, 1983). Although an argument was made for canonical patterns in the hotel check-in, it was also demonstrated that guests are autonomous actors who can and will adapt their behaviours to what they judge to be appropriate and the tone as well as outcome of the interaction that they wish to achieve (Ellingsworth, 1983; Labov, 1972; Tafoya, 1983). In this chapter, it was begun to develop some orderliness in the ritualistic nature of interactions at the hotel front desk. Observations have been made about interpersonal interactions and connections at this initial stage of a guest's stay at a hotel. In a multimodal and multi perspective approach, it was begun to demystify some conceptions portrayed in the literature review (Asante & Vora, 1983). The following chapters build on this analysis and provide further evidence for service encounters in a hotel to be both similar and decidedly different from other service encounters commonly researched, establishing them as a sub-genre (Aston, 1988; Félix-Brasdefer, 2015; Kerbrat-Orecchioni & Traverso, 2004).

# Chapter 6: Analysis II: Stay sequences

## 6.1 Introduction

Interactions during a guest's stay differ from arrival and departure sequences. Arrival and departure are demonstrated in this study to be characterised by a pre-set goal. In stay sequences, the goal needs to be interactionally constructed by the participants. Interactions need to be appropriate for the context and must also be resolvable. This chapter describes the strategies participants employ in these situations.

Arrival and departure sequences revolve around the central activities of "checking-in" and "checking-out". Interactions at the hotel front desk during a guest's stay do not function in this way. Thus, some premises need to be established in order to situate Stay sequences not only within this study in relation to arrival and departure, but also within the overarching comprehension of service encounters. Analysis chapter 1 and 3 demonstrate that the orientation in the interaction is directed towards a singular goal and its completion (checking-in/out). It can therefore be argued that a guest enters the institution (the hotel) through the process of checking-in, and exits it either formally through a checking-out procedure or through the act of departing at the end of their stay. Through checking-in guests become part (even if only for a limited time) of the organisation, and they also become possible participants for future encounters. During the phase of "stay", guests are *latent* interactants who may choose to initiate an encounter, by which they render their actions *focused*, or effective (Traverso, 2008).

Service encounters are frequent during a guest's stay at a hotel. The purpose of the encounter is generally to provide pleasure and satisfaction. Eating in the restaurant or using other staffed amenities in the organisations fall into this category (Noone, Kimes, Mattila, & Wirtz, 2009). The service encounters at the hotel front desk during a guest's stay are of a different nature. Unlike eating in a restaurant, they are usually not desired or expected experiences nor do they provide pleasure. In these situations, guests approach the interaction knowing what they want to talk about (Sacks, 1995b). Still, they provide access to the customer's point of view of service and the ensuing encounters (Bitner, Booms, & Tetreault, 1990). Service encounters during a guest's stay occur within a particular temporally and spatially defined context which emphasises the necessity to address how behaviour is socially situated (Meier, 1995).

Arrival and departure scenes are often subject to an element of sales and negotiation of payment for services. Yet still they remain distinctly different to sales in shops described in the literature (Kerbrat-Orecchioni & Traverso, 2008). Throughout a guest's stay, the hotel is in a

unique position to offer additional services. A guest can also make a request. Service encounters are humanised through this feature (Bitran & Hoech, 1990). It is also during the Stay of a guest that rapport and relationships between the institution and the guests are actualised (Doury & Traverso, 2008).

The relationship is established through the use of routines and formulaic forms that parties associate with the communicative situation (Bladas, 2012; Economidou-Kogetsidis, 2010; Kecskes, 2000; Lundell & Erman, 2012; Terkourafi, 2015). Guests will occasionally deviate from these conventions for various purposes and to accomplish particular communicative outcomes (Habermas, 2004; Kecskes, 2013): a guest may not yet have learned the expected strategy for requesting in a hotel or the communicative goal is not the realisation and subsequent granting of a request, but a complaint. Measures of courtesy, such as politeness and rapport are related to how indirectness and directness are negotiated within a request (Blum-Kulka, 1987). A request needs to contain enough pragmatic clarity to be effective in a service encounter, but it also needs to address measures of concerns for face to be perceived as appropriate (Blum-Kulka, 1987; Coupland, 1983; Locher, 2015; Schneider, 2012).

Stay sequences are initiated through requests posed to the receptionist by a guest. Since there is no singularity of goal pre-established, these requests are co-constructed between the interactants (Filliettaz, 2008). This is done through negotiation; the purpose of the request is established throughout the encounter (Asmuß, 2007). Requests in these situations can be seen to fulfil multiple purposes. Commonly, it is described that there is a difference between "service" and "sales", that is, services are usually free of charge (Dumas, 2008). Service encounters during the stay of a guest can take either form: on some occasions, guests may purchase additional services or products, at other times, guests may require information that they are not being charged for.

### 6.1.1 Overall structure of stay sequences

*Stay service sequences*
- Opening
- **Request/Pre-complaint**
    - Request/Account
    - Account/Request
    - Granting
        - Now (information/artefact)
        - Later (artefact)
- Pre-closing
    - Thank yous and acknowledgements
    - New request *(optional)*
- Closing

It has been observed that arrival and departure sequences have a pre-defined overarching goal for the interaction. The interaction is designed to accommodate specific activities and rapport building activities are realised accordingly. During a guest's stay, the guest needs to propose an activity to the receptionist to start the interaction. A number of concerns have to be addressed in the interaction. In a first instance, the guest needs to establish the topic as appropriate for the interaction where the receptionist represents an adequate target audience (Kerbrat-Orecchioni, 2001). Most commonly, this is accomplished through a request. Less frequently, guests employ a structure I call a pre-complaint. Complaints do not form part of the corpus (see chapter 4 for methodological concerns of recording complaints). Anecdotal and observational data also suggests that the structure of a complaint at the hotel front desk is different to the sequence presented above. This analysis focuses on the communalities observable in the discourse of the corpus[18] (Schegloff, 1999).

## 6.2    Initial forms of engagement presentation:

### 6.2.1    Requests

Requests in institutional interaction may be expected to be straightforward, but research has found that interactional dynamics are more delicate (Gill, Halkowski, & Roberts, 2001). There is the need for guests to establish whether their concerns are "askable" (Stivers, 2011) in the particular institutional context. In presenting a request or other query, guests also need to negotiate common ground (Kecskes & Zhang, 2009). Institutional interaction is often characterised through asymmetries of knowledge between the communicating parties. In stay sequences, guests need to provide an acceptable reason for seeking assistance (Heritage & Robinson, 2006). What is appropriate can vary between hotels and so can who is responsible for a concern. Requests preceded by an account can also follow structures in conversations that attempt to elicit an offer instead of formulating the request (Kendrick & Drew, 2014). However, the analysis of the evidence in this corpus seems to indicate that receptionists do not commonly formulate the request for the guest. However, solutions to problems are presented commonly immediately after the request is formulated by receptionists reflecting the coordinated social action of receptionist and guest and interpersonal influence (Economidou-Kogetsidis, 2010; Enfield, 2014; Gibbs, 1981; Maynard & Schaeffer, 1997; Paulson & Roloff, 1997). Requests are anticipated encounters during stay sequences and provide the overall context for the interactions

---

[18] Field observations and informal talks with guests during the data collection suggest that guests may believe that a receptionist is "better", e.g. more efficient when they agree to fulfil the request without a condition. In Hotel D, guests identified the receptionist as most efficient who everyone else (including himself) considered rather lazy. Guests saw him as showing commitment to their request, without asking for further clarification. This, however, frequently creates additional work for other employees. Receptionists who requested further information or clarification to facilitate the execution of the resolution were seen as less friendly.

and highlight the guest's entitlement. The request sequences are designed to accomplish a goal within the particular institutional context (Nolen & Maynard, 2013). The goals are conventionally embedded in the request presentation and its form (Paulson & Roloff, 1997).

### 6.2.2 Pre-complaint

'Pre-' in conversation analysis is used to describe sequences that occur prior to the utterance sequences under analysis. These sequences may introduce a set of preconditions, presuppositions and other prefaces which may impact on a request (or complaint) (Curl & Drew, 2008; Fox, 2014; Monzoni, 2008). The term pre-complaint (cf. also Kerbrat-Orecchioni, 2001 and the development of "semi-excuse" in "extraordinary requests") will be employed to describe a distinctive interaction event. In a general as well as a legal context, denotes a larger interactional structure, similar to what is commonly understood as a request and complaint. A pre-complaint can be used to indicate an intent to make a complaint. It can also help involved parties to negotiate whether a complaint can be made based on the available grounds. A pre-complaint can also provide an alternate resolution to a formal complaint[19].

### 6.2.3 Complaint

Complaints are understood here as interactions from guest designed to cause face threats. As an action, they may carry financial liabilities for the organisation (Orthaber & Márquez-Reiter, 2011). In other situations, the relationship aspect and the cooperation between guests and receptionists are directed to. Sincere complaints set in motion what might be called a formal complaint sequence. In a formal complaint, the resolution is not delivered in the receptionist-guest dyad, but involves management level employees and the interactions are frequently removed from the semi-public setting that is the reception area. In reference to the present corpus, formal (or actual) complaints thus invoke a different social category. In the observations for this study, formal complaints cannot be resolved between a guest and a receptionist and are here identified as *conflict* (Potter & Reicher, 1987) rather than a complaint. The distinction is made by "the *demand* for relief"[20] ("Complaint," 2004, p. 323) on a ground and not a *request* for a solution to a problem (Vinkhuyzen & Szymanski, 2005). Requests in action are characterised by social and personal contingencies that occur in an interaction, not an action in conversation that seeks to set in motion higher instance resolution (through involvement of the organisation's management) (cf. also "Action at law," 2004).

---

[19] A difference in definition exists in different disciplines (compare also https://www.civilrights.dot.gov/complaint-resolution/complaint-process/employee-complaint-process/pre-complaint)

[20] My emphasis

# Part 1: Canonical requests

## 6.3    Sequence structure

### 6.3.1    Presenting a request

A request utterance is most frequently placed straight after an opening and is used for matters in which the appropriateness or grantability of a request is not in question (Goffman, 1963). Guests invoke routine (Bladas, 2012) in their requests when it is known that a service or item is available and can be requested (Kecskes & Zhang, 2013). Examples may include queries about facilities in the hotel itself (restaurant, gym, pool, washing machines, luggage room); services/amenities in the hotel (safe, Wi-Fi) and questions about services outside of the hotel (renting a car, restaurants in the area, the beach). The following examples present how requesting is interactionally achieved through the described structure. The latter part of the analysis and the accompanying examples develops a detailed multimodal investigation, based on the premises portrayed here.

*Extract 19: Routine request: Using the gym*

*229 (F1 German native speaker, Ant native Spanish speaker)*

```
1    F1: ( ) eine kurze Frage (.) Wir würden gern den FITNessrau:m benutzen.
2        [(0.3)] Wie das genau funktioni::rt.
         (.) a short question (.) We would like to use the FITness roo:m.
         [(0.3)] How exactly (does) that wor::k
3    Ant: [Jaha ]
          [Yehes]
4    Ant: Sie brauchen eine ↑Schlussel. Sie kommen wenn Sie wollen jeden Ta:g.
          You HON need a ↑key. You FORM come if you FORM want (to) every da:y
```

Unlike in other commercial service encounters (Félix-Brasdefer, 2015; Filliettaz, 2008; Traverso, 2001a, 2001c), guests provide an account for the request prior to or after the requesting utterance, much like the literature has suggested for mundane interactions (Schegloff, 2007). Interactants account for their visits to the reception desk and the interaction much like it is observable in medical interactions (Gill & Maynard, 2006; Heritage & Robinson, 2006). Literature on requests in stores deduces that accounts are not usual components of these interactions (Sorjonen & Raevaara, 2014), although Kerbrat-Orecchioni (2001) illustrates some instances in which customers produce what she calls a "semi-excuse" to mitigate potential face threats.

*Extract 20: Accounting in routine requests: Additional items for the room*

*256 (F1 native German speaker)*

```
F1:    (...) Ein Laken, ein Bettlaken, das Bettzeug is mir zu <wa:rm>
       (0.8)
       (...) A sheet a bed sheet, the bedding is too <wa:rm> for me
```

A request is preceded by an account only when the request formulation is dependent on shared ground (Drew & Couper-Kuhlen, 2014) which may not exist prior to the interaction or may be due to misinformation. In order to request, an object or a location needs to be identified as belonging to the responsibility area of the receptionist. A preceding account then also be used to develop the grounds for a request that is also based on non-conclusive information available to the guest.

*Extract 21: Account before request: Communicating an incorrect voucher*

*134 (Sei German native speaker; M1 Swiss German[21] speaker)*

```
M1:    Dann versteh ich hier eine- (.) ein- einen Satz<nicht>
       Then I <don't> understand one- (.) one- one sentence here.   }ACCOUNT
Sei:   Was PAR?
       What (is it)?
       (0.6)
M1:    Da heisst es diesen Gutschein vor der Bestellung abgeben
       [u    ]nd da heisst im Hotel A***m***n abgeben.
       It says there hand over this voucher before ordering
       [a    ]nd (it) says there hand over in the Hotel A***m***n.
Sei:   [Ja, im-]
       [Yes, in the-]
       (2.1)
((Sei takes paper and reads))
M1:    Was ist das?
       What is that?       }REQUEST
       (0.4)
Sei:   ◦Der Gutschein ist verkehrt◦ (0.4) ((sniffs, smiles))
       ◦The voucher is incorrect◦ (0.4) ((sniffs, smiles))
```

---

[21] M1 gave his consent to being recorded remarking that his dialect in speaking standard German may be difficult to understand
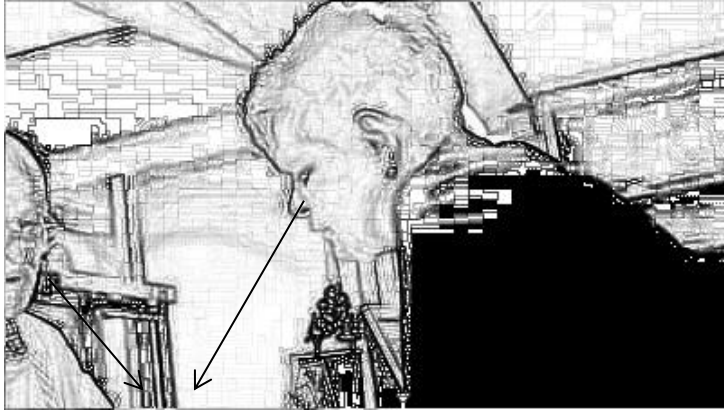
*Frame 19: Co-constructing requestable item*

When a request is preceded by an account, the requestable item is not yet available interactionally to all participants. Gaze orientation helps participants to create availability for the interaction (Bavelas et al., 2002; Kendon & Cook, 1969).

### 6.3.2 Granting of requests

Appropriate requests at the hotel receptions are granted and executed immediately. Execution is begun as soon as the receptionist has deciphered the nature of the request and its solution. It is irrelevant whether the fulfilment is accomplished immediately or through a remote service (Steensig & Heinemann, 2014). This is done while additional details are still negotiated in the interaction (Drew & Couper-Kuhlen, 2014; Gibbs, 1985; Huth, 2010; Steensig & Heinemann, 2014).

*Extract 22: Dialling as request execution: Booking a car (invoking a third party)*

*(M1 native German, Ant native Spanish speaker)*

```
38   Ant:  We- welche Zimmernummer? ((dialling))
           wh- which room number?
39   ((F1, F2 whispering to each other))
40   M1:   ∘vier (.) sieben (.) null (.) <drei>∘
           ∘four (.) seven (.) zero (.) <three>∘
41   Ant:  ((with phone on ear, writing)) Vier sieben?
           ((with phone on ear, writing)) Four seven?
42   M1:   (        )
43   Ant:  Sieben sieben null drei
           Seven seven zero three
```

Booking a car is done routinely through reception and can be done without the guests doing so themselves. The same was observed in the agency providing the key to the reception, guests collecting it from and returning it to there, and the agency collecting the key from there as well (no recordings).
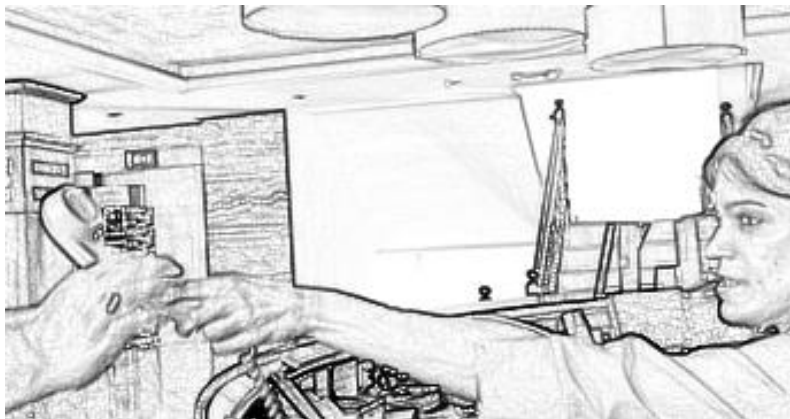
*Frame 20: Dialling as request execution: providing access to third party*

In this instance, the guest had inquired about the opening hours of a diving centre in the area. Xi called the service for the guest and hands over the phone for the guest to confirm details with them. In this instance, the phone call allows the guest to confirm details without going to the centre which may not be open.

Much like requests, routine problems are also solved immediately (Enfield, 2014; Shotter, 1995).

*Extract 23: Request for solution: Wi-Fi not working on phone*

*41 (K native English speaker; F1 non-native)*

```
                                                     ▽
1   K:     Yah. (.) Tha[t's it. An'] then you put that (.) password in there,
2          that's right.
3   F1:              [<Yeah>]
```
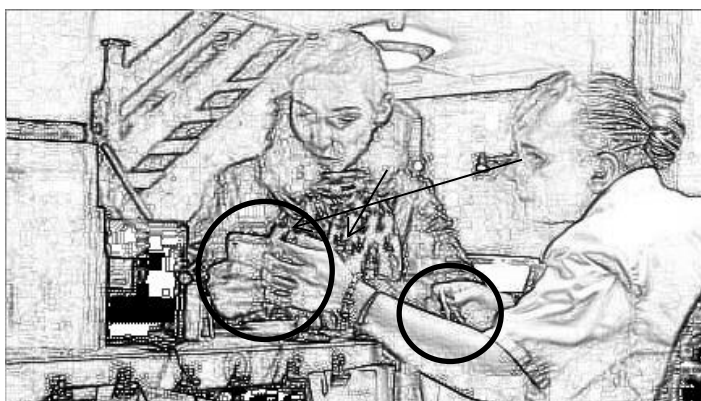


*Frame 21: Key identifier (prior to extract)*

Establishing the problem is frequently accomplished prior to the vocalisation of a problem by co-orientation of participants to an available object as key identifier (cf. Button & Casey, 1984). A guest offering an electronic device for inspection at the hotel front desk (smartphone, laptop) is most likely to have a problem connecting to the Wi-Fi. The receptionist

still uses gaze to construct the object as the topic for the request. The receptionist already holds the Wi-Fi code in her hand to help the guest (Bitran & Hoech, 1990; Shotter, 1995).



*Frame 22: Token moment: Instructing in problem resolution*

The item to resolve the guest's problem (here: the code for the Wi-Fi) becomes relevant when the problem has been solved and can be executed.

If the completion of a request relies on other members of staff, the receptionist will demonstrate interactively that they commit to see to the completion of the request on behalf of the guest (Drew & Couper-Kuhlen, 2014; Steensig & Heinemann, 2014).

*Extract 24: Demonstrating commitment: Writing down a note for the housekeeper*

*(Tar native Arabic speaker)*
```
1   Tar:  ((writing)) <Vierzehn> ∘null∘ ∘∘neun∘∘ .hh Ich schreib das für die
2              Hausdame, oder möschten Sie das mitnehmen?
           ((writing)) <Fourteen> ∘zero∘ ∘∘nine∘∘.hh I write that for the
           houskeeper, or do you FORM want to take it with (you)?
```

### 6.3.3   Pre-closing and closing the sequence

Thank you sequences occur in as pre-closing sequences in the interaction (Bardovi-Harling, Hartford, Mahan-Taylor, Morgan, & Reynolds, 1991). Thank-you sequences are repeated if a guest does not leave after the initial thank-yous and act as a closing sequence then. The guest's non-leaving after line 5 leads to a substantial pause, prompting K to provide additional information on the problem context. This leads into a thank you sequence occurring latched and in overlap and F1 leaves on her final thank you utterance (Broth & Mondada, 2013).

*Extract 25: Wi-Fi Thank you*

*41 (K native English speaker, F1 non-native speaker)*

```
 5   F1:                                                 [Than::k you::
 6        (4.0)
 7   K:   Um (0.3) That wi-fi (0.3) ↓code (.) is all the same throughout
 8        your stay and is accessible throughout the building (.) so you
 9        should be able get in (anywhere in building).=
10   F1:  =Lovely. Thanks very much=
11   K:   =No problem. [Thank you
12   F1:               [Thank you.    ((leaving))
```

## 6.4    On the orderliness of request structures

Efficiency and effectiveness in these moves is demonstrated by including a clear *what* (the want or need of the guest) and a clear *how* (the receptionist as appropriate recipient for the matter) (Bourdieu, 1982; Draper, 1988; Drew & Couper-Kuhlen, 2014; Johnson, 2007). The goal of the interaction is achieved both verbally and ultimately physically in the supply of information or requested objects. Understanding *what* a speaker meant addresses the informative function of an utterance, whereas *how* addresses the instrumental aspect (Hoppe-Graff, Herrmann, Winterhoff-Spark, & Mangold, 1985). The sequence organisation demonstrates the engagement of both parties as responsible for the outcome (Clark & Wilkes-Gibbs, 1986) which is produced in form of a co-solution acceptable to both (Fry, 1995; Habermas, 2004). Despite a previous organised goal, institutionality is negotiated throughout the encounter (Hester & Francis, 2002).

The example here portrays a conventional request sequence where "what" and "how" are clearly addressed within an explicit request for an item (Huth, 2010), including multimodal concerns. The request is produced through a competent use of language allowing the recipient to infer the intended meaning. Throughout the interaction, additional information is disclosed as necessary to address the social setting, roles of speaker and hearer as well as their beliefs and presuppositions about the matter at hand (Gibbs, 1985).

*Extract 26: Verbal and nonverbal co-construction of requests*

*257 (F1 native German speaker, Tar Arabic speaker)*

```
Tar/F1_____∇_____

 1   F1:  (...) Ein Laken, ein Bettlaken, das Bettzeug is mir zu <wa:rm>
 2        (0.8)
          (...) A sheet a bed sheet, the bedding is too <wa:rm> for me
Tar/F1_____
 3   Tar: Ach so::
          Ah okay::
Tar-----------------------------
F1_____∇_____,,,,,,,,. . . . .
```

```
4   F1:    >Ja, einfach< nur ein La::ken.
           >Yes, PAR< just a she::t.
           ①    ②    ③    ④     ⑤
    Tar-------------------------------
    F1_____∇---------------
5   Tar:   Machen wa, Zimmernummer ist?=
6          we'll do (it), room number is?=
           ⑥                  ⑦
7   F1:    =Vierzehn null <↓neun>
           =Fourteen zero <↓nine>
                          ⑧      ⑨    ⑩     ⑪        ⑫
    F1---------------------------------------_____
    Tar--------------------------------------_____
8   Tar:   ((writing)) <Vierzehn> ∘null∘ ∘∘neun∘∘ .hh Ich schreib das für die
    Tar/F1_____
9          Hausdame, oder möschten Sie das mitnehmen?
           ((writing)) <Fourteen> ∘zero∘ ∘∘nine∘∘.hh I write that for the
           houskeeper, or do you HON want to take it with (you)?
    F1_____
    Tar_____     ----------------------
10  F1:    Nee, nö: einfach:: (.) das sie das hochlegt
           No COL, no: COL PRT (just) (.) that she puts that upstairs
11         (0.5)
12  Tar:   Mach ich [(.)] .hh heheh Ja=
           I'll do (it) [(.)] .hh heheh Yes=
13  F1:             [Ja?]
                    [Yes?]
14  F1:    Vielen Dank!
           Thank you very much!
15  Tar:   Sehr ger[ne    ]. Nischt zu dankehehn hh heh
           with (much) pl[easure]. Not for that hh heh
16  F1:            [∘Okay∘]
```

In line 1, F1 requests an item at the beginning of her term and closes with an account to legitimise her turn (Buttny, 1993; McLaughlin, Cody, & Rosenstein, 1983). She identifies the object (ein Laken/a sheet) and self-repairs to a more accurate term for the object (ein Bettlaken/a bed sheet) (Escudé & Janin, 2010). F1 self-identifies the requested object as problematic and repeats the request using a different term to facilitate a common grounding of the object in the interaction (Kecskes & Zhang, 2013; Traum & Allen, 1992). The turn concludes with an evaluative account for why the object is needed (Thompson, 2002). Doing social actions elicits a consequence from the recipient and accounts in such situations address current action in the conversation (Heritage, 1988). Accounts are designed to transform a listener's potentially negative evaluation through discursive practice meant to redefine social reality (Antaki, 1988; Buttny, 1993). F1's account represents her personal circumstances giving Tar access to her personal condition. The account at this stage does not provide any acknowledgement of constraint that the receptionist might have in fulfilling the request. The utterance provides evidence for influences dependent on the speaker (Hoppe-Graff et al., 1985). The account is produced to

facilitate an interactional goal which means that the recipient should treat it as such. No claim is being made as to whether any of the participants believe the content. What matters to the analysis is that the account is treated as appropriate to the situation and the relational stance (Draper, 1988).
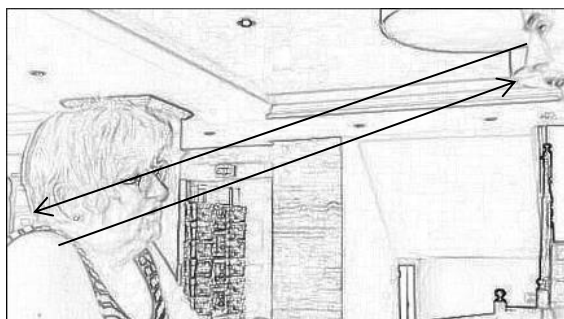


*Frame 23: Mutual gaze in account presentation*

F1 and Tar have established mutual gaze which is held until Tar has produced an acknowledgement token. Tar's reply in line 3 is produced with a significant delay (Bögels, Kendrick, & Levinson, 2015; Stivers et al., 2009) which is accompanied by a head nod (Dittmann & Llewellyn, 1968). Through the pause and the utterance he acknowledges the request along with the epistemic change in knowledge that has occurred in the interaction (Bögels et al., 2015; Rod Gardner, 2001; Golato, 2010; Thompson, 2002). The context and its implications for the interaction are made explicit and available for the participants (Mandelbaum, 1990).
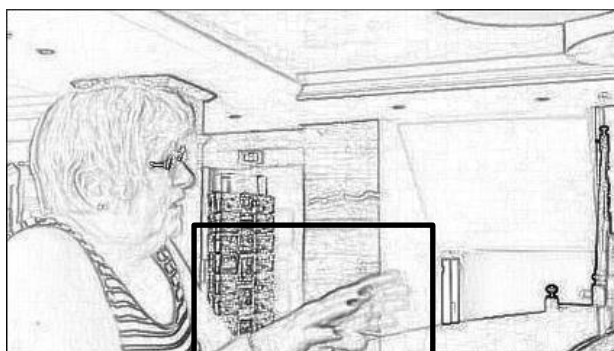


*Frame 24: Minimising request through gesture*

Even though the request has been acknowledged by the receptionist, F1 reiterates her request, but modifies it both verbally and nonverbally to reduce any perceived cost to the receptionist in complying. The introduction of modal particles provides evidence for moderating reciprocity in the turn (Clark & Wilkes-Gibbs, 1986; Heritage, 1984) and establishes a sense of stability (Collins, 1987). Unlike line 1, the request in line 4 incorporates an attempt to accommodate the hearer-dependent influences (Hoppe-Graff et al., 1985). The choice of strategy

in deploying a request is directly related to the situational circumstance and the speaker's assessment of a potential level of face threat (Blum-Kulka, Danet, & Gherson, 1985). The account in the request sequences described here represents the social action (Gardner, 2004). Accounts in institutional interactions are commonly volunteered rather than elicited (Fisher & Groce, 1990). Accounts can be understood as managing organisational power (Harris, 2003). F1 moves her hands in accordance with her utterance (Dittmann & Llewellyn, 1969). The movement is done as her turn reaches the adjective of the sentence, thus, the problem she is experiencing with the item in question. Hand gestures have been described to be largely done by the current speaker (Schegloff, 1984). The gestures can then be seen to be referenceable in the produced talk.
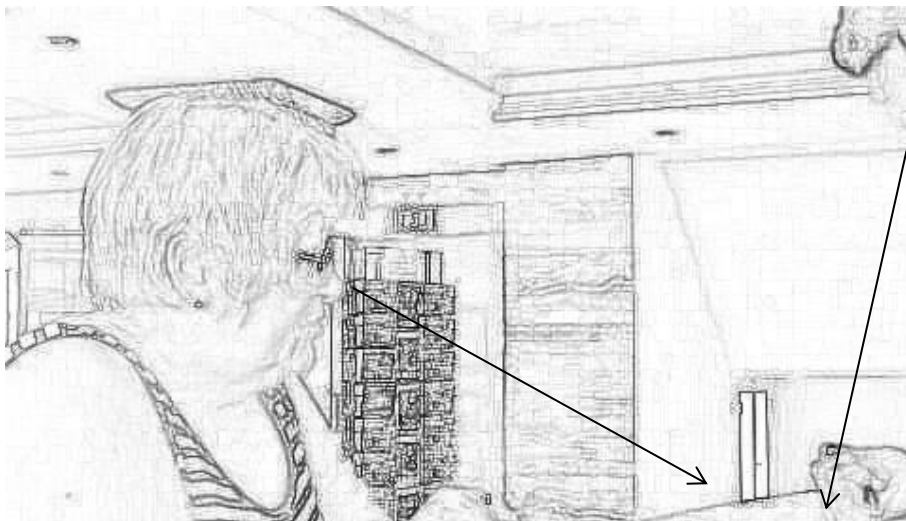


*Frame 25: Remote granting*

Interaction is constructed in response to a prior utterance and an understanding gained through it (Shotter, 1995). In line 5, Tar promises a fulfilment of the request verbally. The preferred response of granting, however, has already begun on his part after his delayed response in line 3. His gaze has shifted to materials on the lower part of the reception desk necessary to remotely grant the request (pen[22] and paper). F1's gaze remains on Tar's face until the granting is initiated. Knowledge of fulfilling the process is co-constructed in the institutional setting (Collins, 1987). Tar moves the pen in his hand to get it in writing position. F1's gaze follows the movement (frame ①-⑤). The shift in attention and accompanying body positioning is related to the object that is fulfilling the request (Furnham & Petrova, 2010).

| ① | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

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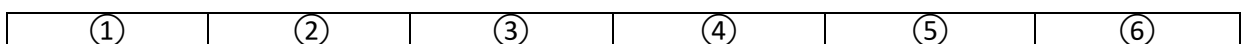
[22] Tar has already a pen in his hand before the interaction begins

| ⑦ | ⑧ | ⑨ | ⑩ | ⑪ | ⑫ |
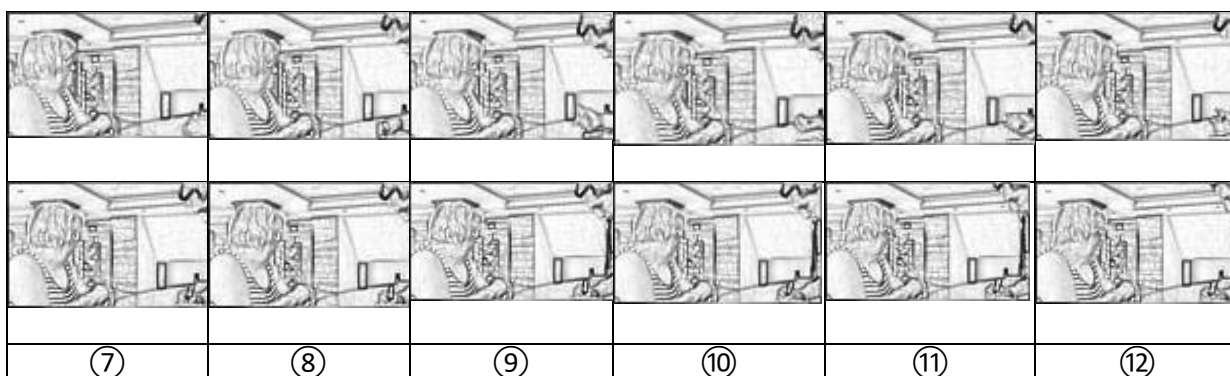
*Frame 26: Gaze shift to a mutual object*

Tar shifts his gaze away from the requesting party. By moving his pen into a writing position he demonstrates that he is still engaging in the conversation and orienting to the request at hand (Goodwin, 1984). Both participants demonstrate that they remain involved in the task (Heath, 1984). The organisation of the request is accomplished through mutual coordination (Quinn & Dutton, 2005). Engaged participants in interaction demonstrate their involvement through their interactional moves signalling understanding throughout an unfolding turn (Jones, 2003; Toerien & Kitzinger, 2007). F1's response to Tar's query about the room number is thus latched as it was anticipated by the listener.

Tar and F1's gaze remains on Tar's writing while he completes the task (verbally and nonverbally). When he is done writing, he moves his head to establish mutual gaze again (frame ⑫) and informs F1 of the expected remote request granting party (the housekeeper), but in the same turn also gives F1 an alternate resolution which would allow for immediate provision of the requested item at the reception desk. While having a choice is preferable for a guest, the amount of work for the receptionist is the same, thus the choice a guest eventually makes irrelevant for the employee. Here F1 choses for the housekeeper to supply the sheet. Her decision turn in line 10 is produced hesitantly, a feature that can be seen in guest responses throughout the chapter: while the interaction is standard and routine to the receptionist, the context is new to the guest (Rimé & Schiaratura, 1991).
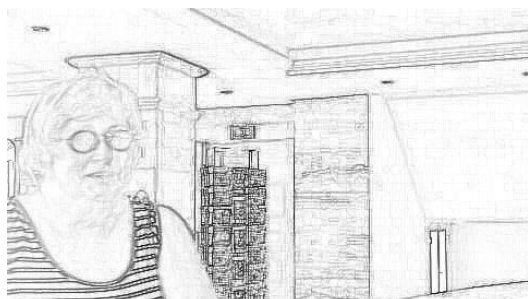


*Frame 27: Smiling in requests (leave taking)*

Despite the hesitation in F1's turn, Tar's next turn in line 12 contains some laughter particles. The issue has been resolved and the topic can be terminated (Holt, 2010). The laughter here acts as an invitation to close the interaction and a following turns close the interaction. As F1 leaves, she smiles contently (Halberstadt, 1991). Emotional expressiveness is greatly present during stay sequences and will be addressed throughout the remainder of this chapter. Holidays are important for people and with it how they experience their time away from home (Ryan, 1997a). Tourists' aim for a holiday is enjoyment and a search for novelty in interactions. They enjoy exploring their surroundings (Ryan, 1991). Satisfaction with a hotel can be made very explicit during Stay sequences. The material found in this corpus would suggest that guests enjoy opportunities for interaction at the front desk. Guests actively seek interactions (apart from complaint situation which are not considered in this study) with staff and often display contentment when an issue has been solved through their own initiative.

## Part 2: Ill-constructed formats

While small talk certainly occurs between a receptionist and a guest during the stay, interactions with a requesting component need to contain a clear request (Hubbert et al., 1995). Requests for services, items, need to be a request, not the provision of information on part of the guest. The interaction needs to have a clearly defined overarching goal. However, guests often account for some particular action, without requesting a resolution from the receptionist. Requests in language can be made indirectly, and in such situations receptionist will frequently attempt to deduce some form of intercomprehension from the guest's story or account (Holtgraves, 1994). The request and overall goal of the interaction is ill-structured (Voss, 1988) leading to multiple re-negotiations to establish a mutual goal. The request is resolved with what I will call a null resolution. A request sequence is produced by a guest in the interaction, but not for a granting. The request here has implications for relationship building and the rapport between a guest and (a representative of) the organisation.

In this example, F1 is reporting a lost key for a bike lock. The family has rented multiple bikes which are all accounted for, but has misplaced one of the keys for the lock. The interaction occurs as F1 is passing by reception; the bikes are not being returned at this stage. Tar has just returned to the reception area and is in front of the desk when F1 intercepts him.

*Extract 27: Negotiation of requestability*

*250 (F1 native American English speaker; Tar native Arabic speaker)*
```
1   F1:    ... key to the lock
2   Tar:   ↓Ah:::: (.) O↓kay
3   F1:    So what do we do about that?
```

```
 4   Tar:   .hhhhh hhh Hit was the (.) ↓↓key:?
 5   F1:    Well .hh (.) We're gonna go through (.) a::ll the ↓room
 6   Tar:   Okay=
 7   F1:    =to check
 8   Tar:   Which .hhh uhm [(.) ◦bi                  ]ke number◦
 9   F1:                   [por right now hay no llave]
10   F1:    I th::ink it's forty two it's the ◦↑peque↑ña◦ [ (.) the l ]ittle,
11          uhm: like, the little mountain bike
12   Tar:                                                 [the pequeña]
13   Tar:   ((heading to the door)) Okay!
14   F1:    (("yelling" after him)) WE HAVE THE BIKE (.) and we have the ↑LOCK
15   Tar:   But uhm- [it locks-
                           ∇
16   F1:            [and WE've been LOCKING them with ours, so that it doesn't
17          get l↑ost
18   Tar:   Okay
19   F1:    That's why (.) my (little) hmhm ((showing key)) (.) .hh So:: .hh
                        ①              ②              ③
20   Tar:   The fourty two you mean la pequeña=
                    ④   ⑤⑥            ⑦              ⑧           ⑨
21
22   F1:    =Yeah, la >peque↑ña< ◦(.) fourty two◦ (.) We have the bike with us
                 ⑩          ⑪
23          right now, (we just [need)
                                 ⑫
24   Tar:                       [You need the new (.) ↓lock
25          (0.3)
     Tar:_____, , , , , , , , , , , , , ,
     F1:_____
26   F1:    Uh::m A new lock, or just so you guys know, we don't have the key::
27          to it, we have the lock
28   Tar:   Okay:. I can arrange a new lock for you
29   F1:    [That's o]kay, [ (.) ] we (.) will (.) share it for now, just wanted
30          you guys to know  when we turn it ↑in
31   Tar:   [ (   ) ]     [Yeah?]
32   Tar:   OKAy, [when you have come back-]
33   F1:          [(We know what we need)]
34   F1:    Yeah
35   Tar:   Okay
36   F1:    Okay (.) Thank you
37   Tar:   You're welcome
```

F1 has produced an initial account of the missing key at the start of the excerpt. In line 3, she produces an utterance setting up a request. The turn is treated by Tar in line 4 as a request requiring a solution and subsequent action from the receptionist. He confirms a particular key as the key item for this situation. Unlike in canonical interactions, no resolution is prompted and initiated with this turn. The absence of a proposal for a solution is addressed in F1's next turn which is prefaced by a marker mitigating face potential face threat (Jucker, 1993). F1 produces a solution instead, thus, committing to an action which is usually the receptionist's responsibility (Hubbert et al., 1995). Tar produces the second pair part for the suggestion in seemingly agreeing to the suggestion. However, he continues in line 8 to pursue a resolution on his end. The turn is overlapped by F1's attempt to produce a more comprehensible rationale by integrating

fragmented knowledge of Spanish into her speech. The overlapping speech in line 8 and 9 begins the pursuit of establishing a potential mutual goal for the interaction: Tar begins to take inventory of relevant information to promote a solution; F1 provides additional context for her initial account. In her response, F1 provides details identified as salient to Tar (Kecskes & Zhang, 2009). The bicycle is co-constructed and jointly remembered by the interactants over the following turns of talk (Edwards & Middleton, 1986). F1 produces three identifiers for the bike in her turn (Hoppe-Graff et al., 1985): the bike's number (as per the organisation's inventory); the Spanish adjective for small (pequeña) and a description (little mountain bike). Tar confirms "the pequeña" at a possible turn completion point in overlap with F1's continuing description and "the pequeña" becomes the unique identifier for the bike in this conversation. At this point in the conversation starts to move towards the front entrance of the hotel to where the bicycles are kept. The subject of the interaction has shifted from F1's context of lock for the bicycle to the bike itself, requiring a form of repair to return to the relevant object part. F1's turn in line 14 returns Tar physically to the shared interactive space and also repeats the state of the organisation's property in list item form. The actual purpose of the interaction remains disputed between the two parties.
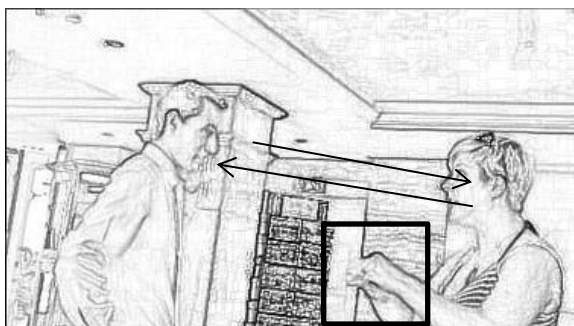


*Frame 28: Use of iconic gestures*

F1 produces an iconic gesture (Schegloff, 1984) by demonstrating the action of locking through the movement of her hands. The motion begins just prior before the verbal utterance with the acme produced coordinated with the first syllable of the corresponding term in the utterance (Schegloff, 1984).
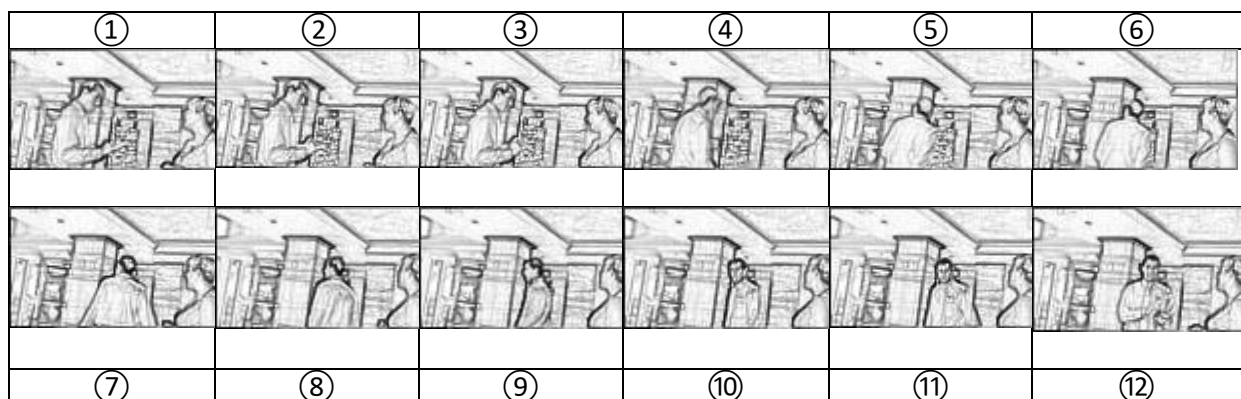


*Frame 29: Negotiating next action*

Interaction and the solution to ill-constructed problems still need to be done cooperatively. In this situation, participants attempt to elicit the resolution from the other party over the course of the interaction (Leudar & Antaki, 1988). In line 22, just prior to the frame sequence above, Tar returns in his utterance from the key to the bike and with the conclusion of his turn begins moving towards the door again. F1 calls him back with her reply. Tar does not turn back on the same plane as F1, but conducts a full circle in his movements (④-⑪). F1's turn here concludes with another request initiation ("we just need") in line 23. Tar has completed his circle just before F1 finishes her utterance (frame ⑪). He produces a solution attempt in overlap with F1 (frame ⑫), establishing that the goal of this interaction is for F1 to secure a new lock (Lerner, 2002). In line 26, F1 states for the first time her goal for the interaction: providing knowledge for the organisation about the state of some rented bikes, without a request for further actions ("just so you guys know"). Thus, even though a proposal is eventually co-produced, it is ultimately dismissed by the guest (Davidson, 1984). This information is embedded within a larger turn in which she first accepts the proposal of a new lock and which end with a review of the current state of the locks the family has at the moment. Tar produces another turn in line 28 seeking to confirm an uptake of the proposed solution. F1 responds again with her null resolution for the request. Tar accepts the null resolution in the repetition.

In this extract, the sequencing suggested that a request for action was being accomplished. The communicative events established in the unfolding of the turns that the goal of the interaction was to initiate an interaction to do relationship work for an anticipated future interaction (returning the bikes). Multiple repair sequences were initiated to render the null resolution to the request as a mutually beneficial outcome for the two parties. Through this, both parties demonstrated a continued interest in achieving the communicative outcome (Kidwell, 2000). The structure of the sequence in large, however, remained in essence true to a canonical request production and accomplishing of solutions.

## Part 3: Request conversations in a series

Some requests cannot be resolved within a single interaction between a receptionist and a guest. External factors or the involvement of other members of staff or certain procedures may mean that a guest has to return to the reception at a later time to promote the resolution of the request and/or obtain progress reports. Requests may also require an account prior to their execution when the request invokes additional interactions, frequently with a different member of staff. Repeated interactions at the front desk do not necessarily facilitate a service relationship between two parties (Gutek, et al., 1999). The request then needs to presented as an ongoing project (Kecskes, 2013). In these situations, the guest becomes the expert on the matter to prevent

that a request sequence with previously failed resolution is restarted. Interactions occur in a series and are structured accordingly.

The example here is the second instance in such a request sequence in a series. A family has booked two rooms with a connecting door. The connecting door is locked and the key has not been located by the receptionist (not the one in the example here), instead, M1 received a number of keys to try to unlock the door. The issue at hand remains unresolved after this interaction, and the door is unlocked after two more conversations.

*Extract 28: Constructing knowledge across conversations*

*206 (M1/Bo native German speakers)*
```
        Bo: ((looking at keys))
        M1---------------------------____▽_____--------_____
  1     M1:    Dann ham wir gestern <ein:> n (0.3) groß'n Satz (.) >Schlüßel zum
               ------------------_____------------
  2            Ausprobieren bekomm', weil die Tür abgeschlossen is, und kein der
  3            _____
  4            Schlüßel< pa::sst.
               Then we received yesterday <a:> (0.3) large set (.) (of) >keys to
               try, because the door is looked, and none of the keys< fi::ts.
                                     ①           ②           ③
  5     Bo:    ↑KEINER PASST! O[kay       ], dann schaun wa auf jeden Fall nochmal
  6            na[hach.
               ↑NONE FITS!    O[kay.......], then we will definitely check again [
  7     M1:                   [NEE::he::!]
                              [NO::ho:: COL!]
                 ④  ⑤  ⑥  ⑦       ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ⑪ ⑫
  8            [Also, das MUSS:: [(.) auf jeden-
               [Well, that SHOULD::[(.) definite-
                                    ①    ②      ③     ④          ⑤
  9
 10     Bo:                        [Weil eigentlich, sollte DIEser ↑hier:: (0.5)
               ...[because technically, THIs (one) ↑here:: should
        (0.5)
                 ⑥          ⑦          ⑧ ⑨       ⑩       ⑪ ⑫
        M1----------------------------------------------___--------
 11     M1:    >>Also dass<< (.) muß SO ein Schlüßel sein, das is <so'n ↓Schlo::ß>
               >>Well that<< (.) must be SUCH a key, that is <such'a ↓lo::ck.
               ------------__--------_____
 12            (0.7) [Nicht] so ein Schloß.
               (0.7) [Not  ] such a lock.
 13     Bo:          [Jaha] Jaha
                     [Yehes] Yehes
 14            (1.3)
        M1----_____---_____
 15     M1:    Sie könn ja mal (.) hochgeh'n, oder so.
               You FRM can PRT PRT (.) go upstairs, or PRT (something like that)
        M1_____----------------------------
        Bo:    -------------------------____ ((looking at M1))
 16     Bo:    JA, wir würden dann das <ma:->
               YES, we would then that <PRT>
        M1----------------------------------------------▽---------------
 17     M1:    Ach so, ja. Also, >wie gesagt<, das muß so ei:n (1.4) in diesem
```

```
     M1----------_____∇_____
18        (0.3) E V V A sein, [da]s steht nämlich auf den- ∘dem kleinen
19   M1-------------_____
20        Schloss da (mumbling)∘
          Ah, okay, yes. Well, >like (one) said<, that must be such a: (1.4)
          in this E V V A,    [tha]t is PRT printed on the- ∘the small lock
          there (mumbling)∘
21   Bo:                      [JA] Ja (.) gucken wa ma.
                              [YES] Yes (.) we'll have a look PRT.
```

*Frame 30: Accounting through evidence and mutual gaze*

In line 1, M1 begins his account by ordering the event and informing the present receptionist of the current situations. He includes a temporal ordering, "gestern/yesterday". From field observations it had been observed that guests making a request combine an encounter at the reception with another activity. The same can be seen here[23]. The family received the keys the day before, but only engages in an interaction the next morning when they are leaving the hotel for the day[24]. As such, relationship building evidence is present even in interactions that may become difficult at a later stage[25]. Smiling and direct gaze is frequently employed when the issue is topicalised in the speech. Participants demonstrate a willingness to comply with the current situation that will ultimately lead in achieving the request (Burger, Soroka, Gonzago, Murphy, & Somervell, 2001). M1 smiles while handling the keys (Heath, 1986), even though he emphasises through a pause that they had been entrusted with a large amount of keys, none of which solved the simple issue of opening a standard door. The ceremonial handing over of the keys is done with clear interactional intentions (Kendon, 2004; Tat Keh & Wei Teo, 2001). Much like in observed in canonical interactions, guests display an interest in being engaged in problem solution as long as a request resolution is clearly moving forward and helps a guest in largely positive way to become accustomed to the organisation (Laws et al., 2006; Tat Keh & Wei Teo, 2001). After stating that it was a large set of keys, his next part of speech becomes more rushed in

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[23] This behaviour continues for the remaining encounters in this series. M1 and family inquire about the key routinely before they depart the hotel for the day and upon their return in the evening.

[24] In similar situations, parents also may send the children to follow up on routine (non-urgent) inquiries.

[25] In the following encounter, M1 remarks that rooms had been specifically booked to contain a connecting door. He does not, however, continue to claim any rights because of this to said door.

an attempt to provide a full account of the situation before Bo as a next speaker could potentially come in. He informs the receptionist that they have received the keys to try out which provides a potential point for the turn to end. The account for the situation is placed as an interjection before the last part of the sentence in which the problem is revealed (Kendon, 1967; Langton, 2000). Up to this point, M1 has done a large amount of interactional work, informing the receptionist of past actions (keys received the day before), state of affairs (the door is locked), and current events (no key fits).

Bo's response indicates that the information provided by M1 was perceived as coherent and that she has understood the individual elements: Someone has already provided a solution for the request which now needs to be re-evaluated, and she also demonstrates that she knows which door the guest is speaking about. M1 had positioned the information about the not-fitting keys at the end utterance, and Bo treats it accordingly as news by repeating parts of the last part of the prior turn. The remainder of the turn acknowledges that the request remains ongoing and needs to be solved by members of the organisation.

In overlap with Bo's news receipt, M1 confirms the uptake of the news item as correct. In receipt of the acknowledgement that the request is maintained, M1 produces a turn to provide additional information to the receptionist on the current situation.
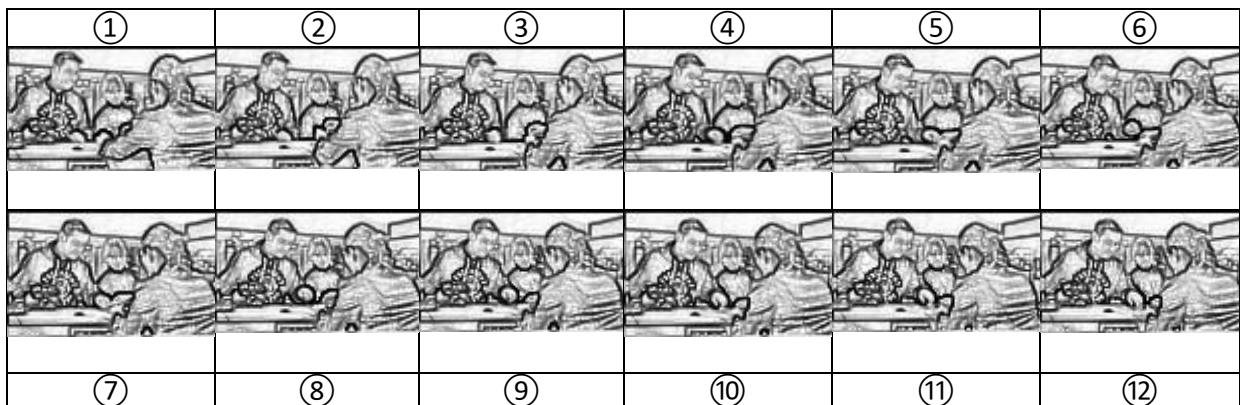


*Frame 31: Attempt 1 for identifying key object*

The forthcoming turn is projected non-verbally directly after the news uptake by Bo in line 5 (①-③). M1's gaze shifts from Bo's face to her hands. She is collecting and organising the individual keys in her hands and M1's gaze tracks a specific key that she has picked up. He has identified the key in question and is initiating the gesture to point at the object in frame ③. The acme of the gesture is reached in frame ⑤, at the beginning of M1's turn and before he has identified what or why he is referring to in his speech. The gesture is very short and M1 retracts his hand immediately after reaching the vicinity of the object. His hand moves to the key again in frame ⑦ and is retracted straight away. At this point, F1 begins another turn (line

11), challenging which key should be the correct one and as such M1's claim to specific claimed knowledge (Heritage & Stivers, 2013). However, after micro pause, M1 attempts to continue his turn while at the same time tracking the key in Bo's hand and initiates another hand movement to now point at the key he means (⑧-⑫).
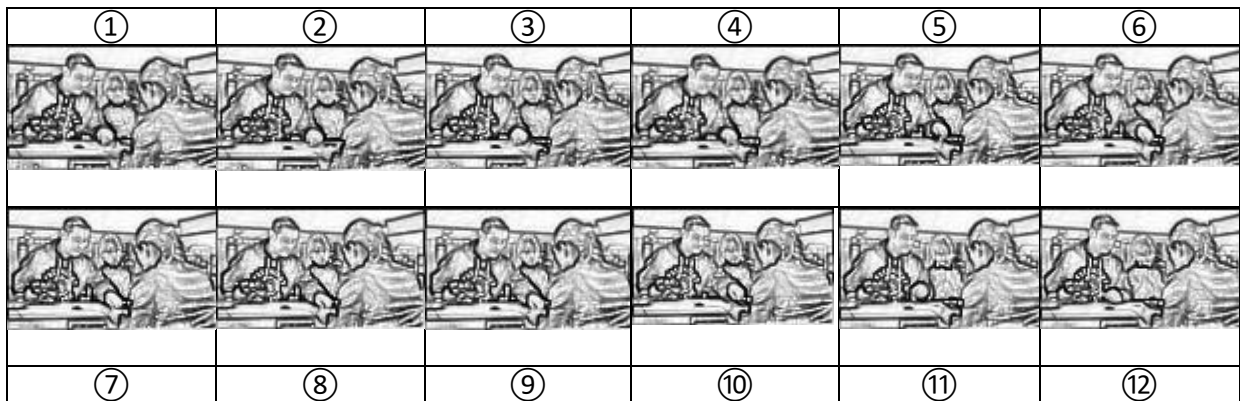


*Frame 32: Attempt 2 for identifying key object*

M1 and Bo leave their turns unfinished and no common ground of understanding of which key is the correct one is developed at this point (Kecskes, 2000; Kecskes & Zhang, 2009). Instead, it has become apparent that a different understanding is present for each individual and that the topic is not resolved.

During Bo's turn in line 10, M1 continues to track the key in question and persists with his turn non-verbally throughout the remainder of Bo's speaking. For this, M1 is leaning forward noticeably over the reception desk. His hand had been positioned on his side of the counter during the initial gesture sequence, his hand is now closer to Bo's side. He uses the space that is not usually available to him (Duck, 1977). In frames ①-③, his hand does not move, but remains poised while he searches for the correct key. The gesture is initiated in frame ④ and Bo abandons her turn as M1's hand movement towards the key continues.

In line 11, M1 begins another attempt to provide the information to the receptionist. He repeats the first part of the previously unsuccessful utterance and without interruption is able to provide his reason for marking this particular key as correct. In this case, the gesture and the verbal rendition correspond. The acme of the pointing is reached when M1 emphasises which key in his speech. M1 also emphasises with his gesture in this instance. He reaches past the reception desk to Bo's side of the counter. In frame ⑨, his finger is extended past the gatekeeping desk. With the key identified, M1 concludes his turn by providing a reason for his belief. His gaze briefly moves up to Bo's face (Kendon & Cook, 1969) to verify that she will receive the news item (⑪-⑫) (Mondada, 2011). This turn is potentially complete here, but Bo does not provide a token of acknowledgement. After a significant pause, M1 continues his turn by providing some

delimitating additional information about the key and Bo provides the token at the same time. Another pause ensues upon M1's turn completion.



*Frame 33: Token moment: identifying key object*

After the pause, M1 proposes a possible next action in line 15 for Bo to promote the resolution of the request. While the guest had been actively engaged in the solution up to this point, he suggests for Bo (representative for a member of staff) to go upstairs and confirm the information provided by M1 and to resolve the problem. Bo agrees in line 16 and provides an incomplete uptake of the solution. This is sufficient for M1 and he repeats his observations with added detail to the receptionist. His previous actions have granted him access to the key in question and he selects it again during his turn.



*Frame 34: Iconic gesture*

In addition to singling out the key again, M1 identifies another key identifier for the key and exemplifies the writing on the lock by using an iconic gesture (Schegloff, 1984). M1 produces an account both verbally and non-verbally to promote the current agenda (Waring, 2007). Unlike conversations occurring at the arrival or departure phase, stay sequences in German contain an increased amount of modal particles. The particles are used to ground the speaker's

experience in a (shared) reality within the interaction (Cuenca, 2013; Mortelmans, 2000). The speaker claims that a particular situational context between interactants exists (Diewald, Kresic, & Smirnova, 2009; Fischer, 2006; Schoonjans, 2015). Modal particles carry little to no meaning in themselves, and a sentence would not loose information if they are not present (semantic bleaching) (Wegener, 2002). However, most modal particles still carry remnants of their original meaning and are thus also used in positioning an utterance within the wider conversation (Diewald, 2011). The particles aid the speaker in providing evidence for their turn. In turn, these utterances are responded to and treated as either a legitimate base for the request or they are not accepted. Whether the information given is true is not necessarily relevant (cf. also discussion on evidentiality and epistemic modality in De Haan, 2001). Thus, modal markers are interactional and address interpersonal aspects, including politeness in the conversation (Brinton, 2008; Cuenca, 2013). They are situated between discourse markers that mark the turn taking system and conjunctions that order the discourse text (Diewald, 2013).

*157 (M1 Swiss German, He German native speaker)*
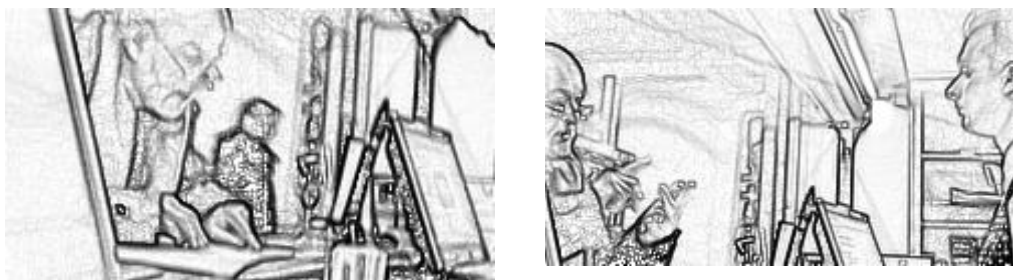


*Frame 35: displaying knowledge about a situation*

Requests that occur across multiple interactions can be seen to contain the features which were described in this section. As first part of the conversation, the guest establishes what is known about a request situation based on prior encounters and in the second part, the guest produces iconic gestures in orienting to what is to be done about the situation.


## Part 4: Pre-complaints

Compliance and demands in requests is co-constructed by the participants (Mastrofski, Snipes, & Supina, 1996). It has been demonstrated in this chapter through examples of a canonical interaction and two additional extracts that request sequences similar delivered with similar face saving strategies as found in mundane interactions are a preferred way for both the receptionist and the guest to render an encounter during a guest's stay effective and efficient. In

this part, the extract addresses an issue that is commonly termed a "complaint". However, it will be shown that the guest retains a requesting strategy which allows for a friendly resolution of the request. Such instances may be seen to be even closer to mundane interactions, as F1 promotes the resolution of the issue through successfully engaging the receptionist that results in an offer by the employee, not a demand of entitlement by the guest (Kendrick & Drew, 2014).

In this extract, F1 provides a detailed story accounting for the presence of dead ants in her hotel apartment. Commonly, such situations are identified in the literature as complaints (Cruz, 2015). However, a closer look at the conversation features shows that the structure of the interaction is comparable to a routine request. From a layperson's perspective, such instances may consist of a complaint, but hotels have dedicated channels to deal with complaints. When I asked F1 for her consent to be recorded, she told me that she was going to make a complaint.

*Extract 29: Stories as requests*

*246 (F1 native German speaker; Ant non-native speaker)*

```
1    F1:    (...) Ameisen hatten, dann kam eine DA:::me rein, und hat das halt
2           (.) öhm irgendwie ge↑tötet .hhh (0.5) Äh::m (.) Und GESTern lagen
3           halt die Ameisen ↑to::t .h in unser'm Apa::rtment, heute liegen die
4           ↑wieder (.) ↑to::t, also das wird halt nicht: (.) weg:gemacht, jetzt
5           ist die Frage, wie oft .h <das denn> ge↑macht wird ∘hier∘

            (...) had ants, then a LA:::dy came inside, and (.) um had PRT
            ↑killed that somehow .hhh (0.5) Uh::m (.) and YESTerday the ants lay
            PRT ↑dea::d again, PRT that isn't PAR (.) re:moved, now the question
            is, how often .h <that PRT> is ↑done ∘here∘
6           (1.9)
7    Ant:   Was ist Ihre Zimmernummer?
            what is your HON room number?
8           (0.3)
9    F1:    Äh- Eintausend<ein::ns>
            Um- one thousand <one>
            ▽
10          (3.7)
11   F1:    (Die Dame hat zwar gestern-)=
12          (The lady had PRT yesterday-)=
13   Ant:   =Aber heute morgen nicht (.) ähm die Zimmermädchen ↑nicht (↓weiter)
            =But this morning not (.) um the chambermaid ↑not (↓continue)
14   F1:    Nee, das war'n- (0.3) Also das Handtuch wurde- (.) ein Handtuch
15          wurde gewechselt, das stimmt, das wird, aber der Bo::den (0.3) .hh
                       ①      ②      ③    ④   ⑤         ⑥              ⑦          ⑧
16          ähm, also gestern hatten wir das mit den Ameis'n (.) .h (.) die sind
            ⑨ ⑩        ⑪  ⑫              ①     ②      ③      ④ ⑤⑥⑦  ⑧⑨ ⑩
17          auch alle (.) ↑to::t hh [  (.)  ] heh .h aber die liegen auch alle
            ⑪            ⑫
```

```
18          (.) aufm Bo::d'n ((gesticulating spread out ants on the floor))
19          (0.3) ↓Gestern war das nich- sch- [(.) ↑schlümm::
            No COL, that were- (0.3) Well the (hand)towel was- (.) a (hand)towel
            was changed, that's correct, that (is done), but the floo::r (0.3)
            .hh um, well yesterday we had that with the ants (.) they are PRT
            all (.) dea::d hh        [ (.) ] heh .h but they PRT all lay
            (0.3) ↓yesterday that wasn- terr- [(.)↑terrible::
            (.) on the floo::r ((gesticulating spread out ants on the floor))
20   Tar:                              [↑Ja: heh]
                                       [↑Ye:heh ]
21   Ant:                                           [Okay, ich sage den- (.)
22          Eintausendeins?
                                       [Okay, I tell the- PL (.)
            One thousand one?
23   F1:    #Ja:::# (.) Weil die liegen halt alle auf'm Bod'n, vielleicht kann
24          man da mal durchwischen (.) [∘oder so∘
            #Yes:::# (.) because they all lay PRT on the floor, perhaps one can
            PAR sweep(through) there (.) [∘or something∘
27   Ant:   ((to Car who comes up the stairs)) [Puedes ir a la mil uno que se ve
28          que le da miedo ( ) las hormigas están ahí.
            ((to Car who comes up the stairs)) [Can you COL go to (the) thousand
            one it appears that she is afraid ( ) the ants which are there.
29   Car:   ((has reached reception and acknowledged request))
30   Ant:   Car kommt jetzt ∘∘sofort∘∘.
            Car is coming now ∘∘immediately∘∘.
31   F1:    #∘Ja::∘#. (.) Es is halt nur weil GEstern to:t sind, und das- das-
32          da liegen- man kann halt nur- man kann leider nur mit Schuh::en
33          dannda halt durchgehen (.) ne, [∘∘das is halt∘∘
            #∘Yes:: ∘#. (.) It's PRT only because Yesterday dea:d are, and that-
            that- lie there- one can PRT only- one can unfortunately only go
            through there PRT with shoes (.) TAG, [∘∘that is PRT∘∘
```

Accounts as stories are presented not in a simple adjacency pair sequence. The explanation follows a story line where the narrative holds dramatic tension (Gergen, 1988). In order to reproduce a coherent story, the speaker must have a representation of their intended goal and the context of the social situation in their mind (van Dijk, 1985). The guest demonstrates with her account in a story format: (a) the organisation of participants in relation to each other; (b) distinguishable subcomponents within the story; (c) participants' orientation to alternative possibilities for action; and (d) how participants manage concurrent involvement in story and other activities simultaneously (Goodwin, 1984).

The recording starts as F1 is producing a first version of her story. She mentions the ants and does extensive relationship maintaining work by refraining from making accusations against the hotel and its employees. While ants are present in the apartment, F1 produces a micropause and a hesitation marker before describing the chambermaid's action leaving the ants dead. The second part of the account repeats the information about the dead ants twice. She then restates the information, and thus formulates the problem. The turn ends with an indirect request. The formulation is designed to promote a resolution of the situation without having to make the actual

request (Gill et al., 2001). Instead, the formulation allows for the receptionist to propose a solution, an offer to address the situation (Davidson, 1984; Kendrick & Drew, 2014). Ant treats the guest's story as a legitimate request that would allow completing the task at hand as fast as possible (Drew & Heritage, 1992a). While F1 is delivering her account, providing the key identifier for the type of request (ants in apartment), she moves to the far end of the reception desk to gain access to the housekeeping records located there (Mondada, 2011). Locating the object leads to the pause noticeable in line 6 (Heath & Luff, 2013; Kendon, 1990, 2004). As Ant has made the information of the housekeeping available to herself, she asks for the guest's room number in the following turn. A short pause, a hesitation marker and a slow rendering of the information in F1's turn in line 9 suggests that F1 had not anticipated a granting of the request at this point of the interaction (compare latched response and smooth delivery of this information in extract 1) (Halberstadt, 1991; Rimé & Schiaratura, 1991).
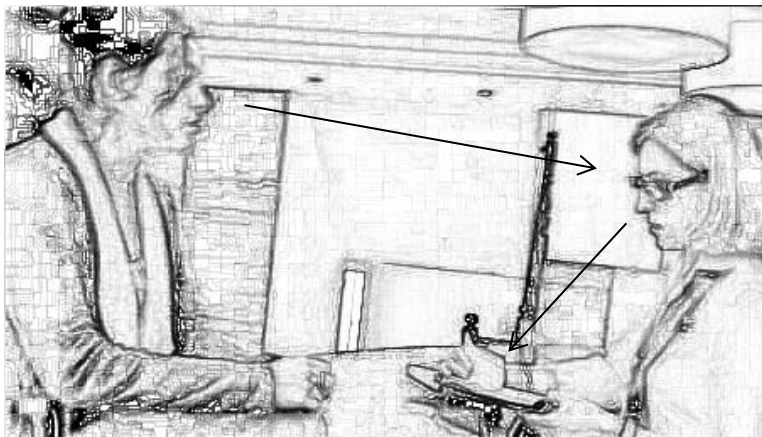


*Frame 36: Establishing grounds*

Ant uses the pause in line 10 to establish the grounds for resolution using the information in the records. Telling the story is not solely achieved through the actions of the main speaker, but also indexed in the listeners behaviour (Goodwin, 1984). Ants are treated in the conversation as a fact[26]. This account is used to reconstruct the context for the participants (Buttny, 1985). F1 regards her anxiously and the recording shows her fidgeting while waiting (Feldman, Philippot, & Custrini, 1991). After allowing Ant almost four seconds of time to find the relevant information, F1 attempts a clarification on the responsible chambermaid's actions, indicating that something had been done and her account only should be understood as addressing the actions that have been missing (removing dead ants) (Duncan & Niederehe, 1974). F1's story is produced for a

---

[26] It appears that the presence of certain pests is expected and tolerated by both staff and guest. Ants are one such insect. Fleas, however, evoke a very different interaction. While Hotel D accepts responsibility for the presence of the ants without hesitation, observations on conversations about fleas in Hotel A were not straightforward in this regard. The alleged presence of fleas and associated bites remained disputed and unresolved.

particular audience (Norrick, 1998). Note that in line 12 and 13 F1 and Ant co-produce an account for "lack of cleaning" of the guests' room. There is no dispute on whether or why ants are present in the room in general by both parties. F1 abandons her turn and Ant completes it for her (Lerner, 2006). Her version assumes what I will call a null action by the chamber maid (no cleaning), an understanding that F1's previous turns had attempted to avoid. However, the content is relevant and as such does not require explicit repair (Jefferson, 2006b), but rather a different treatment. In line 14, F1 produces another attempt at clarifying that she is not suggesting null action by an employee of the organisation. Syntax and overall structure of the first part of the turn is poor (Feldman et al., 1991). As her turn structure does not aid the understanding, she abandons the turn that was meant as a second pair part to Ant's observation (Schegloff, 2007) and instead uses the floor to attempt another story.
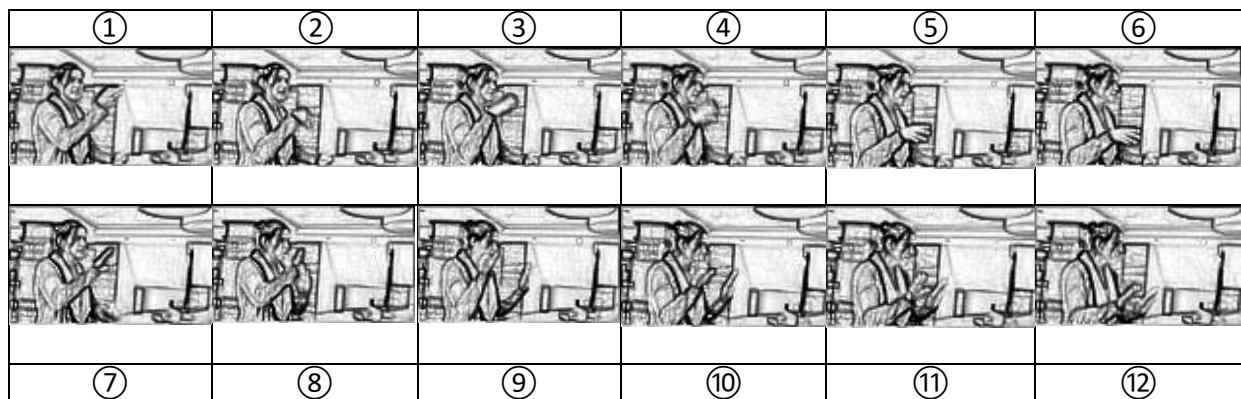


*Frame 37: Semi elicited account*

The story seems to function as a somewhat semi-elicited account, since a responding turn to Ant was unsuccessful and required an additional explanation (Heritage, 1988). In this version of the account, F1 recruits an additional recipient for her explanation (Drew & Couper-Kuhlen, 2014). F1's main addressee for her story is Ant. Tar is present for part of the exchange and in line 16, F1 solicits his attention to the story[27]. The engagement with the additional addressee is timed precisely with the talk at hand (Goodwin, 1984). Even though F1 holds the floor, she recruits Tar into her story. She indicates Tar as new listener through shifting her gaze to him and an accompanying gesture (frame ①) (Hindmarsh & Heath, 2000). Here, the story changes briefly to a conversation where Tar has become accountable to provide a response aligned with the current turn (Lambrou, 2003). The story and the request become less egocentric through this turn by eliciting common ground (Bezuidenhout, 2013). Nonverbal recruitment of Tar is completed at the beginning of this part of the turn and upon success, shifts her gaze back to the main recipient, F1 (frame ③). Her account here is structured as a three-part list, where she takes the listeners

---

[27] Tar is not visible in the video and it is unclear what "background segment" (Goodwin, 1984, p. 242) he engages in until he is addressed in the conversation.

through the occurrences with expressive gestures to aid clarification. Each item on the list is accompanied by a designated hand movement to express the logical structure of the account and provide a visual reference of the utterance (Patterson, 1991). Gestures as an embodied action have been described as important components of communication to promote understanding (Cook & Tanenhaus, 2009; Hostetter & Alibali, 2008; Kang et al., 2012). Her hand movements accompanying the reiteration of an established fact (ants in the apartment) are somewhat undirected (frame ②-⑥); since the presence of ants has been established with the receptionist (Matsumoto, 2015). The second item on her list establishes that the ants are also all dead, and her gesture (frame ⑦-⑫) in this part dismisses or deletes any other kind of ant (e.g. alive) from her intended meaning. The visual representation of the talk is treated as highly important here (Heath et al., 2010).
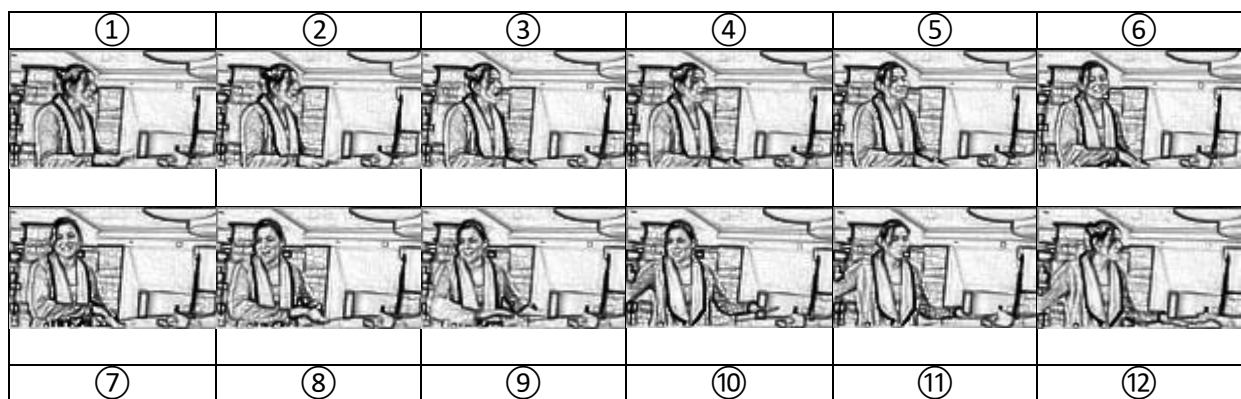


*Frame 38: Illustrating situation*

The third item on her list addresses the real trouble she is experiencing with the ants. In trouble telling, the recipient usually will not produce a laughter token (Jefferson, 1984b). Up to this point, F1 has produced her turns with a serious expression, accordingly. Troubles talk constrains what an appropriate next utterance can be, so the use of unusual laughter may function to return to the original recipient of the talk (Jefferson, 1984a). Here, this can be seen after she has begun to describe her trouble.

The trouble telling has been initiated in frames ①-④, setting the scene for the final telling. The trouble has been produced by frames ⑤-⑦ (ants are laying) and F1 produces first a laughter token and smiles while continuing her account (Holt & Price, 2014; Jefferson, 1984b). Ant does not join the laughter (in troubles not invited).
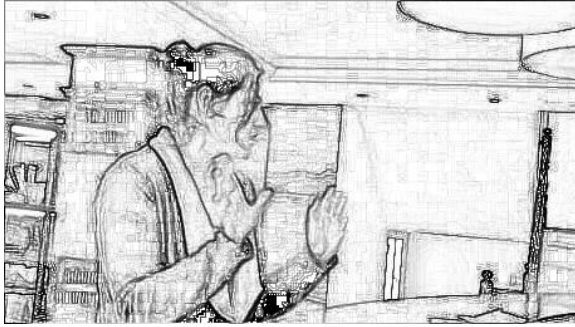
*Frame 39: Minimising request item*

Her turn has reached a potential point of completion after the delivery of the last list item. Tar as recruited listener into the conversation had provided a token of acknowledgment after the second list item, but neither of the two receptionists provides a token after the trouble source has been delivered. F1 thus continues her turn using a face saving strategy. F1 attempts to minimise any perceived imposition or false entitlement by recognising a potential face threat as well as a potential refusal to the request for assistance (Johnson, 2007). We have seen the use of gestures to indicate a minimisation of imposition by guests in canonical interactions. Here, the same is done, but the gesture is made large and highly visible to the listener.

Ant produces an offer to resolve the ants on the floor in line 21 in overlap with F1, initiated by "okay" orienting to the receipt of the information provided (Beach, 1993; Schegloff, 2007). The interactional work in having a request granted at the hotel front desk can be emotional for the guest. Ant confirms the room number and F1's responds with an emotionally charged, creaky voice (Depaulo, 1991; Kappas, Hess, & Scherer, 1991). She repeats the trouble regarding the ants on the floor to account for the proposal (here also an indirect request to have something done) that the floor could be mopped (Houtkoop-Steenstra, 1990). For the receptionist, the request has been granted and now only needs to be executed by the housekeeper[28]. Coincidently, while F1 produces her account, Car, the housekeeper is walking up the stairs towards the reception area and Ant shifts her gaze to Car in order to get her attention.

---

[28] The chambermaids' shift ends at 2pm. After that, only two senior members of housekeeping are present at the hotel.

*Frame 40: Additional participants in interaction*

At the first possible point of completion of F1's turn, Ant calls to Car, asking her to address the ants in the apartment.
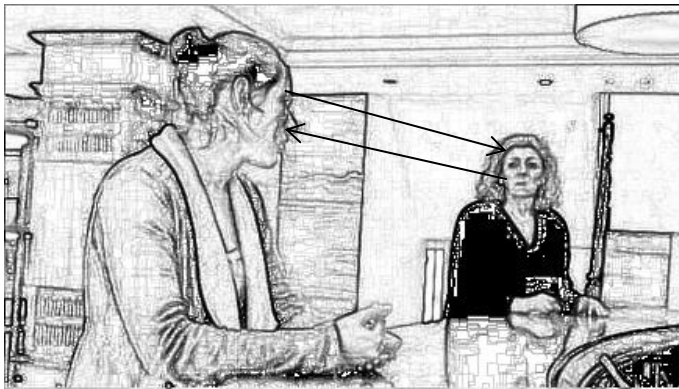


*Frame 41: orientation to request execution party*

Car confirms her availability to Ant, who informs F1 (line 30). F1's turn begins again with an emotionally creaky and low voice (Kappas et al., 1991). She summarises the items on her previous list again while looking at Car (who does not speak any German). The turn contains numerous self-repairs and only here does F1 vocalise that the ants on the floor impede on being able to walk without shoes in the apartment. Thus, only after the request has been resolved does she provide the account to her prior storytelling and explanation turns.

The anticipated complaint was treated as an ordinary and legitimate request by the receptionist very early in the interaction. F1 resisted the notion of legitimacy of her request during this encounter and incorporated large amounts of interactional work directed to relationship maintenance in her turns. The request was anticipated by both the receptionist and F1 to be completed at a later stage, which may account for F1's surprise in receiving assistance immediately. The early recognition of routine request together with a speedy resolution have been co-constructed by the participants to a mutually beneficial solution (Noone et al., 2009). A

complainable matter has been resolved in a manner that allowed the guest to become more familiar with the organisation and has promoted trust between the parties (Kuroshima, 2010; Sako, 2006).

## 6.5    Conclusion

Stay sequences form an important part in front-line interactions. Some researchers have suggested that participants in a short and simple service encounter should be solely task-oriented, whereas complex interactions should contain additional elements of relationship and self-focused behaviours (Bradley, Sparks, Zapf, McColl-Kennedy, & Jimmieson, 2013). Hotel interactions have some additional sub-context that can complicate such a simple paradigm: a request may be considered simple in one organisation, but complex in another (Guerrier & Adib, 2000). Entering, completing and withdrawing from a request in a service encounter require mutually achieved components. A service provider needs to identify the purpose of the request and respond accordingly (Coupland, 1983; Gibbs, 1981; Merritt, 1976; Patterson & Mattila, 2008). A sequence may be presented as a complaint, but can be resolved as a request, or a complaint can be actualised as unsolvable. Such direct complaints that identify a failure of the company's conduct will frequently hold the receptionist responsible (Monzoni, 2008). Guests do not present all of a request's components in the first instant, so that specifying and negotiating the specifics becomes the primary purpose of the interaction (Lee, 2011). Seemingly straight forward interactions become more complicated calling for flexibility from the parties (Flores & Kremer, 2002). Flexibility in addressing routine matters is not only used to promote a resolution of a request, but can also show underlying relationship work between participants.

Hotel guests begin to take the role of 'partial employees' in beginning to understand and to demonstrate what requests are appropriate and how to formulated them (Harris, Harris, & Baron, 2001; Tat Keh & Wei Teo, 2001) through demonstrating acquired expertise. They also become 'regulars' (Laurier, 2012) to the services which can influence how requests are articulated. Guests make spatial references in their requests that evoke associations of the place (Sacks, 1995a) – and how it ought to be (e.g. clean).

Schegloff (2007) proposes a number of characteristics for requests as they occur in interactions: (a) regularly accompanied by accounts, mitigations or candidate "excuses"; (b) often withheld until it can be done in an "accommodating" or "exchange" position; (c) often treated as a dispreferred action by masking them as other actions; and (d) frequently occur late in an interaction (adapted from page 83f). The analysis of the present corpus shows how requests are enacted in service encounters at the hotel front desk. It is demonstrated in which regards the

encounters under investigation follow these characteristics and in which they display particularities.

It is the guest's choice whether to engage the institution through the formulation of a request-like interaction. As such, they occur late in the sense that they take an individual and dedicated interaction during a guest's stay (Schegloff, 2007). Requests during a guest's stay are developed to be treated as ordinary occurrences (Sacks, 1984). Politeness and rapport building aspects of the interaction are both visible and embedded at different levels of the interaction. At a macro level, request-like sequences allow for the initiating party to choose how they wish to frame the overall interaction (request, pre-complaint, complaint). The interactions describe throughout this chapter provide the linking point between two different communicative states as they appear in arrival and departure. During arrival, common ground is not assumed and co-constructed by the participants. In departure interactions, common ground and knowledge of the institution is assumed and oriented towards by participants. While hotel guests will gain knowledge of the organisation by their prolonged physical presence in it, interactions that occur during a guest's stay present important "updates" on the consumer's current knowledge state of the hotel.

The fleeting interactions in which guest and receptionists interact create a sense of communality. Burger, Soroka, Gonzago, Murphy, and Somervell (2001) demonstrate that even short and temporary instances of "liking" can increase request compliance. It might be argued that service encounter relationships can be built on episodic encounters with various employees, and do not necessarily require an actual relationship to develop between a specific employee and a guest. They aid in the construction of trust in the service encounter (Dasgupta, 1988; Gambetta, 1988; Gellner, 1988; Kuroshima, 2010; Luhmann, 1988; Sako, 2006; Thom, Kravitz, Bell, Krupat, & Azari, 2002) and provide insights to how hotel guests engage with services during their stay. Much like in everyday interaction, guests and receptionists form "activity contracts" (Aronsson & Cekaite, 2011) which are created, revised and enforced through interactional work. Activities to be conducted are pursued through accounts and the co-compliance to request between speakers.

The encounters during a stay are mostly exciting for the guests. Unlike arrival and departure, they are often unexpected and guests can be seen to treat these events as unusual, but not necessarily as not welcomed – guests establish their presence in the hotel through these interactions and take ownership of their stay there. Guests experience their stay at a hotel through interacting with staff. Most of these interactions are done for pleasure, like eating in the restaurant (Noone et al., 2009). These interactions are conventionally treated as routine by the receptionists,

making them efficiently reproducible (Normann, 2000). The quest for ownership in the service encounters and guests' interest in contributing to the resolution is still oriented to by the receptionists, promoting the understanding of personal attention to the guests (Moscardo, 2006; Ogbonna, 2011). Interactions are marked with relationship building activities that allow for more effective next encounters (Boden, 1994). The type of encounter described in this chapter provides insights into how customers become familiar with an institution, integrate into the processes and become experts in the environment and its mode of conduct (Tat Keh & Wei Teo, 2001). The resulting patterns in interactions are described in the following chapter.

# Chapter 7:    Analysis III: Departure Sequences

## 7.1    Aim of the chapter

In line with the institutional setting, departure sequences often contain elements denoting a transactional nature in the interactions. However, the accounts are enacted differently to what has been described in the two previous sections. The nature of the conversations is different and specific to departure sequences. In this chapter, the first section addresses how the transactional focus of these situations are being encoded sociolinguistically. The second part looks at the particularities of leave taking in departure sequences multimodally. The third notion to be addressed investigates other business that is being dealt with is introduced and negotiated in the sequences.

## Part 1: Canonical departures: some premises

## 7.2    Structure of departure sequences

Departure sequences have a number of components. First, there is a business compartment that needs to be attended to. Secondly, since it is the final interaction, any other unfinished business needs to be dealt with. Gutek, Bhappu, Liao-Troth, and Cherry (1999) argue that service encounters that take place in the same organisation, but where customers potentially interact with different staff in each interaction do not lead to a relationship between client and provider. Although the authors anticipate that even in such cases the customers will develop some familiarity with practices of the organisation as a whole (cf. Manning, 2008), this premise does not seem to be supported by an analysis of departure sequences in a hotel. In this chapter, it can be seen that guests orient to established rapport in their talk, regardless of whether they have engaged in repeated interaction with the receptionist or not (Goodwin, 1996).

### 7.2.1    Structure of departure sequences

*Departure service sequences*
- Opening
- **"Check out"**
    - Interaction with objects/artefacts ("business at hand")
        - Presented by receptionist to guest (to be kept or be returned)
        - Resented by guest to receptionist (to be kept or be returned)
- Pre-closing
    - Last new mentionables *(optional)*
- Closing

The terminology "check-in" and "check-out" promotes the understanding that these events are somehow related to each other. Indeed, a check-out can arguably not occur without a preceding check-in. Consequently, some parallels in overall structure between these two types of service encounters can be observed: interactions begin with an opening, move into what constitutes the "check-out", propose a pre-closing and terminate with a closing sequence.

*Extract 30: Closing*

*253 (M1 native German, Ro native Spanish speaker)*

```
69   M1:    [Vielen Dank nochmal. (.) [War ganz toll hier.

70          [Thank (you) again.   (.) [Was really great here.
71   Ro:                              [Bon appetito::
```

Expressing thanks for hospitality received is a common feature of departing from a hotel. The guests show appreciation for services received throughout their stay to the receptionist, even if little to none was due to the direct work by the receptionist being spoken to. The guest orients to their stay in the past tense.

*Extract 31: Orientation to leaving*

*235 (M1, F1 German, Tar Arabic native speaker)*

```
5    Tar:   [Werden Sie gleich abgeholt?
            [Are you HON being picked up shortly?
6    F1:    Ja, wir werden (hier) abgeholt, ja.=
            Yes, we are being picked up (here), yes.=
```

Physical leave-taking is a principal feature of departing from a hotel. This part of knowledge is available to both parties and frequently oriented to. The understanding is co-constructed by both parties.

*Extract 32: Orientation to payment*

*233 (M1 German, Ant Spanish native speaker)*

```
1    Ant:   Wollen Sie bezahlen mit Kreditkarte?
            Do you HON want to pay with credit card?
```

If some payment is outstanding upon a guest's departure, interactional sequences display that interlocutors assume an intention to pay. In this example, payment is introduced by an utterance invoking a payment type, not the notion of payment.

Departure sequences, however, may contain an additional component: after the business of checking-out has been completed, guests have the opportunity to address a new topic, a place

for last new mentionables in the interaction (a notion that was demonstrated to be discouraged in arrival sequences). The check-out interactional procedure is also different to what is to be accomplished in arrival sequences: the business attended to in a departure sequence is mainly focused around the interaction with objects. Information is only apparent as it relates to objects that are being dealt with (e.g. clarification of items from the mini bar as they relate to the invoice). Objects that are being interacted with display the continued nature from the arrival sequence: guests return their keys (an action that is usually initiated by the guest and often not even acknowledged by the receptionist) and pay any outstanding billable (interaction with objects related to money: cash (keep) or card (be returned)).

*224 (M1, Br German native speakers)*



*Frame 42: returning of keys and displaying of payment intent*

Here, the guest has returned the key (on the desk) and is holding his wallet which displays the orientation to paying his bill. Br is grasping the key while looking at her monitor to feed forward the transactional part of the interaction.

Guests also receive an invoice (sometimes by request only). Pre-closings are interactively rich places in which the final leave-taking of the guest is suggested and negotiated. Commonly, these are initiated by the guest and can provide an opportunity to complete any outstanding conversational topics. These can be initiated by the guest by expressing a want (e.g. "I want to thank…"), or by invitation from the receptionist (e.g. "Was everything okay?"[29]). A question from the receptionist may be treated as a pre-closing or as a genuine object of concern that needs to be attended to by the guest. When treated as a genuine re-opening of the conversation, the actualisation and negotiation of the topic is in the hand of the guest, similar to when it has been proposed by this party.

---

[29] This may appear as an invitation to complain; however, complaints and requests are dealt with in stay sequences, and notably absent from departures. Guests may offer some issues that they have observed (e.g, "The bathroom door didn't lock"), but they are not dealt with interactionally as something that needs to be resolved.

*253 (M1/F1 native German, Ro native Spanish speaker)*



*Frame 43: Orientation to multiple artefacts*

This example shows how multiple objects are made visible for use in the interaction and are oriented to simultaneously. The A4 sized paper on the desk is the guests' bill. Next to it are the guests' returned room key and their room card (which does not need to be returned). M1 holds his open wallet from which he has passed a banknote to Ro who is holding it. During this exchange, F1 has held the filled in feedback form for Ro to interact with. Both the cash register and the box for the feedback forms is to the far end of the reception desk. Departure sequences are economical as is demonstrated here.

## 7.3   Focus on business in departure sequences

While efficiency and effectiveness were at the forefront of the investigation in the first analytic chapter, this focus is not at the centre in departure sequences. Efficiency and effectiveness is portrayed in a different way than what was being observed in arrival sequences. In those situations, pauses were kept short and responses constructed cooperatively between receptionists and guests. The cooperation is also visible in the event of departure sequences, but is displayed differently. Here, pauses are often long and responses are frequently more minimal (or even appear absent) than in arrival sequences. Participants interact according to a specific social context that can be seen to invoke particular behaviour patterns (Arminen, 2000).

In arrival sequences, it was argued, that for effective and efficient communication to occur, guests and receptionists alike have to orient to the ritualistic procedure of the interaction. That is, both parties need to go through the items on the agenda, even if they have done this before. Behaviour like this may then be compared to service encounters between doctor and patient, or even at the supermarket check-out. The literature suggests that in these interactions, people routinely reproduce the situation over, and over again. Strong (2001) speaks of the "ceremonial order" of medical interactions, a suggestion that points to the repeatability of episodes in interactions. Service encounters at the hotel front desk, however, occur for different purposes and, thus, invoke different procedures and resulting behaviours from the participants -

routine as it is being displayed in all of the interactions; no matter the business dealt with, is an interactional achievement (Schegloff, 2006b).

In arrival sequences it was shown that guests in cooperative situations supply a token of acknowledgement at the first possible point of completion of an item on the agenda (Gardner, 1997). It was demonstrated that guests will often produce both a verbal response, and where applicable a nonverbal launch into the requested action. In departure sequences, this orientation appears to often be assumed. Receptionists do not wait for guests to supply a token or show nonverbal engagement before moving onto another activity. Guests often do not vocalise a token of acknowledgement, or do so delayed and together with an additional interactional item. Both parties can be seen to conduct their business independently with cooperation implied and verified through gaze or vocal rendering when *necessary*, not when *expected*. Necessary cooperative moves can be found in keeping on the agenda by a receptionist supplying a minimalistic utterance regarding the next item on the agenda or resolving responsibility collaboratively of an artefact. Making choices in reference, both lexical and nonverbal are thus demonstrated to be subject to what relationship the interactants attribute to this interaction and how this is different to communicative instance within the environment of the organisation prior to this occasion (Enfield, 2013).

Laughter is another powerful mechanism in interactions that has been of ample interest to scholar s, and continues to remain so for researchers. In this regard, laughter in service encounters can be seen as employed by interactants for particular purposes (cf. Holt & Price, 2014). Although it has been shown in the previous chapters that it is of not very frequent occurrence in arrival or stay sequences, it is of more importance in departure sequences. In this example, laughter is incorporated into a situation that is strongly focused on dealing with transactional matters. Still, M1 manages to invite laughter from the receptionist (Jefferson, 2006c). Laughter may be a natural component of a conversation, but in institutional settings its occurrence may have implications for what is displayed as the standard. It still can serve an important function even in an asymmetrical interaction: laughter can build momentary rapport, even between unacquainted parties (Lavin & Maynard, 2001). It is highly notable, that laughter sequences - especially reciprocated laughter – occurs more regularly in departure sequences than it does in arrival and stay interactions. Laughter, thus, is more frequent in acquainted parties (Thonus, 2008):

*Extract 33: Abbreviation in speech*

*204 (M1, Si native German speakers)*

```
3            Si------------,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,——————————
             M1-------------------------------------- ((wallet))
4     Si:    O↑kay. (.) .hh viernzwanzich ACH↓zich sind es, ↑ja?
             O↑kay. (.) .hh twenty four EIGH↓ty it is, ↑TAG?
             M1--------…——————————
5     M1:    hm↑hm
6     (30.2) ((Si retrieving documents; talking to other guest)) ▽
             Si--------------------,,,——————————
             M1------------------------------------
7     Si:    So. Eine Unterschrift, ↑bi:t↓te!
             Now then. A signature, ↑plea:↓se!
8            (2.1) ((M1 signing, Si moving retrieving something))
             Si-------------------------------------------((other
             document))
             M1-------------------------------------------((signing))
9     M1:    HUHUM ((clears throat))(.)(Is die Übernachtung hier mit auch drauf?)
             HUHUM ((clears throat))(.)(Is the overnight stay included here?)
             Si-------------------------------------------((other
             document))
             M1-------------------------------------------((signing))
10    Si:    Mhm
11           (0.5) ((M1 lowers pen))
             Si------------.....................((looking down))
             M1 ((releases pen))

      ((four lines omitted))


15    (1.4)
             Both_____
16    Si:    Restaurantbeleg nich?
             Restaurant bill not?
17    (2.5) ((M1 shakes head and looks down))
             Both----------
18    Si:    Den auch nicht?
             This one neither?
19    (0.6) ((both continue looking at documents on desk))
20    Si:    [Das 'smeina]
             [That'smine]
21    M1:    [Das 's Ih]rer.
             [That 's you]rs HON.
22    (0.5) ((looking at documents on desk))
                  ①      ②    ③
23    M1:    De- Den krieg ich
             Thi- This one I get
             ④⑤⑥⑦ ▽⑧    ⑨ ⑩
24    Si:    Genau. (Passt) HAH[AHAH
             Exactly. (Fits) HAH[AHAH
                               ⑪⑫
25    M1:                      [HEHEhehe
26    (3.4)
```

In this extract, Si and M1 move through the check-out swiflty and treat the routine for behaviour as established. Knowledge that is assumed to be shared between participants is not repeated in the conversation. In line 3, Si asks for confirmation of the amount left payable on the guest's account while first looking at her screen and then beginning to move to the other end of the reception desk. In her turn, she only specifies an amount of money, but does not provide any detail on what this money represents, what it is paying for. M1 looks at and interacts with his wallet while Si is speaking and continues do do so while producing a minimal token of acknowledgement. Only after his turn has been completed, the shifts his gaze to Si who has moved out of the frame:
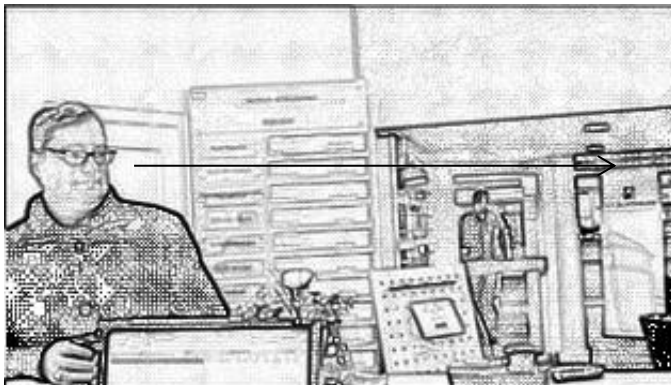


*Frame 44: Continued nonverbal engagement*

In a lenghtly pause (30 seconds), Si remains at the other side of the reception desk, collecting relevant artefacts for the continuation of the interaction. When she returns to the interaction in line 6, mutual gaze is not established to continue effective interaction with the documents she produces. In this line, the document being dealt with is the print out from the card reader which Si places in fron tof M1 in combination with a verbal rendition of the new item on the agenda. Her request for interaction with the document is constructed in an abbreviated manner, not a complete sentence. However, it is pre-faced with "so", verbally indicating that a new item of the agenda in the sequential order is being adressed (Barske & Golato, 2010). Before her turn is complete, and before M1 displays any complying behaviour to the request, F1 is already shifting her body, including gaze and attention to another area of the desk. M1 does not produce a token of acknowledgement, but displays nonverbal engagement by beginnig to engage with the document.

After a pause, M1 clears his throat in line 8 and poses a question that relates to another document on the counter. Both parties continue to look at different items througout the utterance and through Si's minimal response. Subsequently, both parties begin to negotiate the next item on the agenda (lines omitted). The next relevant item emerging is concerning the ownership of the

documents displayed on the desk. In line 15, Si and M1 have established mutual gaze at turn beginning (Goodwin, 1980). In Si's very abbreviated query, she wants to know whether M1 wants to retain the document constituting the restaurant bill. M1 negates by shaking his head and looks down at the reception desk. In the ensuing pause, both orient their gaze to the remaining documents. In line 17, Si poses another abreviated query regarding one of the other documents (Robinson, 1998). A small pause ensues in which Si and M1 continue to look at the document, establishing the responsible owning party (Hazel & Mortensen, 2014; Mondada, 2014). Simultaneously, Si and M1 produce their account for who is responsible for the document in doubt. The observations both establish Si as the rightful owner.
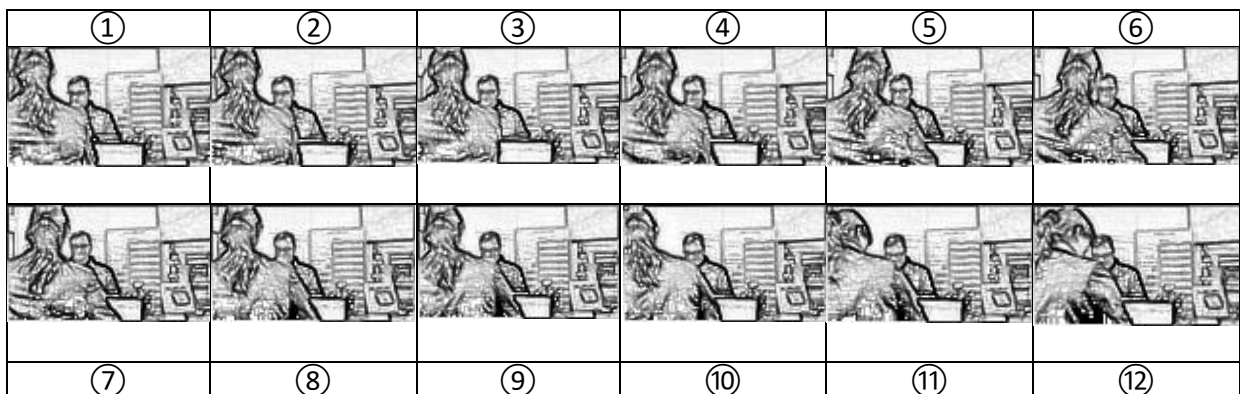


*Frame 45: Negotiating and establishing accountable party for an artefact through gaze and laughter*

Thus prior to the sequence of stills, both participants in the interaction are still gazing at the documents on the reception desk. Ownership of one document has been established through overlapping turns in line 19 and 20. Subsequently, a pause ensues in which participants participants remain engaged with the remaining documents on the desk. In line 22, M1 claims ownership to one of those documents on the desk. His turn starts with a hesitant restart and is accompanied with the beginning of a shift in gaze direction (Goodwin, 1980) (①-③). In Si's turn, she confirms the utterance of the guest, and her response is accompanied by a shift in her own gaze until mutual gaze is briefly established towards the end of the turn (④-⑦). Here, both participants collaboratively co-construct the actualisation of the conversational need for establishment of mutual gaze, and the realisation of each other's behaviour as being co-constructive to the achievement of it (Kendon & Cook, 1969).

*Frame 46: Getting ready to laugh; establishing and co-constructing recipient through mutual gaze*

In departure sequences, laughter can occur in situations that have a strong focus on the transactional nature of the interaction. Here, laughter can be described as an off-task action: while laughter is being shared as a means to establish rapport, business continues (İçbay & Yıldırım, 2013). The negotiation of accountability for an object (document) has been mutually co-constructed and resolved through the aid of laughter. Both participants in this sense display that they share the knowledge as to who is responsible for the document (Akman, 2007). Participants shared laughter in departure sequences is often used in initiating topic termination, as demonstrated here (Holt, 2010). The end of this sequence of business is also demonstrated in the shift in gaze. After mutual gaze had been established for the initiation of the laughter, both recipients now shift their gaze to other objects ((9)-(12)).

Canonical departure sequences in the corpus are characterised by behaviour as outlined in the example above. Verbal renditions addressing the topic at hand are often kept to a minimum, pauses, regardless of length, are treated as admissible, an participants use previous experience of both parties as guiding cooperative behaviour (Akman, 2007; Nielsen et al., 2012). Cooperation is evidenced in various situations across the departure sequences.

### 7.3.1 Invoking routine and continuing rapport

Participants in the interaction have multiple resources in establishing as well as displaying trust and rapport in the interaction and in which they can demonstrate their commitment to the present exchange situation (Kollock, 2006). One method is form a participant to address this by "invoking procedure" (p. 1458) in the conversation. In their interactions, the interactants can make the business of the situation relevant, as already demonstrated in the previous example. Here, both receptionist and M1 do this explicitly (Baraldi, 2013):

*Extract 34: Payment as expected activity*

*204 (M1 native German speaker, Tar Arabic speaker)*

```
                          ∇
 6   Tar:   Stimmt so::?
            Tha::t's correct?
             ①-④
 7   M1:    ∘∘<joa> (mumbling)∘∘
 8          (1.3) ((Tar attempting to insert card into card reader))
            ∇
 9   M1:    Wir ham nich mitgezählt, aber ∘wir gehn'n davon aus∘ (mumbling)
            We haven't counted(with), but ∘we assume TAG it∘
10   Tar:   hehe
```

Tar has just informed M1 of the amount of money left to pay on the guests' account and now invites M1 to review the outstanding payables to the hotel. A number of objects are available for interaction at this point to the participants: the guests' invoice is lying on the desk, the card reading machine is positioned on the desk, and Tar holds the M1's credit card. At the beginning of the fragment, F1 interacts with the invoice by gazing at the document. Tar initiates his engagement with the card reader at the beginning of his turn, demonstrating the goal orientation and swift handling of accountable situations in the check-out process. In his turn, he asks a short and abbreviated dichotomous question – is the amount payable correct or not (Raymond, 2006). In the analysis of arrival sequences, it was demonstrated that such formulations are vital in ordering the agenda in a hotel check-in. It was seen that participants commonly comply with the rendering of the preferred response. In an arrival sequence, these questions usually are posed to ensure that the guest has received information and agrees to comply with it. In departure sequences, the questions are commonly related to receptionists' actions that affect the guest in some way (whereas in an arrival information is provided on future guests' actions that may affect the institution). Here, the receptionist needs confirmation for taking payment for payable services the guests have accumulated over the course of their stay. It is not a previously agreed upon amount of money (e.g. cost of accommodation and included services). It is a monetary rendition of the agreement made in the agenda and accompanying question sequences at the arrival stage (note the contingency of institutional and laypersons actions over the course of a guest's stay at a hotel). This additional amount of money to the institution needs to be organised by the participants in the rendering of their actions: here, a positive response is necessary for the payment sequence to continue.

*Frame 47: Actualising the stop of an activity until relevant response has been supplied*

At the end of his turn, Tar opens his hands and releases the card reader machine, indicating that the interaction can only proceed if and when a relevant response is supplied by the owner of the card. The use of gestures demonstrates here that actions are made deliberately (Kendon, 2004).
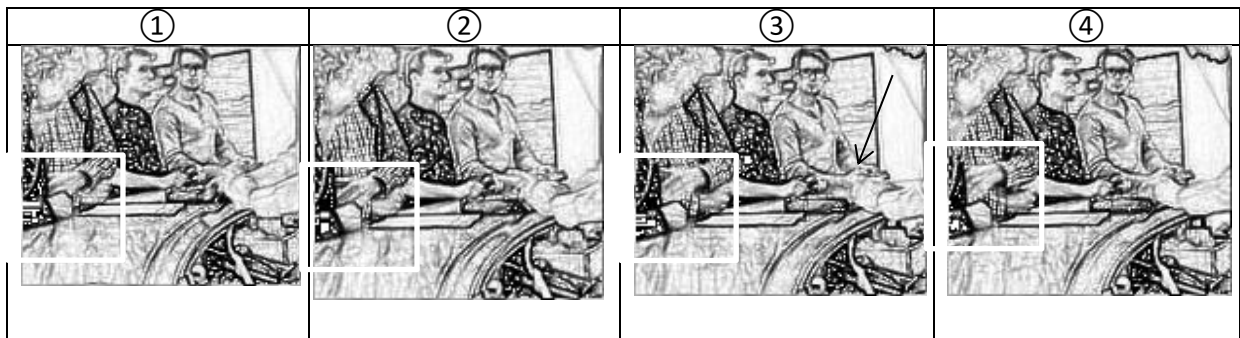


*Frame 48: Minimal response, nonverbal rendition and recipient response*

M1 produces an affirmation as a minimal response token, paired with a minimal gesture to signalise the "go ahead" for the current activity. The gesture becomes visible in frame ②, at which point Tar's gaze begins to shift back to the machine to continue with the physical activity of taking the payment. In frame ③, his gaze has been fully redirected and the payment activity is resumed in frame ④. Stopping and resuming an activity can thus be accomplished very quickly and efficiently in a cooperative environment and with minimal interactional effort from the participants (Heath & Luff, 2013; Kendon, 1990, 2004).



*Frame 49: Uncertainty account as small talk at action initiation*

During the ensuing pause, Tar attempts to insert the card into the card reader. As he succeeds and slides the card into the slot, M1 initiates a new turn in which he provides an account

displaying both uncertainty about his prior affirmation concerning the payment, but also invoking the built rapport and trust in the interaction. This account now also includes his wife ("we") (Levinson, 1979; Nunberg, 1993; Recasens, Hovy, & Martí). However, what appears to be uncertainty provision in the account serves as small talk, as active rapport building resource, in this turn (Kerbrat-Orecchioni, 2001; McCarthy, 2000; Placencia, 2004; Traverso, 2001c) and is treated as such by Tar. Tar proceeds with taking the payment and also produces some short tokens of laughter, concluding the activity sequence at hand (Holt, 2010). Trust, as has been demonstrated here, constitutes an "embedded decision" that participants incorporate into their interaction (Bachmann, 2006, p. 466). Trust, however, is not the only aspect of a departure sequence that needs to be actualised and subsequently negotiated. In the negotiation of complex behavioural patterns, the reception desk constitutes a valuable interactional resource for the participants in projecting and completing action sequences:



*Frame 50: The reception desk as interactional resource (pre fragment 231)*

In this still M1 can be seen completing an action, Tar is waiting for completion of this action by M1 as well as a print out from the card reader and F1 waiting for completion of sequence to introduce a new topic. The reception desk has an important role for the institution and it is used for specific purposes in interactions. Object that are placed onto the desk are always assumed to have a communicative function (see also chapter 4 section 4.9, p. 87ff for recording concerns and handling of equipment regarding the reception space). Positioning an object on the desk renders it accountable to at least one party in the interaction. Participants make use of the space to order their communicative behaviour and invoke particular practices (Brassac et al., 2008; Hazel, Mortensen, & Rasmussen, 2014; Mondada, 2014). Distance in human encounters has been described to be influential as to how participants interpret the relationship to each other (Hall, 1982, 1990; Kendon, 1990). Using the available space effectively may also aid participants in a departure sequence to interpret or predict cohesively and correctly the behaviour of the other interactants (Duck, 1977).

## Part 2: Negotiating leave taking

Closings in arrival and stay sequences do not seem to require any extensive work. The final leave taking at the end of a guest's stay is different in this regard. In departure sequences, good byes are more complex and subject to negotiation between all of the interactants. In the first two chapters of the analysis, efficiency and effectiveness in relation to rapport in service encounters at the hotel front desk were addressed. It was shown that although the concepts are important, their definition has been shown to be flexible and not fixed. Although institutional interactions operate around a definite agenda, the length of an interaction is never specified prior to the conversation. It has been demonstrated that certain tasks are addressed by the receptionists, but on a general note, what is being said is also never decided before an interaction (Sacks et al., 2006). Adjacency pairs in departure sequences commonly transition between turns with no gaps and little overlap (Sacks et al., 2006). In this example, the interaction between the two guests and the receptionists shows this trait. Turns are allocated collaboratively in departure sequences (Sacks et al., 2006). Sentences are often constructed collaboratively in a departure situation when business has been dealt with (Lerner, 2006), suggesting that speaker and recipient constitute parties contingent on the interactive behaviour of each other. More than in arrival or stay sequences, departure interactions require a high level of negotiation between participants to facilitate leave taking and thus the final departure of the guest. (Schegloff, 2006c).The coordination that is necessary for collaboratively construct the negotiation of leave taking is tuned to a very fine degree and acted upon by all interacting parties (Clayman, 2013). Closings have been discussed at length in CA literature. Closing of a conversation is not a static enterprise, but can take different variations and is subject to negotiation by the participating parties (Button, 2006). Like other components of an interaction, closing is an activity. Negotiation is therefore necessary since interactants cannot simply end a conversation without closing it (Robinson, 2013).

In this extract, a potential pre-closing is formulated in line (16) and completed in line (20). There are various places in the conversation visible that may have led to a finalising of the departure, but the talk continues. Here again is an indicator of regards for efficiency in service encounter speech. Tar, in formulating, a (partial) pre-closing demonstrates an acknowledgement that the official business has been dealt with and that the interaction can come to a close. He does not finish formulating his pre-closing statement which addresses concern for effectiveness in the encounter: by not finishing his turn, he demonstrates an availability for a continuation of the conversation. This display is not enough to keep the interaction going. The girls mutually show an equal display of preparedness to continue with the interaction. Talk is shaped by context. Here, participants refer themselves to preceding talk. By producing – or deciding to not fully produce a

turn or next action, participants show their understanding of what has occurred in the conversation. Participants demonstrate what has been done in the interaction, and also what should happen next. Understanding constructed in a conversation happens on multiple levels to create what will become mutual understandings in the conversation (Heritage, 2006b):

*Extract 35: Knowldege and leaving the organisation*

*234 (F1, F2 native German speakers; Tar native Arabic speaker)*

```
        Tar --------------------------------------
        F1/2 _____
6   Tar: Braucht ihr (0.3) Schlüßel für Gepäckraum, (.) oder ((looking at
7         paper on lower part of reception desk))
          Do you FAM need (0.3) key for luggage room, (.) or
            ①②③  ④   ⑤
        Tar------------ ((paper on desk))
        F1,,,,,,,,,,,,--- ((door to luggage room))
        F2_____
8   F1: .hh hn nee::: h.
        .hh hn no::: h.
9   (0.4)
            ⑥                    ⑦           ⑧ ∇
        Tar--------------------------((paper on desk))
        F1---------------------------..((door to luggage room))
        F2,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,------ ((door to luggage room))
10  F2: Nö::, ∘das müsste passen jetzt, ne?∘=
        No::COLL, ∘that should be alright now, TAG?∘=
            ⑨        ⑩          ⑪
        Tar-------------------- ((paper on desk))
        F1.............._____
        F2------------------- ((door to luggage room))
11  F1: =Wi- Wir wart[en jetzt-
        =W- We wai  [t now-
                ⑫                         ∇
        Tar------------.................._____
        F1_____
        F2--------------------------,,,,_____
12  Tar:        [Ach so seid's ihr um (.) zwölf Uhr dreitzisch seit-
                [Ach so are you at (.) twelve (o'clock) thirty are-
        All_____
13  F2: Ge↓nau, da kom[mt der Bus. ((Tar, F1 nod; F2 nods))
        Ex↓actly, the bus co[mes then.
14  Tar:               [Perfekt
                        [Perfect
                                ∇ ((F1 nods))
        Tar/F1_____
        F2__,,,,,,,,,,....._____((Tar to F1))
15  F1: Die [halbe Stunde.
        That [half hour.
16  Tar:     [Dann-
             [Then-
        (0.5)
        F1_____,._____,((Tar to F2))
        F2_____,,,..._____((F1 to Tar))
17  F2: Müsste passen.
```

```
                Should be fine.
18              (0.3) ((①-⑥Tar nods)) ((⑦-⑫))
                All_____
19      Tar:    Dann (0.3) Alles Gu↑te:::: hhh
                Then (0.3) All the be↑st:::: hhh
20      F1:     Ja, danke[schön
                Yes, thank[you
21      Tar:             [∘bis nächstes Mahhal∘ hh [hehe
                         [∘until next time∘ hh [hehe
                                                F1/2,,,,,
22      F1:                                     [J[aha
                                                [Y[ehes
                                                F1/2,,,...
23      F2:                                     [Genau
                                                [Exactly
```

| ① | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|



| ⑦ | ⑧ | ⑨ | ⑩ | ⑪ | ⑫ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
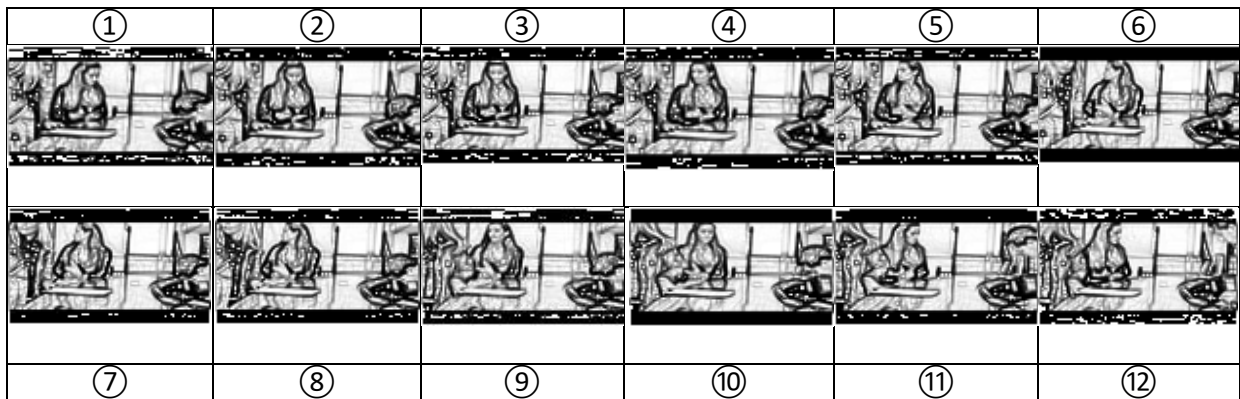
*Frame 51: Visible rendition of verbal gesture*

The extract begins after the "check-out" has been initiated: the guests have supplied their room number to Tar who subsequently begins to complete the task that has been set in motion by the information. While he is doing the task, he produces the first turn in the fragment, not changing his eye gaze to the guests, but remaining focused on his task. In his turn construction, Tar uses a preformulated format to feed forward the interaction with the girls (Lerner, 2006). In this situation, the girls are presented with yes/no interrogatives that structure their responses. The polarity in the questions leads to type-conforming responses that are frequently found in institutional settings. Here, however, the questions are used to forward leave taking of the organisation (Raymond, 2006). The questions are designed for a particular purpose which indicates a particular preference that is related to the conversation and the projected responding actions to candidate answers (Pomerantz & Heritage, 2013). The recipients of his turn maintain their own gaze on Tar. The decision on the question has to be negotiated between the two recipients. In her response, F1 hesitantly utters a rejection to the offer. In making her decision, she begins to turn her gaze away from Tar and towards the direction of the luggage room (①-⑤). After a short pause, F2 confirms the choice that F1 had made in her response and also turns away from Tar and towards the direction of the luggage room (⑥-⑧). This results in a situation in which service provider and recipients look in different directions. Spoken utterance and bodily rendition are thus highly coordinated (Kendon, 1990).



*Frame 52:Co-construction of co-membership of the institution*

This position can be regarded as display of embodied knowledge that the participants have which is rendered visible in a demonstration of attention to the topic at hand through the spatial repositioning of gaze in a rythmic manner (Hostetter & Alibali, 2008; Kendon, 1977, 1990). This production of knowledge has been constructed in two ways: Tar does not have the need to produce a gesture to indicate the location of the luggage room (compare deictic activities in arrival sequences), but the guests still produce an embodied response to a non-rendered gesture. Thus, language is used in the interactions to dynamically construct valid expertise about the institution in Tar's turn (Holmes et al., 1999). The participants reproduce what they know about the situation, and as such about the organisation (Wilson, 1991). Miscommunication has been frequently said to occur more often in situations with people from different cultural backgrounds and/or asymmetries in knowledge (Roberts, 1998). However, participants in this example demonstrate awareness of how a previously existing gap in knowledge has changed over the course of the guests' stay (Pomerantz, 2006b). Participants thus make reference in their behaviour on now shared experience displaying a high level of cooperation in their actions (Cap, 2011; Fetzer, 2011; Kidwell, 2000). The receptionist treats the guests as competent members within the context of this organisation, and the guests act accordingly (Bittner, 1965). Tourism research commonly reminds that social interactions in this context are not occuring naturally, but are a consequence of the commodification of a service and that therefore service relationships are simply a representation of supply (front line employee) and demand (customer), rather than a complex social encounter (Podemski, 2005; Watson & Kopachevsky, 1996). However, as developed in any of the examples in this analysis, all participants demonstrate a concern for how to produce a relevant next action. In situations with multiple addressees of a turn of talk, both verbal and nonverbal responses have to be coordinated (Broth & Keevallik, 2014; Zimmerman & Boden, 1991).

During the majority of F2's utterance, all participants are oriented towards their respective objects. To end her turn, F2 produces a tag, redirecting her own interpretation of the offer to another participant. F1 subsequently turns back to the conversation at hand and produces an account for their decision and implied next actions. The turn is latched with F2's previous turn (Schegloff, 2007), displaying affiliation with the previous speaker (Antaki, 2012). Her turn starts with a self repair and is left unfinished. During this turn, F2 is still gazing towards the luggage room, but Tar has begun to display movement, indicating the completion of his task and the further availability for other interactive activities (⑨-⑪). In overlap with F1's hesitant account, Tar produces a cooperative completion of her turn while shifting his gaze towards the guests (⑫). His turn begins with "ach so", a token that according to Golato (2010) marks not only

receipt of information, but also explicitly addresses understanding in German. Introducing what he has thus claimed to understand from the previous turn, Tar leaves a micro pause, which initiates F2's swift turn to re-join the interaction by establishing mutual gaze with the speaker, realising that she has been looked at as co-recipient of the utterance that requires her interactive attendance (Goodwin, 1980; Kendon & Cook, 1969).
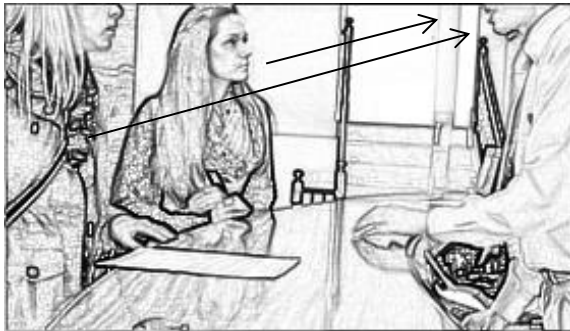


*Frame 53: Mutual gaze in cooperation*

Tar abandons his turn, but both the previous uptake of understanding displayed by Tar and the now reestablished mutual gaze point to a cooperative environment in this situation (McKechnie et al., 2007). F2's next turn confirms this mutually established understanding and elaborates on Tar's account, which he confirms in a short overlap with F2's turn. Participants again demonstrate that behaviour is frequently checked for cohesion to the current task at hand (Langton, 2000).

Effective service systems are said to be reproducible – a notion, that from patterns observed in this corpus would also suggest that guests and receptionists are co-producers of any service encounter and the ensuing service relationship (Normann, 2000). Cohen (2004) presumes that all linguistic and interactional work is expected to be carried out by the service provider in a touristic context. However, it would seem that established rapport through successful co-membership categorisation of the interacting parties would suggest that guests are likely to be accommodating and cooperative in their interactions, as developed in this example (Kerekes, 2007).



*Frame 54: Checking needs of co-participant*

In face –to-face interaction at the hotel front desk, a conversation needs to not only navigate verbal behaviour, but also the final "walking away" of the guest (Broth & Mondada, 2013). In this sense, departing is not a by-product of closing, but an achievement in itself that clearly demonstrates awareness for the role of the receptionist and other engagements or activities to be dealt with. It is also an activity that needs to be negotiated between the participants. Tar's supply of a short token in line 14 in overlap with the previous utterance could have been used as a closing for the topic. F1, however, reopens the topic providing further evidence for declining the offer produced by Tar in line 9 was the correct choice. Thus, the topic appears to be not yet fully finished (Button, 1991). This is displayed in F2 shifting her gaze to F1 to seek her affiliation to the observation. Tar however supplies a second attempt at closing the topic and a first attempt at initiating a pre-closing in line 16. Here, two different interactional forces are at work: F1 has displayed a further investment in the topic in recycling components already known to the participants and Tar has demonstrated that a closing of the interaction is an interactional option, that the guests are "free to go". Tar abandons his turn and displays that he is interactionally available to the guests. After a pause, F2 aligns herself to F1's prior turn and then moves her gaze back to Tar. F1 shifts her gaze briefly to F2 and reorients herself then back to Tar. Both F1 and F2 have thus have been able to produce further evidence on the topic. Another short pause ensues, allowing for any other observations on the topic to be made. Thus, the floor remains open to the participants. The negotiation of the topic closure in this pause is continuued nonverbally:
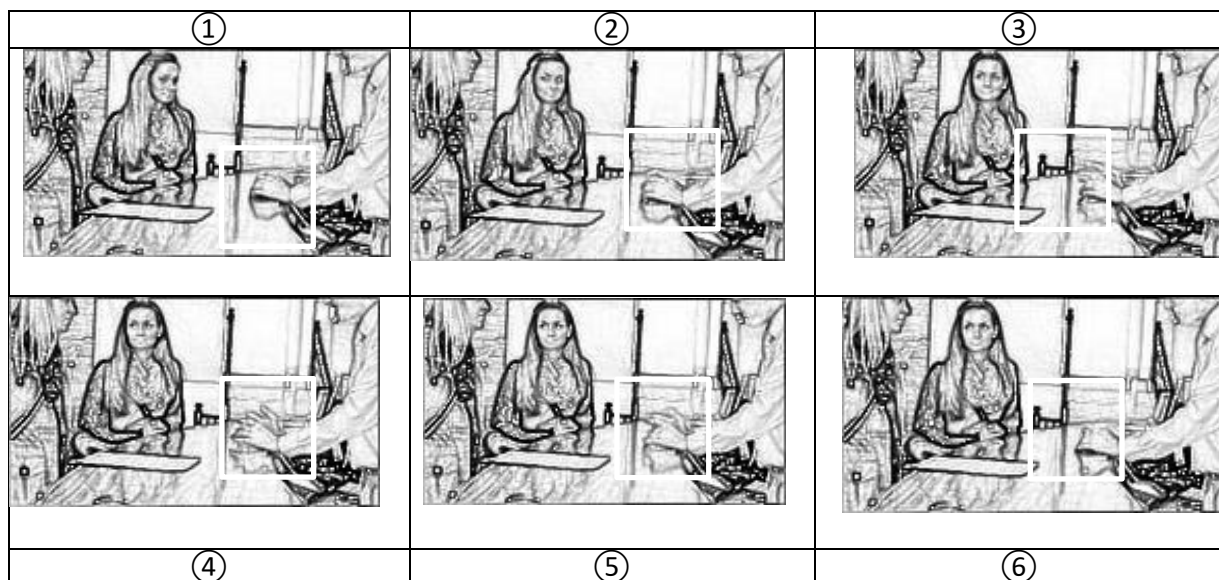


*Frame 55: Initiating pre-closing in pause*

Tar's gesture invites any further comments that have been left unmade. F1 checks with F2 that there is no additional information forthcoming by shifting her gaze to her during Tar's initiation of the gesture (①-③). In synchronous fashion with Tar's termination of the gesture,

the focus of F1's gaze also begins to shift. As his hands rest on the reception desk again, he nods briskly, confirming that the topic can be closed (Dittmann & Llewellyn, 1968, p. 82).
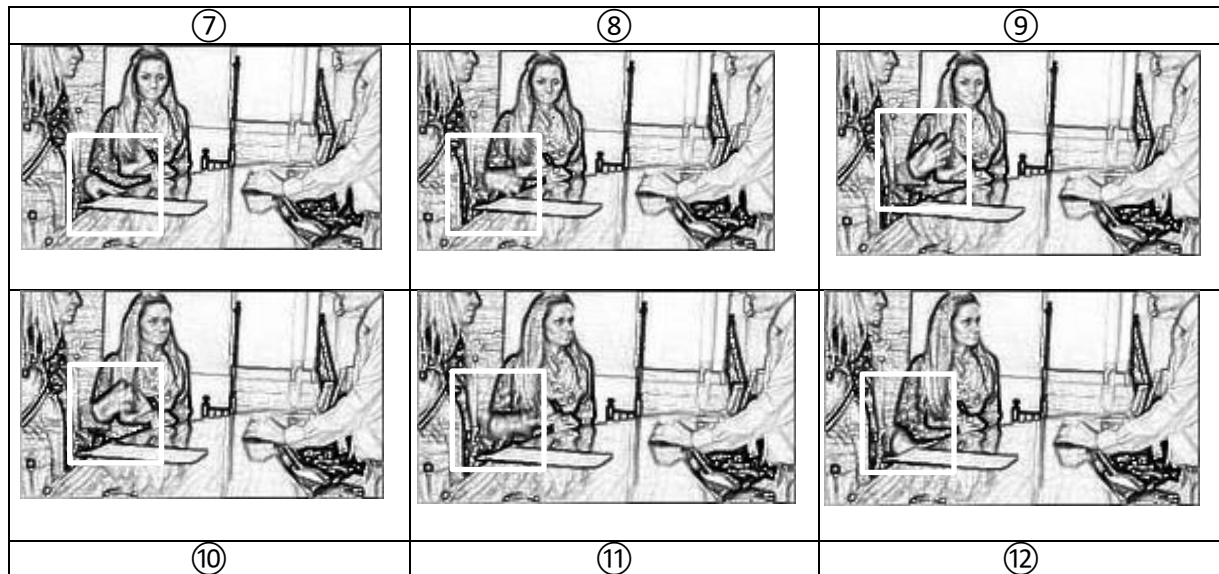


*Frame 56: Response to initiation of pre-closing in pause*

As soon as Tar's nod has been concluded, F2 produces a reciprocal responding gesture to the notion that the topic may be treated as concluded (Cook & Tanenhaus, 2009). With the termination of F2's gesture, F1 has also reestablished mutual gaze with the receptionist. In this situation, the gestures produced by the two participants of the interaction demonstrates that these actions have been collectively attributed the role of actionable item that participating parties attend to (Kendon, 1990).

Mutual gaze between the participants is maintained from line 19-21. In line 19, Tar reattempts to initate a preclosing sequence again (Button, 2006). Again, he leaves a short pause after the initation to allow participants to address any new mentionables (see also insertion of new topics later in this chapter). F1 produces a receipt and acknowledgement of the good wishes supplied, but both F1 and F2 maintain their gaze and body orientation as fully engaged in the encounter. Consequently, Tar cooperatively provides an extension in which he points to another interaction at some point in the future, attending to the social role of interactions in progress (Myllyniemi, 1986). Although the possible interactions between this particular organisation and the particular set of guests are being terminated for an undetermined period of time, the receptionist orients to the established social relation between institution and the visitors, allowing for future interactions and the coninuiing of the relationship (Boden, 1994). This remark is produced more quietly than the surrounding talk and concludes hesitantly with a laughter token. Thus, Tar marks his turn that it can be understood and treated as a joke by the recipients (cf. also Schegloff, 2001). Instead, the guests in overlap produce affirmative tokens, treating the prior

utterance as a sincere statement that they can align with. Thus, the extension of the pre-closing has been treated as a form of new mentionable by the guest that needs to be attended to (compare later example in this chapter on new topics being introduced in a pre-closing).
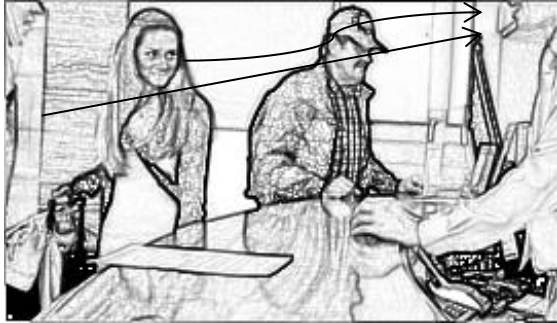


*Frame 57: Mutual gaze after initiation of leaving (post-fragment)*

As the guests leave, both F1 and F2 return their gaze one final time to the service provider[30].

Closings and leave-taking in departure sequences have a specific character in the encounters between receptionist and guest, because it is acknowledged that the stay is being terminated. Therefore, the interaction is brought to a complete end, meaning that a subsequent visit needs to proceed through the comprehensive agenda of the service encounter. Any subsequent visit to the organisation will thus be treated as a completely new interaction. This is a fundamental difference to the endings in arrival and stay sequences: arrival and stay sequences presume a potential continuation of an interaction with a representative of the organisation (*not* with a specific individual) and treat the conversation accordingly by allowing the context to stay present (Adato, 1975). Adato (1975) emphasises that in general service encounters any reference that is being made to a potential future conversation is entirely incidental since there is presumed to be a lack of a personal relationship. Contrary to this observation, the thesis in this argument is different, since the premise of interactions at the hotel front desk are described to occur on a continuum, rather than in a vacuum like arbitrary service conversations. In this extract, both Tar and F1 and F2 do considerable work to establish a relationship that is to continue beyond the leave-taking of the guest.

Leave-taking needs to be negotiated and is orchestrated between participants in minute detail (Auer, 1990). What leaving means to the parties involved needs to be negotiated in an activity by all participants. Meaning is not fixed, but constructed locally and from within the interaction (Wagner, 1996). Terminating an interaction needs to ensure that the closing is

---

[30] This appears to be an interactional achievement that seems to often not be accomplished between new employees and guests.

organised appropriately and that participants are satisfied with the outcome of the interaction *and* the closing. The recycling of certain passages (see line 14ff) is used to establish agreement and confirm the termination of the interaction (Pavlidou, 1998). In German telephone interactions, there appears to be evidence that participants require (at least) two closing sequences (Harren & Raitaniemi, 2008). Recycling in this instance, may thus be a cultural difference (Pavlidou, 1998; Sun, 2005). The considerable work that is displayed by participants shows that leaving an interaction is a delicate affair – both technically and socially (Sun, 2005). Generally speaking, interaction in German has been described as favouring a focus on goals over social-bonding activities (Grieve, 2010). This does not mean that leave-taking in service encounters that feature speakers of German are only concerned with speedy termination. Being truthful (Grieve, 2010) requires more work as is displayed in the sequence. In this example, the guest is a native speaker, the receptionist is not. In an interaction like this, it is the participants that decide on the relevance of cultural or social structures through their talk (Seedhouse, 1998).

## Part 3: Pre-closings and introducing new mentionables

### 7.4    Unfinished business; previously unmentioned topics

In the first analysis chapter, it was demonstrated that arrival sequences are characterised by a rather set agenda – an agenda that allows for little to no deviation on what topics are being addressed in the interactions and which is led by the receptionist. Departure sequences, however, are more flexible and allow for the introduction of any topics that have not been mentioned previously when introduced by the guest at the appropriate time in the interaction. After business has been concluded in the sequence, there is a space in departure sequences to introduce new mentionables (Nielsen, 2012).

Over the course of this analysis, it has been shown that receptionist and guest coordinate their communication and that incidents of communication failure do not occur. Instead, the goal orientation of the interaction takes precedent. Potential miscommunication does not result in a break down in the conversation, but is cooperatively negotiated. Repair mechanisms described in the literature exist in conversations for exactly this reason: to negate errors and violations in turns (Sacks et al., 2006). Notably, even if turns contain potential elements that may present areas for miscommunication, speakers frequently treat these turns as sufficiently relevant to continue without explicit repair. Thus, error correction in this situation remains unmarked through the way that it is being treated in the situation, forming an interactional resource (Jefferson, 2006b).

*Extract 36: Last new mentionables*

*231 (M1/F1 native German speakers, Tar Arabic speaker)*

```
19  Tar:  Vielen D[ank.=
            sThank you very much.=
20  M1:          [Danke:
                 [Thanks:
            ①      ② ③        ④      ⑤         ⑥   ⑦   ⑧   ⑨      ⑩
21  F1:   .h =>∘Ich möchte mich auch< noch bedan↑ken∘ Sie haben:: (.)
           ⑪       ⑫       ①     ②                        ③
22        m::ir (.)zum:: mh (.) Geburtstag eine ∘∘ Flasche Sekt ∘∘ geschi:ckt.
            ④⑤⑥⑦    ⑧   ⑨      ⑩
23        [(.) Recht herzlichen Dank.
           =>∘I also want< to than↑k you HON∘ You HON have:: (.) se:nd me a
           ∘∘bottle of sparkling wine∘∘ for mh (.) (my) birthday
           [(.) Thank you muchly.
24  Tar:  [Oh, herzlichen Glückwunsch. Hehe
           [Oh, congratulations. Hehe
            ⑪                                            ⑫
25  F1:   Ja, das hatt ich hier hinten auch nochmal draufgeschrieben, <falls
                      ①          ②             ③
26        hier keiner> ↓is'. (.) >Oder< ich weiß ja auch nicht wer das
                      ④
27        <gewesen ist>.
          Yes, I also had that written down on the back here, <in case no one>
          ↓is here. (.) >Or< I also don't know PRT who that <was>.
               ⑤     ⑥    ⑦      ⑧
28  Tar:  Das 's von der (0.3) ↓Hotel↓direk↓tion.
          That 's from the (0.3) ↓Hotel ↓manage↓ment.
            ⑨      ⑩ ⑪        ⑫
29  F1:   Herzlichen Dank hehe
          Heartfelt thanks hehe
30  Tar:  Sehr gernehe .h
          (With) Much pleasuhre .h
```
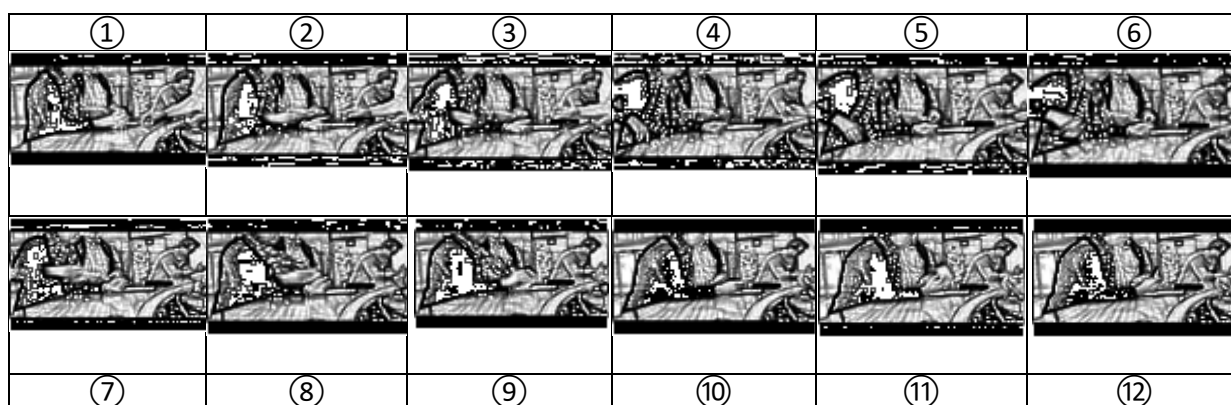


*Frame 58: Transitioning into a new topic*

### 7.4.1 Topic transition

In this example, F1 introduces a new topic after business has been dealt with, a point that the corpus suggests as a desirable time to introduce an item that is not part of the agenda in a departure sequence. The fragment begins with the topic closure of the previous item on the

agenda: outstanding payment received (see also next fragment). In the following turn, F1 presents an introduction for a proposed next topic. The topic transition sequence involves both verbal and nonverbal mechanisms to be successful (Drew & Holt, 2006). In the first sequence of stills from the video footage, the coordination of speech and embodied action can be observed. Moreover, it demonstrates that the actualisation of both gesture involving an artefact and the rendering of a long utterance have been pre-planned by F1 and are rendered at the perceived appropriate time (Kendon, 1967). As soon as Tar's turn has been completed and synchronistic with Tar's retraction of his hand from the previously relevant document on the reception desk, F1 moves her hand to her pocket (Frame ①-③) and initiates her turn latched with Tar's conclusion of the prior topic (Hazel & Mortensen, 2014). Her turn introduces the topic by expressing an action that she wishes to do (thanking). She reaches her pocket in frame ④, at the same time that Tar's hand has been completely retracted from the desk area, thus also nonverbally concluding the prior topic, while maintaining gaze alignment with Tar at whom her speech is directed and who needs to display acceptance of her topic induction. She then produces the object that is relevant to her turn, attempting to keep mutual gaze with Tar (Frame ⑤-⑧). After the initial expression of want in her turn, she launches into an account of the action the thanks is to be directed at. The mutual gaze is attempted to be maintained because F1 directs the thanks to the receptionist. In frame ⑧, however, her gaze shifts to the object in her hand which completely arrives at the object in frame ⑨ in which she manipulates the object to prepare for interaction with the addressee, that is to ensure it is presented to the other party in the correct orientation. A micro-pause in her current account together with the stretching of various syllables accompanies the production of the object, ensuring that vocal and non-vocal remain in accountable and relevant synchronisation. The action is continued in frame ⑩ where the object is extended toward the recipient. In the last two frames (⑪-⑫), the presentation of the object has been completed (F1 has turned is turning the card around to make it face Tar) as an initial stage to bring the object as accountable into the conversation. F1's gaze, however still remains on the card, ensuring that the object is displayed cohesively with her speech and can be perceived as accountable item and evidence in the interaction (Brassac et al., 2008). Verbally, F1 has now established the receptionist as the acting party in her account and herself as the recipient of the action.

| ① | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
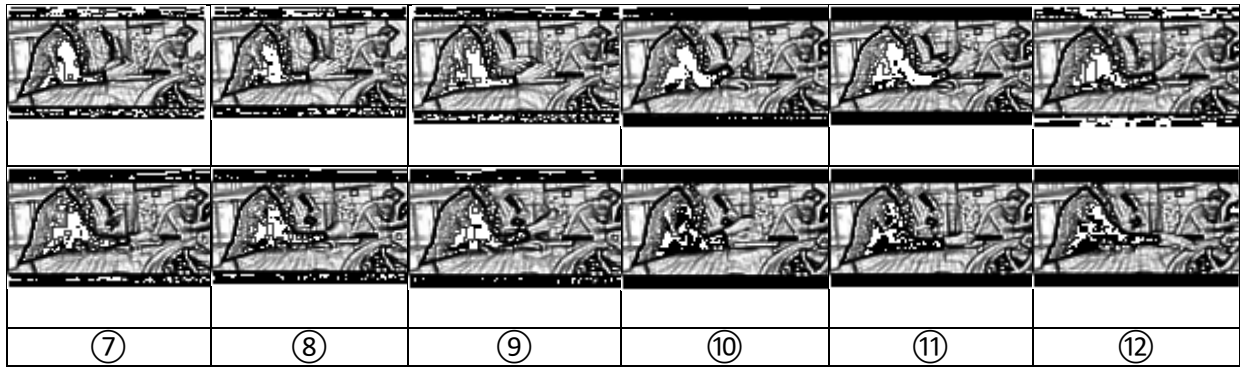
*Frame 59: Gesturing with an artefact; coordination vocal and non-vocal*

F1 has completed her preparatory moves and has achieved mutual gaze with Tar again (Frame ①). She also has finished positioning the object to align with Tar's gaze. Thus, the object as well as the gaze has now been prepared to act as accountable items for the continuation of the speech. While the retrieval of the object was marked with aspects of hesitation to synchronise to the speech, the remainder of the account is produced fluently. The card is held still for inspection past frame ③, until the verbal account has been concluded (Brassac et al., 2008). After a micro-pause, F1 now produces the action that she promised at the beginning of her turn (thanking). From frame ④-⑧, she waves the object up and downwards patterned with her speech. The movement changes from frame ⑨ to frame ⑩, where F1 quickly bounces the card on the desk in a form of pre-offering the card to Tar, initiating the completion of her turn and her own engagement with the card (Kapitan, 2006).

In overlap with F1, Tar produces a response to the account at the first point of possible completion (compare also Analysis chapter 1 on canonical efficient and effective responses) (Schegloff, 2007). Tar's turn begins with a change of state token, confirming the change of topic (Golato, 2012). He does not, however respond with an extension to the thank you sequence initiated by F1 (see prior extract on recycling sequences). Instead, he congratulates her, thus, responding to an event (birthday), not the action of the hotel (sending a bottle of sparkling wine), thus treating the event as more important interactionally than the object presented outside the context of the conversation. This aspect of "anticipating" wants and needs of a customer has been addressed frequently in the relevant literature (Gutek et al., 1999; Hubbert et al., 1995; Siehl, Bowen, & Pearson, 1992). Since Tar's response does not fully comply with the preferred answer that should have been provided in this area, some form of repair by either participant might be expected. However, this is not the case. The topic at hand has been successfully established, and F1's continuation of her accountable actions treats Tar's utterance as sufficiently relevant to continue with the interaction (Deppermann, 2012; Golato & Fagyal, 2008; Kasper, 2004). F1 denotes with her acceptance that a level and rapport has been established that makes cooperation likely to be the interactional goal of participants. Up to this point, F1 has identified a bottle of

sparkling wine as object of her talk; Tar has referred to a birthday as the object of the conversation. Now, F1 introduces the object she is holding for the first time as the physical artefact that has to be negotiated in this conversation (Blome-Tillmann, 2008; Kapitan, 2006; Nunberg, 1993). In her utterance, F1 introduces the relevance of the card to her previous account, thus establishing its relevance to the situation. In her turn, she produces two reasons for why the card is relevant to the conversation. The turn begins with a claim and then provides a reason that is false and treated as irrelevant by Tar, who does not provide a response at the appropriate time point. This indicates the dilemma for front line staff negotiating perceptions of tangible and intangible aspects of service in an encounter (Chang & Tarn, 2008). In frame ⑫, F1's hand concealing the card has moved to the Tar's edge of the reception desk, completing her preparatory move to transfer the object to Tar as an accountable party. To some extent, the prior move has been recycled since the card has been offered twice to the designed recipient. The execution of the re-offering is slightly different in the last frame, because the bouncing in the earlier frame nearly caused the card to slip out of F1 Thus, in frame ⑫ does not only complete the preparation for the offering, but it is also a recovery move to prevent the card from sliding off the reception desk.
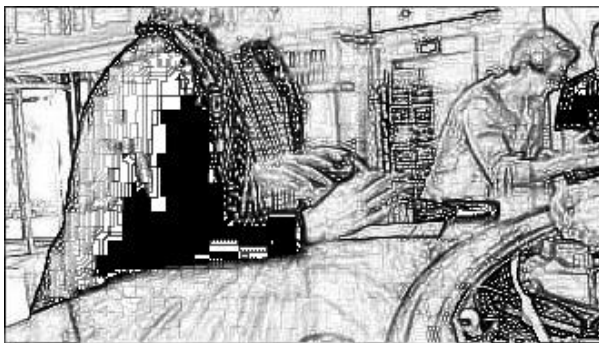


*Frame 60: Gaze orientation, object as accountable*

| ① | ② | ③ | ④ | ⑤ | ⑥ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | |
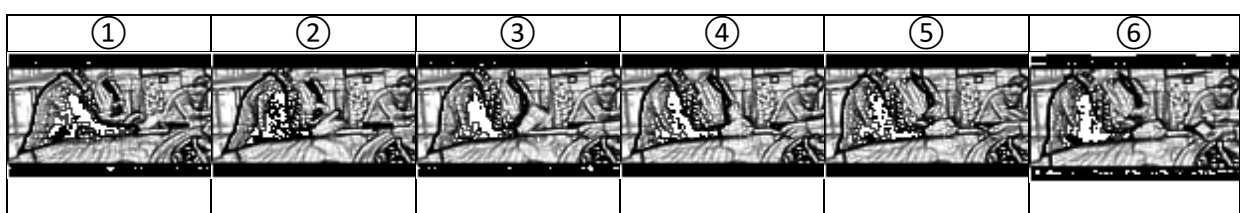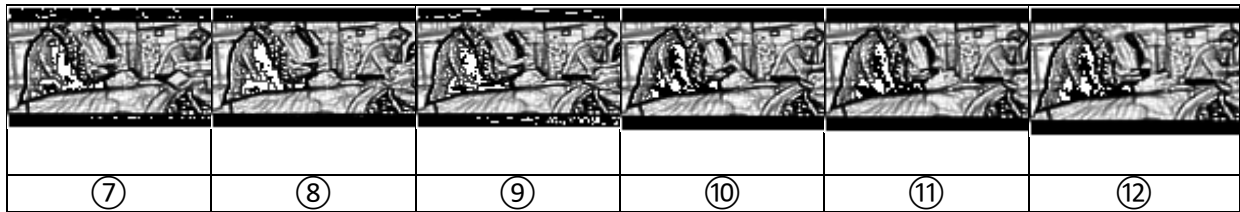
*Frame 61: Transferring the object to a party identified as accountable*

After the first part of her explanation has been unsuccessful, F1, after a micro pause, restarts her explanation attempt in which she verbally redirects her prior account as well as the recipient of the card away from the receptionist to an unknown party outside the conversation. Thus, even though Tar is to be the recipient of the card, F1 recognises him to not have been the acting party in her initial account.

Before she surrenders the object, she lifts it up one more time (Frame ①) before depositing it on the reception desk (recuperation from sliding card in previous sequence of stills), at the edge closest to Tar, and moving her own hands swiftly back to her area of the reception desk (Frame ②). Tar's hand begins to extend towards the object and he grasps it in frame ③-④ acknowledging the altered explanation provided by F1 as relevant for this action, and subsequently moves it to himself, showing receipt of the object by displaying it to F1 (⑤-⑦). In his display to F1, he identifies the management of the hotel as the responsible party to F1's provided account in her first turn. Lines 24-29 thus act as an insertion in which the participants negotiate the relevant acting parties in the situation (Schegloff, 2007). After this has been established, F1 produces another thank you which is now acknowledged and responded to by Tar. Tar retains the object visible for the duration of the topic associated with the relevant object (Brassac et al., 2008). The object is thus not processed in the interaction, but displayed as an item that will be dealt with later and presumably by another party to forward it to the negotiated recipient (hotel management).

The object of the topic in this example provides evidence for how guests may be unable to differentiate between actions of linguistic politeness that are constructed by participants in an interactions (leading to service relationships as they have been described in the literature) and managerial decisions that are deployed automatically and as such do not form part of a linguistic encounter (further evidence in Hernández-López & Blitvich, 2014). In this situation, the guest still feels the need to find a recipient to direct her thanks to. Thus, the guest displays that an accountable relationship can been built between the guest and the organisation, and does not necessarily need to be directed towards a particular employee. The negotiation in talk and the inserted sequence to identify the party (if it exists at all) shows that the receptionist, the initial "target" of the thanking displays resistance to accept this action as long as it is directed at him,

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and only accepts it when the action of thanking has been redirected to the hotel management and the receptionist has established that he is only responding *on behalf* of the organisation. This is an important observation that does not match with any of the reviewed assumption in the literature (e.g. Bendapudi & Berry, 1997; Bove & Johnson, 2001, 2006, 2009; Bunzel & Parker, 2009; Lee et al., 2006; Parish & Holloway, 2010; Ventola, 2005). This example demonstrates the necessity of knowledge across disciplines in describing interactional encounters in a specific setting. Service literature like the examples cited above have been preoccupied in discussing whether relationships between service provider and customer should be encouraged, managed, or discouraged; their effect on customer loyalty; and the resulting implications for service quality and staff training. This approach can be demonstrated with examples like the one at hand to have neglected any kind of sociolinguistic observations between participants in any kind of service encounter. However, ignorance towards the contextual reality of an encounter also seems to lead to perpetuation of questionable results. Hernández-López and Blitvich (2014) provide a recent example of this. In their questionnaire and subsequent analysis, there exists no difference between interactionally invoked politeness and actions of an organisation that may lead to inappropriate understandings and renditions of politeness and rapport in a service encounter.

In line with other interactional engagement behaviour in the earlier chapters, guests and receptionists continue to display cooperation. In this situation, F1 asks for information, but at the same produces an answer, showing insider knowledge of the organisation. This anticipatory completion is used as a resource to minimise the imposition of information on a topic that is not of transactional nature (Lerner, 2006). Still, it takes the form of a marked other-retrieval. Organisational, it is portrayed similar to a repeat request (Jefferson, 2006b). In the situation, F1 uses this resource as an opportunity to create a second assessment situation (Pomerantz, 2006a). Assessments are organised interactively in the conversation and occur concurrent with other parts of the interaction (Charles Goodwin & Goodwin, 2006). Doing assessments is a structured activity that allows participants to make visible congruent understanding in an interaction. In the same instance, it allows F1 to present their own knowledge or information as an account situated as news (Maynard, 2006). Participants orient to knowables in a conversation. F1 has in-depth knowledge of the internal workings of the organisation, information that is not generically accessible to hotel guests. Here, assessments do the interactional work (Pomerantz, 2006c). Knowables are constructed as evidence in an interaction (Pomerantz, 2006b):

*Extract 37: Minimising impositions*

*234 (F1/M1: native German speakers, Tar Arabic speaker)*

```
                     ▽
45   F1:    Wegen uns müssen Sie (.) kein Frühs[tück vorbereiten.
            Because of us you HON don't have to (.) prepare break[fast
                                                  ▽
46   Tar:                                      [HHH HEHE NEIN. Gib's noch
47          mehrere.
                                              [HHH HEHE No. There are
            others.
48   M1:    ()
                              ▽
49   F1:    Jojo, ich glaub vie[r, ne?
            Yes, I think    fou[r, TAG?
50   M1:                       [(∘die morgen nach Hause [wollen∘)
                               [(∘who tomorrow [want to go home∘)
51   Tar:                                              [Ja.
                                                       [Yes.
52   F1:    Ja
            Yes
53   M1:    [Okay.]
```
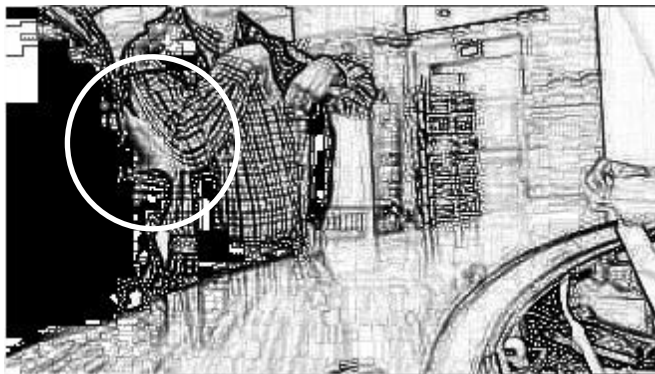


*Frame 62: Emphasising "us"*

In this example, Tar has established the time the guests will be collected from the hotel to journey to the airport. The time positions the departure at half past three in the morning, thus prior to the hotel's breakfast hours. Tar then informs the guests that the breakfast room is already open and cold breakfast is provided, should they wish to have some. This is a very routine occurrence, not just in this hotel, but can be generalised to hotels that are frequently confronted with guests departing prior to breakfast hours. As a result, hotels may choose to provide their guests with the option to have a reduced breakfast outside the normal operating hours of the service (similar claims can be made for lunch boxes). Whether or not a hotel chooses to offer this option is related to their customer demands, but also a matter of cost and effect[31]. Much like in the example before, the guest' departing time triggers a particular response from the receptionist

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[31] Hotel A is very small (unlike Hotel D where this extract is from) and as a result it is not profitable to pay chefs for work outside the designated schedule. Guests are thus informed on arrival that there will be no hot food available after the kitchen has closed, and any other arrangements have to be made well in advance with the kitchen. However, even the small hotel recognises potential need of their customer and mechanisms are in place to cater for them. In this case, guests who are arriving late are offered to select from a sandwich menu – although they are not told that it will be the receptionist preparing the food in absence of the kitchen crew.

which is not related to a personal favour to the guest, but rather an account for a procedure in the hotel. In the talk, Tar aligns to the early departing time of the guests, resulting to small talk in the account. The guests, however, treat the event like it is to be understood as a special favour, a personal attempt at building rapport with them which needs to be responded to in kind.

The fragment begins with F1's reopening of the topic. In a prior turn, M1 had already proposed a closing for the topic and a pre-closing for the interaction (see Figure above, M1 preparing for leave taking). F1's turn is structured as if she had personally initiated a request for an early breakfast which needs to be minimised to avoid potential face threat to the listener. In her turn, she identifies herself part of a specific membership categorisation (guests who are causing trouble with requests out of bound the services paid for and rendered by the hotel) and disaffiliates her personal dyad from that category (Kerekes, 2007). From a grammatical point of view, she and her husband ("us") represent the indirect object of the sentence. – In terms of grammar, the least relevant component for comprehension of the sentence. Customary to the rather flexible word order in German, her account starts with the most interactionally relevant component, rather than a structure that observes overall comprehensibility as most efficient resource in constructing an account. Subsequently, the subject of the sentence, Tar, is introduced, concluding with the action (or direct object) of what he does not have to do. Concerns for face can also be observed in the micro pause after F1 has introduced "us" and "you" into the utterances. With this order, F1 not only disaffiliates herself from other members of her group, but also aligns herself with a potential desire or want from the service employee[32] (Goodwin, 1996).
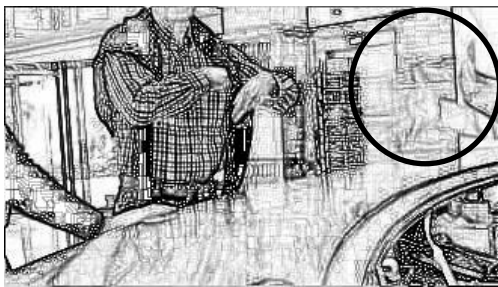


*Frame 63: Minimising imposition*

Tar's response begins in overlap with F1's prior turn. From the data collection, it can be said that this situation is a very common occurrence that receptionists deal with on a daily basis. However, even though the account provided by F1 may have been easily anticipated by the receptionist, Tar still allows F1 to produce the majority of her turn and overlaps with her speech at an appropriate time, at which the intention of F1's sentence is clear. Interactional behaviour

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[32] After Tar has introduced the notion of an early breakfast being available earlier, F1 also expressed her pity for the kitchen crew explicitly.

like this demonstrates how a receptionist can render "personalised service" that has been discussed in the literature (Moscardo, 2006; Ogbonna, 2011). Unlike the literature, however, it appears that notions for raising service quality can be much simpler than attempting to exceed customer expectations through elaborated schemes. It may be as simple as listening to a guest at the appropriate time[33]. Affiliation and subsequent rapport building can thus be seen as maintaining the focus of topic presentation on the guest in a departure sequence (Lindström & Sorjonen, 2013). The overlap with F1's prior turn is constructed as an audible breath as well as laughter tokens. The vocalisation of the turn begins with a "no" prefaced utterance, in this case a token of affiliation with F1's turn. On the utterance of "no", Tar also underlines the louder utterance with a gesture, disaffiliating from any imposition on the hotel. The turn finishes with an account in which other guests are held responsible for the action.
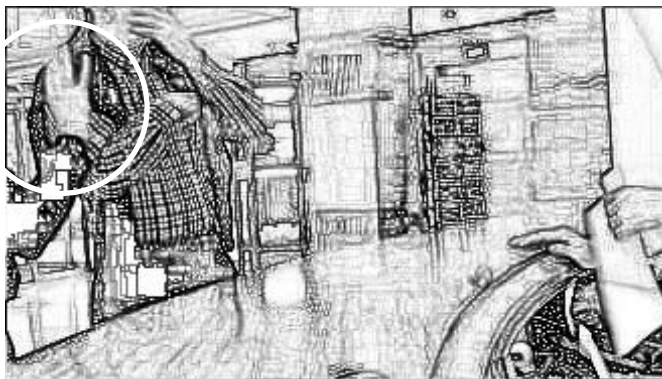


*Frame 64: Emphasising "four"; shift in body orientation to initiate leaving*

Subsequently, F1 displays her insider knowledge of the hotel (cf. first extract in this chapter) and what happens with fellow guests. With her utterance, she lays claim to insider knowledge that mark her as being an observant part of the organisation – knowledge that would be expected to only be accessible in such concrete form to an employee (Johnston, 1989; Siehl et al., 1992). She offers her knowledge as an uncertainty account (Pomerantz, 2006b). Here, F1 treats the previous utterance as a presentation of new information that needs to be addressed interactionally. She proposes four other departing guests, the number visualised by her fingers as she utters the word. F1 addresses an asymmetry in knowledge and draws on the institutional nature to gain information and align her talk to the knowledge of Tar (Baraldi, 2013). This kind of behaviour demonstrates the epistemic access that participants have (or believe to have) to the organisation (Lindström & Sorjonen, 2013). In this situation, F1 makes a specific claim on knowledge in her talk, and substantiates it through the construction of her turn (Heritage & Stivers, 2013) and nonverbal actions. At the same time, she begins to move away from the

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[33] Data from the corpus with less experienced receptionists suggests, however, that this behaviour is learnt over time and cannot be expected in junior employees.

reception, initialising the leave taking from the interaction. At the end of her turn, M1 also produces an utterance that could function as a completion to either Tar's or F1's prior turn, thus effectively expanding on the insider knowledge theme. Tar confirms the information without further expansion (Pomerantz, 2006c). Consequently, F1 and M1 both utter tokens confirming the receipt of the information and closing the topic. This action also acts as a further pre-closing, initiating the leave taking of the guests. Navigating complex patterns of knowledge in leave taking that are contingent on closing a conversation are established collaboratively at appropriate moments in the interaction (Bardovi-Harlig, Hartford, Mahan-Taylor, Morgan, & Reynolds, 1991).

## 7.5    Conclusion

Blue and Harun (2003) have put forth the theory that interactions between guests and receptionists will lead to a form of pseudo-friendship over the course of a guest's stay in a hotel. At a surface level, this may well be the case. However, although the conversations may bear a certain resemblance to what could be construed as friendship; the rapport building mechanisms observable in the interactions appear to be more complex upon closer examination. Relational work is accomplished through sociolinguistic actions in the interactions. Conversational practices are directly related to the phase they take place in which the service encounter occurs. All interactional engagement, including courteous behaviour, such as politeness and rapport building behaviours are subject to constant production, coproduction, evaluation and re-evaluation by the interacting parties. Research, however, has treated service encounters and service relationships as entirely different entities, usually with little to no regard to the other (Gutek et al., 1999). Pragmatic research on service encounters seems to be relatively unconcerned with potentials for relationships between customer and service provider (Félix-Brasdefer, 2015), with few exceptions (e.g. Placencia, 2004). Gutek, et al. (1999) claim that interactants in a service relationship are solely cooperative because it is unknown to the participants when the last interaction between them will occur. While some of this behaviour may have been observed in the analysis of stay sequences, this does not explain why participants remain interactionally available for future interactions if a departure represents a possible last interaction – a last interaction that is known by the participants to be the last.

In this chapter, the examples discussed as representative occurrences of behavioural patterns in the corpus demonstrate that participants are highly cooperative in departure sequences. In this corpus, no confrontations or conflict was observed in a check-out procedure (Tafoya, 1983). Instead, it was observed, that issues that are treated as complainable cannot occur as a last interaction, but are addressed by guests during their stay. Any issues raised, e.g. as invitation to

comment by the receptionist, are not treated as conflict material in the departing conversation. Emotive displays of shared laughter were shown to be perceived both as genuine, but also as vehicles for social activities and call to action (Ruusuvuori, 2013). A preference for self-repair was maintained in the interactions pertaining to departures (Kitzinger, 2013), but occurrences were infrequent, instead parties collaboratively retrieve shared knowledge and expected behavioural events. Guests and receptionists in this analysis were demonstrated to respond to different situational cues that mark Departure sequences and display cooperation in their interactions according to behaviour described in acquainted parties and thus demonstrating established rapport in their conversations (Duck, 1977). Service behaviour in this chapter was seen to be distinctively related to tangible aspects, both in the orientation to activities completed in the interaction (manipulation of various objects), but also to the tangible sphere of the service rendered (e.g. payment for accommodation, food; thanking for a bottle of wine). It was demonstrated that guests orient to tangible aspects of the service and resolve the negotiation within their interaction. Guests were shown to be somewhat unable to truly differentiate between tangible aspects of an encounter that were made based on managerial decisions and the appropriate polite rendering in their conversations (Chang & Tarn, 2008), suggesting that problems may exist in CA's treatment of all service encounters as of a singular variety (Félix-Brasdefer, 2015). Evidence was provided for the notion that interactions and knowledge of participants at the hotel front desk evolve from an interaction between strangers to co-members of the institution invoking particular social practices dependent on the unique social context (Arminen, 2000; Kerekes, 2007; Peräkylä & Vehviläinen, 2003). Interactants in recurring interactions seem likely to establish relationships based on communality that is observable in their conversations (Goodwin, 1996).

# Chapter 8:     Discussion

*An encounter provides a world for its participants but the character and stability of this world is intimately related to its selective relationship to the wider one. The naturalistic study of encounters then, is more closely tied to studies of social structure on one hand, and more separate from them, than one might at first imagine. (Goffman, 1997d, p. 138)*

## 8.1   Aim of the chapter

This chapter aims to demonstrate how the preceding analytic chapters address the overall goal of the present study, including how the research questions have been answered through engaging with the context and the literature developed in previous chapters. It is demonstrated how the methods employed are appropriate to answer the research questions. The chapter develops how interactional engagement, including courteous behaviour, have been addressed throughout the study and how the concepts have been developed in the analytic chapters. It is argued, that encounters in hotel receptions address a considerable amount of concerns present in the literature and provide thus a unique point of insights for behavioural practices. The analytic chapters described underlying features of 'arrival', 'stay' and 'departure' based on conversation analytic findings. These chapters thus were structured according to patterns and characteristics of behaviour observable in the corpus. In this chapter, the premises are summarised, revisited and extended through ethnographic material and relevant literature.

The aim of this chapter is to demonstrate how interactional studies can provide novel insights to existing concepts in the literature which can be enriched through the use of ethnographic observations. Interactional ordering is addressed within a context and as such extends across individual conversational occurrences or interactions. Interactional engagement is treated as an overarching rationale for the organisation of the analysis and is demonstrated throughout the chapter in relation to the orientation to the epistemic stance between the interacting participants. The chapter discusses the specifics of communicative behaviour at the hotel reception that establish the institutional character of the interaction to accomplish a service encounter.

## Findings

## 8.2   Analysis 1: Arrival

The analysis found a number of features within the organisations of front desk conversations which made them identifiable as part of a larger conversational project (Robinson,

2006). Observational evidence and the interactional findings of the corpus suggest that the joint activity of "checking-in" is a mandatory interaction between receptionist and the arriving guest. The data suggests that this is the case for both guests staying at the hotel for the first time and returning guests. Observational evidence also suggests that guests arriving at the hotel orient themselves to the reception desk before moving into other parts of the hotel. The reception desk is thus treated as an access gateway into the hotel in which an interaction with the employees is of a required notion. The corpus also contains evidence of the reception desk as an initial interactional pivot point (Goffman, 1974) between the hotel and an arriving party. In one example, a family arrived at the hotel was unable to locate the hotel which they had booked and utilised Hotel D's reception to ask for directions. Even in situations where arrival situations are not plausible, the reception desk acts as a gatekeeping mechanism. The first part of the analytic chapter concerned with arrival sequences presented examples on the overall ordering of check-in activities.

### 8.2.1 Interactional features of arrival sequences

The analysis of encounters at the beginning of a guest's engagement with a hotel suggested some distinctive features of arrival sequences. The findings indicate that interactants orient towards a common goal within the interaction, thus, making "checking-in" the accountable premise for the encounter. The corpora indicate that checking-in is achieved, regardless of interpersonal differences in communicative styles. The examples in analysis chapter I demonstrated that there is a spectrum of rapport and engagement in regards to how much, or how little participants engage with each other. It establishes how interactions are treated as at a later date to form "encounters" and "relations" (Gutek et al., 1999). Thus, arriving at a hotel and entering into a check-in is subject to an interactional demonstration that the associated activities are admissible, much like the notion of establishing "doctorability" in doctor-patient interaction (Heritage & Robinson, 2006; Nielsen, 2015). Initiating an interaction in which a check-in can be accomplished is based on prior activities that both parties have undertaken before they engage in the interaction.

This spectrum is an important indicator for guests and carries forward to future interactions with the staff. Canonical interactions have been shown to feature the guest's orientation to what the receptionist designates as appropriate amount of engagement. In cases deviating from the desired format, guests and receptionist demonstrate a high level of reflexivity in adjusting to a communicative behaviour in line with effectiveness and efficiency requirements set forth implicitly.

Conversational engagement differs and is explicated in communicative actions participants take. Communicating parties hold each other accountable for their orientation to the

overarching goal and the analysis has shown that turn-taking mechanisms are employed to redirect digressing parties to the routinised, or normalised, level of engagement. The initial encounter at the hotel front desk thus acts not only as an encounter directed at "checking-in" the guest in terms of institutional requirements, but also serves as a communicative initialisation to the hotel.

Arrival sequences, the initiation into the organisation, are guided by the expert on the institution, the receptionist. The interactional data suggests that check-in sequences follow comparable patterns across the different hotels in the corpus. Further, these are consistent not only across various establishments in different countries, but also across conversational dyads. Extract 1 (p. 102) and Extract 2 (p. 102) showed how receptionist and guest establish the premise that the check-in can occur. Confirmation of an arrangement between the customer and the hotel as the facilitating organisation are established. In the interactional order, these examples show that it is an activity which needs to be completed. The information provided on either side of the dyad is checked for consistency with information outside the interaction. Ethnographic observation found that the hotel and thus the receptionist have information about their guests and their bookings prior to their arrivals. The interactional findings suggest that a first task often revolves around an official artefact, commonly a form to be filled in by the guest. Observations suggest that the forms are frequently pre-filled in by information provided by the guest upon booking, or contain information from the hotel's database, if a guest is a regular. This observation becomes actualised in the interactions and takes the form of artefacts that are managed throughout the check-in process. Extract 3 (p. 102), Extract 4 (p. 103), and Extract 5 (p. 103) demonstrated how the documents are made relevant in the conversation and how they pertain to background information.

Participants' actions create a sense of formality for the interaction in which a non-adherence to these standards creates a reproach to normality. Laughter is absent in the corpus from interactions between unacquainted parties during check-ins, producing a notion of sincerity in achieving the interactional goal. Canonical interactions unfold turn-by-turn and invite guests into the hotel. Thus, topics and topic progression is pre-ordered to a greater extent than in ordinary conversation (Sacks et al., 1974). Both parties, guest and receptionist, are assigned specific roles for the duration of the encounter: the receptionist leads through the necessary steps to accomplish the check-in and the guest listens and responds. Both parts are important for the interaction and interactants can be seen to hold each other accountable for their actions. Information is provided and received without significant pauses, and guests often produce a token of acknowledgement in overlap with the receptionist's speech (Barske, 2009; Rod Gardner,

2001); failure to produce such a token is considered an interactional breach as it is perceived as withholding of a relevant next action (Betz & Golato, 2008). A verbal rendition of embodied interaction is further used to address asymmetries in knowledge during the conversations (Guttman, 1993). Receptionists produce what might be called a "narrative of action" in which they give a verbal account of what they are doing, or not doing. This is also observable if one party needs to leave the reception desk to retrieve immediately relevant information or artefacts. Both parties will provide a verbal confirmation to continue the interaction despite the recess.

The first encounter between a guest and the hotel has an importance for the organisation and provides an opportunity to provide the newly arrived person with the desired first impression. Extract 9 (p. 107), Extract 10 (p. 108), and Extract 11 (p. 110) provided an overview of a canonical interaction in which a number of recurrent features were identified. The example showed how preferred responses are positioned and treated there (Schegloff, 2007). The example also demonstrated that participants display a preference for simple adjacency pairs. The receptionist takes the leading role and the guest produces acknowledgment tokens within the normal transitioning space after each turn (Schegloff, 2007). The responding actions were seen to exist both verbally and non-verbally, rendering deictic behaviour and physical space a relevant dimension of an interaction that is made conditionally relevant throughout the course of a conversation. A difference in knowledge about the hotel in which the check-in is taking place provides the basis for rapport in these interactions. Prior experience a guest may have is made relevant in the acceptance of the receptionist as the leader for the duration of the exchange.

This is commonly reflected in relevant literature in terms of what is claimed to be "manageable" in these encounters (Atilgan et al., 2003; Ng et al., 2011; Nitin et al., 2005; O'Neill & Palmer, 2003; Wilkins, Merrilees, & Herington, 2007). The analysis of the present corpus of data has shown that the interactions are organised according to the needs of accomplishing the "check-in" as it is customary in a particular establishment. The receptionist/guest dyad acts in their conversation as a mediating party to establish routine and normality in the interaction. The literature expresses a concern for excellence in service quality (Bitner, 1995; Garavan, 1997; Hudson et al., 2006; Nadiri & Hussain, 2005; Ng et al., 2011), but the corpus found that there is an observable zone of tolerance for interpersonal engagement which prefers a neutral range of expressed personal interest over overzealous behaviours.

The first interaction provides the opportunity for participants to establish "normality" as basis for staying at the hotel, construing routine as achievement (Schegloff, 2006b). Normality here is found to work similar to how the concept was understood by Goffman (Misztal, 2001). Establishing norms is rendered easier because the interactions are goal directed, and the

achievement of it is present in all instances found in the corpus (Cohen, 1972; Jacobsen, 2003; Misztal, 2001). Arriving and the associated engagement is a mandatory activity and is therefore treated as such. This leads to an observable spectrum of rapport and engagement. The goal orientation is explicit and forms the basis of the interaction; interactions can be classed according to participants' orientation to it. Normality is oriented to and achieved by both parties and worked through by them. It acts as a protective mechanism which invokes trust as the basis of everyday interaction to maintain social order (Misztal, 2001).

The concern for efficiency becomes interactionally salient in how conducting a hotel check-in is accomplished. The receptionist may be seen as "guardian of situational order" through initiating the guest into the organisation during a guest's arrival and the associated service encounter (Goffman, 1963, p. 226). The participation in the encounter is not the sole responsibility of the employee, however. Guests have an active role that needs to be maintained. The amount of involvement that is expected from each participant is highly specific. Lack of engagement is noted, and so is over-involvement. Engagement and rapport building in effective and efficient interactions has to fall into the mutually desired scope of engagement, so as to allow participants to adjust their behaviour based on current requirements for the interactional goal attainment (Goffman, 1967).

The second part of the chapter characterised what was identified as the spectrum of rapport. The following three examples (Extract 12 (p. 114), Extract 13 (p. 117) and Extract 14 (p. 119)) showed recurrent features of interactions that are distinct to the canonical situation. It was demonstrated that the tasks pertaining to checking-in are accomplished even in what may be called deviant situations. When these situations occur, the examples have shown that the interactional order allows participants to reorient to the task at hand. The sequential order is maintained and allows for engagement to be oriented to on an appropriate level. The extract in example 6 occurs in an interactional space in which the guest should have oriented to a pointing gesture by the receptionist; instead, what is transcribed in Extract 14 (p. 119) takes place. Upon the resolve of this topical insert and past the extract, the receptionist repeats the directions to the guest's room, including the gesture and this time, the guest produces the relevant response by turning his gaze and body towards the indicated direction. Rapport and other interactional mechanisms were seen here as co-constructed by both parties with requirements that need to be met by both sides; to allow participants to stay on task. The guest's inserted sequence attempted to show epistemic knowledge about hotels and doing check-ins. The premise for canonical check-in situations under which the preferred positioning of response utterances works, however was seen to be based on the participants' orientation to an epistemic imbalance between the

interlocutors. The prior examples in this section (Extract 12 (p. 114), Extract 13 (p. 117)) showed how participants who display a lack of engagement are held interactionally responsible to complete the required tasks of the check-in. Here, the guest was seen to attempt to leave the reception desk prior to a satisfactory completion of the check-in process. The attempt to leave is another example of a guest's non-acceptance of epistemic imbalance between the parties. As a result, the receptionist denies producing an utterance that makes a closure of the interaction possible and instead continues the tasks to render the expansion of the conversation relevant which holds the guest accountable to continue the exchange.

The premise that interactive activities carries over to future interactions has been shown in examples of returning guests to the hotel. The examples showed how guests and receptionists use established rapport to emphasise concerns for politeness and rapport. The last part of the chapter described the sequential order and how checking-in is done in situations when the arrival is not the first encounter between the two parties. The examples (Extract 15 (p. 122), Extract 16 (p. 125)) suggested that the interactional order orients to the ceremonial order of the check-in process which is routinely invoked. In this part, it was shown that engagement is oriented to through a mutual respect for adhering to the routine procedure (Schegloff, 2006b). Despite being a frequent visitor to the hotel, the guest still completes the check-in tasks (Extract 15 (p. 122)). Thus, in this case, the usual epistemic imbalance is oriented to, even if it exists to a lesser degree. However, the receptionist is still constructed as the leader of the interaction who holds relevant information that the guest does not automatically possess, but are or can be subject to change. In this example and in observations, this may refer to the room a returning guest stays in (even if they have indicated a preference), the restaurant opening times, room cleaning or other policy changes which may have occurred since the last time a guest has visited the hotel. The epistemic imbalance is oriented to here as a form of courtesy and orientation to the notion of face for both parties (Goffman, 1967, 1997e).

The second example in this part (Extract 16 (p. 125)) showed that repair attempts are made if a party does not follow these established conventions. Here, the returning guest does not adhere to the convention of routine epistemic imbalance during arrival at a hotel. This has also been seen in the ethnographic data were returning guests appearing to intent to establish continuity from their previous visit to the current one. This may relate to expectations concerning particular services at the hotel and also to employees. However, the literature notes that tourism and hospitality workers are highly mobile, and may not work at an organisation for a long time (Duncan et al., 2013). A guest's orientation to a lack in knowledge about the hotel as it is at the present time is seen as important to allow for interactions to proceed according to preferred

answers. It was observed that returning guests may ask after particular employees, frequently in the form of polar questions, such as "Is x working today?". In these cases, the receptionist cannot produce a type conforming answer, but has to construct the information as a news item (Maynard, 1991). This produces a dissonance between the guest's claim to knowledge about what is now a previous employee and the receptionist's factual knowledge and epistemic access to the hotel as a continuing organisation. Guests and receptionists orient to shared knowledge about the organisation and may employ a personal "short-hand" when conducting the check-in, orienting to the premise that shared knowledge is not repeated in an interaction (Goodwin, 1979). If a receptionist is in doubt about a returning guest's knowledge, the assumption that they do know is made explicitly.

It is observable that the initiation into the hotel is reflected in speech. Extract 17 (p. 128) provided further evidence for the ceremonial order of check-in interactions. In this example, the guests attempted to address a topic prior to when the task is set to be accomplished interactionally. This demonstrated further epistemic imbalance between the guest and the hotel and showed an additional behavioural characteristic upon arrival which has been further been evident in observations. The guest and the hotel in this instance display differing areas of concern. The guest displays worry about receiving a potential fine for lack of parking in front of the hotel through which they are forced to park on the historic market square. Due to its location, hotel guests are allowed to park in front of the hotel for a few minutes which makes the matter of receiving a fine void for the hotel. In observations, it was seen that direction giving to the hotel's parking is rather complex and is thus postponed to a dedicated interaction as was shown in Extract 17 (p. 128). Matters of parking have been observed to often produce similar dedicated conversations across the hotels in the corpus.

The structural order in which check-ins occur follows a best-practice model which was best demonstrated in the canonical interaction. How elements and associated tasks are placed within the process was seen to serve the overall purpose of accomplishing the arrival as a sequence. Routine postponing of certain topics have demonstrated how conversations at the hotel front desk are treated as part of a series. This notion is further developed within the remaining analytical chapters which show the contingency between components of the arrival sequence and the effects on stay and departure sequences. Engagement is seen as an initiating form of engagement during arrival sequences which produces a continuity that is seen as salient in the latter interactions. Receptionists welcome their guests to the hotel and into the organisation. Speech references position the guest as being "here". Interactions are grounded in time and space.

Conversations foreground the location through these initiating practices. Both parties forecast the *future* presence of the guest at the hotel.

The analytical features of arrival sequences can be summarised in the following graphical representation:
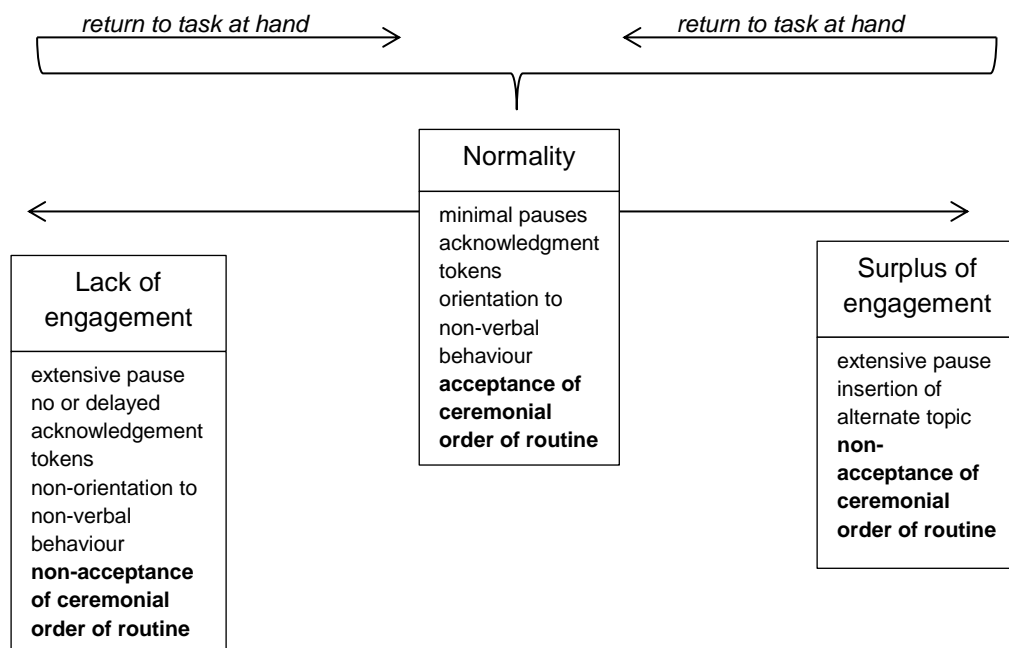


*Figure 7: Spectrum of engagement*

The interactions during arrival sequences were seen in the corpus to occur on a spectrum of engagement. Canonical interactions were seen to be oriented to routine and normality. Situations in which a lack or a surplus of engagement becomes salient in a sequence, the interactional structure provides receptionists with resources to bring the conversation back to the task to be accomplished in order for the check-in to be accomplished.

### 8.2.2   Arrival in context of the literature

The context for the interactions in analytic chapter 1 is the arrival at the hotel. Unlike many other service encounters described in relevant literature, arriving at a hotel is an extensively planned activity. The data in this study has shown that guest and the service provider have made arrangements for the interaction to occur on a specific day and within a specific timeframe. Both sides have conducted activities outside of the interaction to allow for the encounter to be feasible: in order for the interaction to occur, a guest travels to the location of the service provider. Commonly, the destination where the hotel is located is far away from the guest's home (Walmsley & Jenkins, 2000). Staying at a hotel is frequently planned well in advance; thus, the

knowledge of the exact time when the arrival will occur is another salient aspect of the interaction and a circumstance that hotel user and service provider hold each other accountable for. This may occur within an interaction, but is also often built into the larger context of expected and anticipated behaviour in the travel industry and constitutes manageable aspects of the organisation: hotels frequently inform their guests explicitly from what time they will be able to use the booked room. Other factors, like arrival of chartered airplanes, or the weather, may also provide information for both parties when the interaction will occur on the day. Thus, in order for an arrival sequence to work as such, both parties must have done their part of the work to allow for this to happen. The booking details indicate preferences and expectations a guest has for their stay.

Consequently, arrival sequences use interactional features that are particular to them. The conversational routine which makes arrival sequences identifiable as such to participants is co-constructed by the interlocutors (Bladas, 2012). Arriving in a hotel is the initial opportunity for an organisation to interact with their customer and are developed as such in the literature (Marriott Jr. & Brown, 1997). Consequently, various aspects of how hotels construct this instance are present in the literature (Bunzel & Parker, 2009; Carey & Gountas, 2000; Dann, 2011). In addition, this study has shown how communication between the two parties, visitor and host, is accomplished interactionally. It was found that epistemic, or knowing and not-knowing, asymmetries in the interaction are salient in these initial conversations. Participants orient to the (lack of) epistemological knowledge between the service provider and the receiving party (Belhassen & Caton, 2009; Hardin, 2006; Platenkamp & Botterill, 2013). Turn-taking is constructed to reflect the state of affairs (Drew, 2013; Levinson, 2015; Stivers et al., 2009; Tannen, 2012). Effective and efficient behaviour depends on interactants constructing the interactions accordingly. As a result, it is the receptionist who provides the majority of the information. The guest's responsibility within this interaction lies in receiving the information provided to them. The interaction creates a dyad between the two parties: in order to be efficient, the receptionist must be allowed in an arrival sequence to guide the interaction and make information *available* and *accessible* to the guest over a series of interactional turns. The business oriented literature has so far only provided theoretical aspects of the relationship between frontline employee and a customer (Ogbonna, 2011). The analysis in the present study has demonstrated that receptionists leads the conversation and the guest is the recipient and has little influence on how and when particular elements of information are presented to them. The receptionist then needs to demonstrate an awareness of how guests perceive their environment and how information is relevant to them (Bradley et al., 2013; Lee, 2015). The same is observable for when certain aspects of information are provided. *How* to present the information appears to

be a learned aspect of individual speech behaviour which can be pertinent to the receptionist as an individual; *when* information is provided is more strongly related to the organisational requirements. The order attempts to ensure that a guest processes information about the institution as it is given to them in order to store and retrieve the information at a later date. Service literature addresses this in the omnipresent concept of service quality (Wilkins et al., 2007). Most of the information addressed in these service encounters describes a reality that lies outside the immediate context of the conversation. Guests must be able to produce the received pieces of information at a later and appropriate time – finding their room, using a key card or arriving at the restaurant at a particular time, to name but a few instances.

## 8.3    Analysis 2: Stay

### 8.3.1    Interactional features of stay sequences

Interactions during stay sequences were shown to have particular characteristics. It was found that conversations are developed in a pattern of requests. An overarching goal ("check-in/out") is not present at the onset of the encounter and needs to be established collaboratively. The interactional work is subject to the realisation of a request done by both parties. Within the request, guests also demonstrate that the receptionist is the correct recipient for the query. What is requestable may be different in different hotels and a correctly placed request shows that guests have learned what constitutes correct behaviour in the hotel in which they have taken residence. This becomes apparent in the following example from the corpus and shows how the individual sequences in separate conversations work together:

*Extract 38: Observation Hotel A*

Guest:  Dinner, please
K:      Yeah, if you just go through to the bar, we'll bring you a menu.

In this example, the guest requests dinner at the reception instead of doing so in the restaurant. Information provided upon arrival carries over to the guest's stay and their behaviour. Here, guests are instructed to let the receptionist know when they want to eat dinner as the receptionists double as waiters when the restaurants are not busy. The thematic thread of accountability for the interaction is carried to the interaction and embedded in the resolve of the initial statement (Schegloff, 2007). As such, an account is absent from the guest's utterance as the request has been pre-resolved during a separate conversation and is treated here as an entitlement (Goffman, 1963; Schegloff, 2007). Ethnographic notes are used here to tie the separately occurring sequences into larger interactional projects (Robinson, 2006). These projects in some cases exceed a singular arrival, stay, departure sequence, and may become salient in future

interactions. Observational data and informal conversations with the guests suggest that there is a concern for maintaining a working relationship with the hotel and its gatekeepers. This was further apparent in the following example:

*Extract 39: Observation Hotel A*

Guest: I'm not bothered, but other guests might be.

In this observed example, a regular guest informs the reception of his bathroom which has not been cleaned properly. Notably, he does not request for this to be rectified, but rather shows concern for the hotel as a business and the impression other guests who are unfamiliar with the hotel may have. The guest constructs his utterance as a noticing (Schegloff, 2007) which introduces the topic as relevant and positions it within the relationship between the interlocutors.

The encounters have a number of distinct features. Encounters in stay sequences are optional and may treat diverse topics. They all have in common that they address matters important to the guest's stay in the hotel. The encounters were shown to follow a request pattern in which the guest treats the query as a negotiable matter which is subject to being granted by the hotel employee. Social structures during this phase are demonstrated to be subject to modification by the interacting parties (Lanzi, 2011). Conversations here provide an occasion to shape and readdress the relationship between hotel and guest (de Souza Briggs, 1998). It has been observed that these interactions are initiated by the guest which has an impact on how relations between the guest/receptionist dyad progress. The guest *seeks* assistance from the service provider (Frankel, 1984), providing interactional grounds for the diagram below.

Characteristics of how knowledge is represented in stay sequences is different to arrival sequences. Interactions here contain two experts on the topic or subject at hand: the guest is the expert in the problem/issue; the receptionist the expert in solutions. The interactional evidence in the first part of the chapter (Extract 19 (p. 139), Extract 20 (p. 140), Extract 21 (p. 140)) showed how presenting a request is accomplished during stay sequences. The use of accounts was seen to be used to ratify the making of a request. This notion was further developed in the second part of the chapter. The part provided details of how canonical request sequences are constructed during a guest's stay. This example (Extract 19 (p. 139)) provided evidence for a preferred action-type (Schegloff, 2007), a request, to occur during stay sequences. It was further noted that even minimal requests are accompanied by an account. Throughout the chapter, it was noted that mitigating the imposition of the requests was accomplished through an increased use of modal particles in the German data in accordance to what might constitute a face threat and thus a threat to the relationship between guest and receptionist. This has been seen to impact how appropriate

and polite behaviour is constructed and validated through rapport as an interactional achievement. Consequently, requests are presented and dealt with at the front desk on at least two planes. These demonstrate each party's level of expertise. A guest has experienced the issue and presents their side to the receptionist which is accomplished through provision of an account and/or story. It is notable that this is done even for small queries. The receptionist orient to the guest's expertise on the matter through listening and provision of affiliate tokens (Stivers, 2008). The account or story is not relevant for the solution of the query or problem in routine situations, but it is important for interactional cohesion within the dyad. Receptionists frequently repeat elements of a guest's account and/or repeat the item/service in request which shifts the level of expertise to them, so as to find an adequate and mutually beneficial resolution. Through this shift, receptionist can deploy the solution and, where necessary, recruit a third party to fulfil it. Levels of expertise are thus negotiated *within* request sequences. Requests at the hotel front desk occur at a specific time and place and for a particular purpose. The way in which they are established allows for an analytic connection between their micro-interactional production, and the surrounding larger social order (Pentland, 1993).

As described in analysis chapter II (see 6.2.1, p. 137), a receptionist can usually anticipate when a routine request will occur, based on when a guest approaches the front desk. Requests are usually non-urgent and are thus initiated when a guest is *en route* to or from other activities (e.g. prior to leaving the hotel for the day, on the way to dinner). When a guest produces first turns that precede the formulation of the request in forms of an account, the receptionist already receives information on the nature of the query, allowing for the request to be resolved at a very early stage of the interaction. After a guest has produced an account for the request, they formulate the item or service they require. A routine quest in the corpus is responded to and granted without hesitation or thinking time on behalf of the receptionist.

The following part of the chapter provided further evidence of how salient matters of relationship building are to the interlocutors during a stay sequence. The interactional extract (extract 2) showed how a stay sequence that is presented like a request, yet is unsolvable is treated by the interlocutors. Here, the receptionist was identified by the guest as the suitable recipient of their query. The interaction proceeded according to the canonical example presented in the earlier part of the chapter. However, no solvable request sequence was produced. It was seen that the receptionist made multiple attempts at establishing the request item, or what is serviceable in the interaction. The interacting parties developed the interaction to produce a resolvable outcome that acted as a substitute for the absent request utterance. The principal matter of this interaction was seen as an orientation to rapport continuation between the guest and the

organisation. The guest presented a concern to the receptionist (a misplaced key for a bike lock) as a pre- for what in a latter interaction may become obsolete (if the key is found in the room) or relevant for the return of the rented item (key lost and lock unusable as a result). At the time of the interaction, the implications for a latter interaction are still unclear. The interaction is oriented to negotiate epistemic access to knowledge about the hotel's property (as the guest says: "Just so you guys know"). Transferring and orienting to relevant information about aspects of the hotel become relevant during stay sequences and have been seen to be rather easily solvable within a routine request sequence. Constructing a pre- as an entirely separate interaction (or, one might say as a "reportable" matter) shows how guests and receptionists construct contingency about shared and not-yet-shared pieces of information. Knowing, much like the production and display of knowledge becomes a relationship building element of how rapport is continued and oriented to by participants.

The immediate nature of the response triggers the guest to produce a sequence of request appreciation in form of thank-yous. As the last step in time, the request is executed, either by the receptionist present in the interaction, or it is delegated to another employee of the hotel or even a third-party service. Requests at the front line are thus frequently subject to collaboration by multiple parties, even if not all of them are present at the time when the request is made and dissolved. Maintaining engagement across interactions was shown in the following section of the chapter. The example (extract 3) in the section showed how continuity is constructed in situations where a single conversation between a guest and a member of the reception team is not sufficient for the resolution of a guest's problem. The analysis of the sequence showed that a mitigating account for a request is replaced by a story in which the guest summarises steps to the solution for the problem for the receptionist. Thus, there is an observable shift in modality where knowledge about the problem is reconstructed for a receptionist who may or may not have been the person with whom the request was initiated with. Observational data suggests that guests will provide a short story to introduce their return to the request in progress, regardless of whether they are speaking with the same receptionist or not. The guest thus uses this utterance as a mechanism to ensure that knowledge is evenly distributed between them. The interactional data and the ethnographic material show that staying at a hotel is constructed as an interactional project with individual interactional episodes as part of an overarching project. The guests orient to the continuity with interactional "arches" which construct the relationship between hotel and customer and further the development of interactional engagement.

Requests appear to be the preferred method for engagement during a guest's stay in a hotel as observable in the corpus. Interactions are a means of social construction (Erickson,

1982). During stay sequences, participants produce cohesion across the topic at hand as well as beyond the present interaction. The last part of the chapter developed notions on situations which a guest identifies as non-routine queries which constitute potential threats to the relationship between guest and hotel. In this example (Extract 29, (p. 159)), the guest had commented before a recorded interaction that she would be making a complaint. However, the micro analysis of the interaction showed that the matter was resolved as a routine request by the interacting parties. The interlocutors orient to the issue as a reasonable requestable item which can be easily resolved by the receptionist and the hotel as an institution. By invoking a routine nature for the interaction, a complaint situation is effectively avoided and the orientation to maintaining rapport and a continuing relationship is maintained. Thus, even though the guest had identified the issue as complainable (Schegloff, 2007) prior to the interaction, the parties are able to avoid interactional and actual liabilities associated with a complaint situation within a company setting (Orthaber & Márquez-Reiter, 2011). The guest's comment prior to the recorded interactions suggests a concern and anticipation of a conversation which may have implications for the relationship status between guest and receptionist. The guest presumes the interactional topic (dead ants in the hotel room) as something out of the ordinary, thus something that cannot be regulated with a request. The receptionist, however, treats it as a routine occurrence in the interaction. The interactional outcome is thus not only a solution to the guest's problem, but also the negotiation of knowledge. In this case, the resolve of the interaction within a routine request establishes the knowledge for the guest that the request pertains to a permissible domain.

The analysis of stay sequences has shown how problems during a guest's stay at a hotel are preferably resolved in the form of requests which can be assigned a routine nature in order to maintain rapport between the two parties. Matters of relationship building were foregrounded in the interactions. Stay sequences demonstrate how conversational partners are able to enable and complete relevant actions through their level of engagement (Erickson, 1982; Levinson, 2003). Vacations are typically taken in anticipation of enjoyment. A vacation as well as travel for other purposes in connection with a stay at a hotel is associated with a state of temporary change from daily routine (Cohen & Taylor, 1992). Being away on vacation has been associated with better moods and less fluctuation than life at home (McCabe & Johnson, 2013; Nawijn, 2011). Interpersonal interactions at a hotel are thus grounded on the premise of "getting along" (Grove & Fisk, 1997). They invoke a co-production of belonging (Fox, 2006), a communal impression developed through shared practices and discourse (Caletrío, 2009); a notion which aligns with individual's preference for agreement with the second party in conversations (Sacks, 2006). Stay sequences occur at a stage where the guest has already some experience with the organisation and will continue to engage with it after the interaction. Demonstrating competent reasoning for a

request orients to a shared reality. Guests are thus seen to produce their accounts to establish appropriateness of their claims to a service (March & Olsen, 1998). Accounts frequently take the form of a story in which the overall reason of the request is detailed (Sacks, 1986; Stivers, 2008).

Request sequences provide an actionable mechanism for coordinated problem solving between two parties. The relevant sequences can extend over multiple encounters and supersede individual interactions as it can take more than one instance to organise a solution. Multiple points of contact between guest and receptionist may be necessary; interactions solve problems in the now and speech orients to issues that are relevant in the *present* moment.

The graphical representation below summarises how request sequences are constructed as shown in interactional and observable evidence as demonstrated throughout the second analytical chapter.
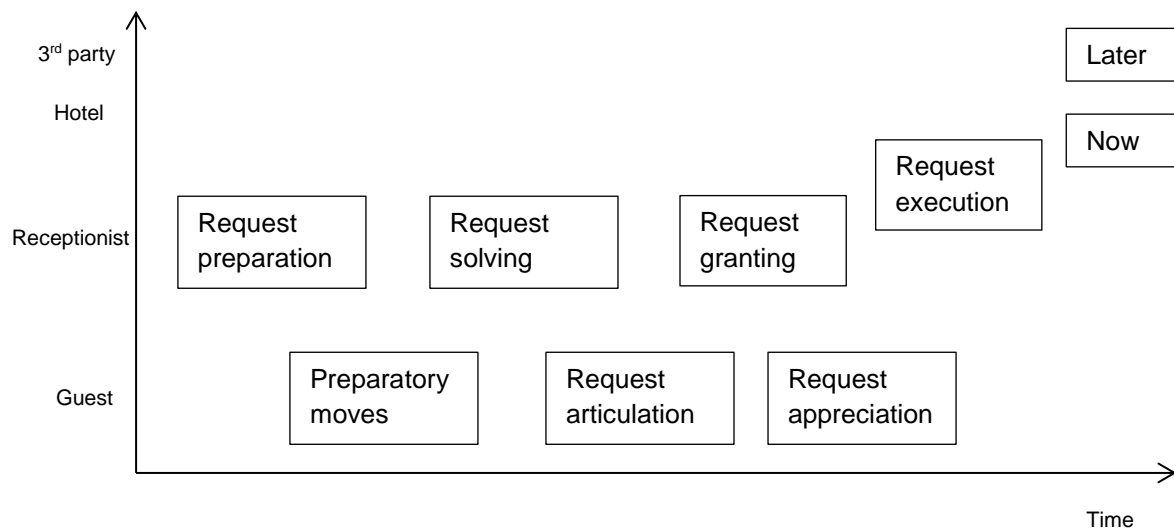


*Figure 8: Timeline and planes of requests*

Observational data suggested that requests occur at certain times which allows receptionists to anticipate when a guest will be making a request. While a guest is producing an account, story or other mitigating aspects, the receptionist receives information on the nature of the guest's request and can produce what has been seen in the interactions as an immediate granting of the request. Guests were seen in the interactions to produce thank-yous as a mark of appreciation. The receptionists can often execute the requested services or products directly after. In some instances, a third party in form of another hotel employee or an outside organisation completes the request resolution on behalf of the granting party, the receptionist.

### 8.3.2 Stay in context of the literature

Analysis chapter 2 described the conversations that occur while a guest resides at the hotel, rendering staying at the hotel as the relevant context made salient for the conversation. Staying in a hotel is not accomplished through the interaction with the receptionist, but achieved by the guest's engagement with the destination, amenities at the hotel and other service providers, both at the hotel and in other local establishments; guests learn about the organisation, their own role within it and what constitutes acceptable parameters of performance through various channels. The literature suggests that service and associated interactions are a learned symbolic realisation of society (Vann, 1999). Conversational behaviour present in associated interactions reflects learned as much as learnable aspects as a continuing development (Ishihara & Cohen, 2014; Reed & Szczepek Reed, 2014).

The analysis of the corpus found that concerns for engagement and rapport building activities remain oriented to for appropriateness (Meier, 1995). The interaction here has been described in the analysis as a voluntary activity the guest may choose to engage in. As such, guests have an opportunity to further engage with receptionists, but there is no formal requirement to do so which makes them potential or latent interactional partners (Traverso, 2008) who engage in interaction proactively (Márquez-Reiter, 2008). Interaction is initiated by the guest on a topic of their choice. In this situation, what constitutes routine needs to be developed and achieved at the beginning of the conversation (Bladas, 2012; Schegloff, 2006b). The interactional goal is established through a different format than in the arrival sequences: requests are used here as a main interactional device to structure the conversations (Curl & Drew, 2008; Economidou-Kogetsidis, 2010; Terkourafi, 2015). The guests are initiating interactions based on contingency with their prior engagement with the hotel. Stay sequences offer insights in how the guest has adjusted to conventions articulated in their environment (Burger et al., 2001; Curl & Drew, 2008). The queries need to be constructed as appropriate to be treated as within the realm of responsibility of the receptionist. Effectiveness is oriented to by guest in their initial construction of the request. The receptionists continue to construct effectiveness through deploying an efficient solution – both interactionally and in the aspect of granting an appropriate request structure (Enfield, 2014; Gralinski & Kopp, 1993; Maynard & Schaeffer, 1997; Nolen & Maynard, 2013; Paulson & Roloff, 1997). Asymmetries in knowledge are adjusted over time while a guest stays in the hotel (Ten Have, 1991) and they become members of a social group in which what is "normal" in behaviour is recognisable (Leech, 2014, p. 5). Rapport and engagement then can act as mechanisms to establish and re-establish relations between guests and receptionists that are enabled through rituals or "communicative altruism" (Leech, 2014, p. 3).

The literature suggests that tourists use their expectations and past experiences to "anchor" (Pearce et al., 1996, p. 91) their understanding of a place and form a mental image, or social representation of a destination. This information is accumulated throughout the active phase of staying in a place and retained in memory. Communication in these timeframe interactions built on each other and include evidence of real-time formulations and retroactive descriptions (or ascriptions) of actions (Enfield & Sidnell, 2014). The information about places in which the interactions occur becomes important in continued engagement as guests leave an impact on the place they have visited (Crouch, 2000; Veijola, 2009). Interactions at a tourist destination become a form of envisioning social reality (Crang, 1997) where knowledge is situated within a specific context and deployed for a particular interactional goal (Jamal & Hollinshead, 2001).

Engagement with the organisation invites a hotel guest to internalise, or learn the expected behavioural norms in the institution. The analysis of stay sequences has shown that guests and receptionists appear to prefer to collaborate in learning and teaching these norms. Verbal behaviour in particular has been used throughout the present study to identify such conditioning that allows for later use of (verbal) symbols to elicit preferred patterns of behaviour on both sides (Bennett & Bennett, 1981; Scott, 1971). Evidence in the present study shows that hotel guests can choose whether or not to engage in service encounters at the hotel front desk during their stay. Choosing to do so reveals particular motivations to reach particular interactional goals. These goals may be transparent to both parties at the beginning of the encounter, they may become activated over the course of the interaction, and they can also be changed and re-negotiated during the conversation (Graham, Argyle, & Furnham, 1981). Established relationships change and thus allow for problems to be resolved interactionally.

## 8.4   Analysis 3: Departure

### 8.4.1   Interactional features of departure sequences

Characteristics of departure sequences display some commonalties with arrival sequences. They provide the complement to check-in, which becomes the check-out. Analysis chapter 3 ('departure') presented the interactional features of leaving a hotel. "Checking-out" was seen as a corresponding interaction to check-ins during arrival sequences. Observational data suggests that check-out interactions are mandatory in some hotels, but not in others. Departing from a hotel can be done without a conversation with a gatekeeper in the present data. This may be explainable through the observable contingency between arrival and departure; arrival sequences establish and confirm details of the guest staying in the hotel. For the purpose of this study and the data available, this provided information acts as an interactional resource highly

relevant for continued rapport between parties. Orientation to terms of contracts (staying at a hotel is based on an agreement to pay for services received) thus is established during arrival and becomes less relevant at a later point. Observational data and conversations with managers about hotel practices suggest that guests demonstrate an awareness and responsibility to pay for stay and/or additional services where appropriate. This allows for policies in which guests are informed upon arrival to simply leave their key at the reception upon their departure if no additional charges have to be paid for or if these charges are billed to an external party, e.g. a business guest's place of work. Depending on the hotel, checking-out can be a mandatory interaction, but it can also be accomplished through other means. In Hotel A, guests may pay upon arrival or arrangements have been made for payment post-departure. Guests are informed that they can leave their key on the reception desk upon departure if they have not accumulated any expenses throughout their stay.

The analysis found a pattern of disengagement in which parties negotiate the (often permanent) dissolution of the hotel/guest dyad. Leave-taking in a hotel is understood in the present study as the last shared activity in congruence with interactions which have come before. The interactional structure of "checking-out" was shown to revolve around accomplishing tasks to terminate the engagement between hotel and guest. Various examples in the chapter (Extract 32 (p. 170), Frame 42 (p. 171), Frame 43 (p. 172), Extract 33 (p. 174), Extract 34 (p. 178)) addressed the activity of payment for outstanding payables. The first part of the third analytic chapter presented the overall interactional structure of the check-out. The structure was seen to be comparable to check-ins as it constitutes of a number of tasks which need to be accomplished. The data suggests however, that check-out sequences have a dedicated interactional space for guests to propose new topics and last new mentionables. The conversations during this phase have been shown to display how hotel guests have been socialised into the organisation (Ashforth & Mael, 1989) and express continued social cohesion between service provider and the guest as recipient (Fine & Holyfield, 1996; Long & Mathews, 2011).

Goffman developed that communicating and conveying a message to a listening audience also carries with it an impression (Manning, 2008). Departure sequences orient interactionally to this impression as a result of a guest's engagement with the hotel. Patterns of speech in this phase indicate that asymmetries in knowledge have shifted; the receptionist needs to ensure that "checking-out" as an activity is accomplished, but the routine of being in the hotel has already been established and changes how people interact. The canonical example for check-outs showed that a state of epistemic balance has been achieved in regards to the hotel and its procedures. Guests and receptionists were seen to have developed a form of interactional "short hand" on

matters of the hotel as a shared space and knowledge base. Unlike in check-in interactions, the receptionist does not insist on a guest's production of acknowledgement tokens. Significant pauses before complying with an accountable action are admissible. Instructions and responses are often truncated, mumbled and abbreviate. Receptionists no longer explain their actions and leaving the scene is no longer accounted for by any party. The shift in conversational behaviour demonstrates that have become socialised into the organisation (Brislin, Worthley, & Macnab, 2006; Halberstadt, 1991). Asymmetries in knowledge regarding competent behaviour in the hotel have disappeared (Johnston, 1989; Tat Keh & Wei Teo, 2001) and a state of interactional equality has been achieved (Ryoo, 2005). Shared laughter is frequent (İçbay & Yıldırım, 2013; Thonus, 2008). Both parties have access to experiences and accompanying narratives (Matsumoto, 2015; Rawls & David, 2005) which allow guests to linger within the conversations, making the overall duration of the encounter subject to negotiation. Departure sequences have been seen as a place in which guests express their thanks for services received (e.g. Extract 30 (p. 170), Extract 35 (p. 182), Extract 36 (p. 191)). In Extract 36 (p. 191), the guest talks about a bottle of sparkling wine that she received from the hotel on her birthday. The guest treats this as an item which needs to be independently addressed upon leave taking. The guest makes the present interactionally salient in the departing encounter where it co-occurs with other matters of thanking. Interactional engagement here is oriented to as a notion of appreciation for a specific service received. As an individual item, it is marked as non-ordinary which makes a next action required for the recipient.

Guests and receptionists engage in a series of thank yous. Here, the guest personifies the hotel (thanking for a pleasant stay), whereas the receptionist expresses an economic motivation (thanking for the custom). The interactions begin to demonstrate a divergence of interests as the leave-taking unfolds. In exchanging good-byes, both parties orient to the guest's return to home. This is further apparent in topic choices regarding the departure. Home life as a realm lies firmly in the expertise of the guest. Addressing aspects of the guest's life at home is non-consequential for the engagement with the institution as it is being terminated, but important for an implied continuation of the relationship. The interactionally realised difference between hotel and home allows an impression of the stay to be carried from institutionalised discourse to everyday life.

Leaving from a hotel is the final act in the examined strings of interaction and as such it represents the final opportunity for hotels to engage with their guests. Leaving in terms of "checking-out" is institutionalised and can contain artefacts, such as written questionnaires or as subjects of the conversation. The interactions are goal oriented as they need to cover aspects of payment and other closing activities to complete and terminate a guest's stay at the hotel. During this interaction, multiple mechanisms exist in which the organisation can receive a form of

summary feedback from their guests. These can be initiated by (a) the guest, (b) the receptionist, (c) the hotel[34], or (d) a combination. The corpus shows that guests frequently offer a closing summary of their stay at the hotel, frequently paired with a promise of return, and/or the return of a feedback questionnaire. It is also common for receptionist to pre-close the departure interaction by invoking the guest's feedback on their stay and/or elicit a promise of return from them. Interaction during this phase has been grounded in shared perspectives the guest has gained through regular engagement with and exposure to the organisation (Bone, 2006). Extract 37 (p. 196) provided further evidence for continuing engagement between guest and receptionist. In this example, mitigate the services offered by the hotel as facework. It is apparent from observations that hotel routinely provides breakfast service for departing guests one hour prior to when the first guests are scheduled to depart. Depending on the day, breakfast for these guests may be already served as early as 3 or 4 am. In the extract, the guest emphasises that breakfast does not need to be prepared on their account. Prior to the transcribed extract provided in the chapter, she had commiserated with what may be perceived as the resulting longer working hours for the kitchen staff ("Poor x"). While information from the hotel confirms that this service does not provoke longer shifts in the kitchen for particular personnel[35], the guest produces an observation which is consistent of what she has learned about the hotel to constitute routines (e.g. breakfast times). Knowledge about the hotel has been shared with the guest and is utilised as such throughout the interaction. Interactional items which are not seen as routine behaviour (extract 3 and 5) by the guests are established as belonging to a larger set of routines which exceeds the guest's stay and thus their experience of the activity as a routine. Birthday presents or upgrades are usually one-off occurrences during a stay or even across multiple stays and are thus unlikely to be treated as granted or routine as evidenced in the interactions. These two examples show how information can be construed as belonging to a routine based on interactional experience. It further provides evidence for information that cannot be immediately constructed as routine throughout a limited time of exposure to the organisation.

Guests disengage from the hotel in preparation to return to their home life, or continue their travels. The spatial change implicated by leaving is embedded in the interaction. This is made apparent on the time sensitivity of departing. Extract 35 (p. 182), showed how physical departing from the hotel is made relevant in the interactions (also Extract 31 (p. 170)). Here, interactional rapport continues through the utterances. This is also apparent in other examples throughout the chapter. Participants orient to a difference between home and the hotel in their

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[34] The hotel may be understood in this case as a form of 'self' in a Goffmanian sense (White & Hanson, 2002).
[35] Observational evidence from the hotels suggests that it is possible for shifts to run longer due to certain guest requirements (e.g. waiting for guests to arrive after the reception has officially closed).

conversations. This was shown to be done through presumed knowledge, e.g. in example 2 and extract 3 regarding departure time and method (bus or car) from the hotel and also through addressing topics that further develop continued rapport post-departure. From pre-trip planning up to the time that comprises activities returning to everyday life, interaction with service providers are the primary source of information and form impressions. The finalising of the stay allows for post-trip reflections to emerge and establish grounds for how the trip is remembered and referred to in everyday conversations (McCabe & Stokoe, 2010; Neal, Sirgy, & Uysal, 1999; Rendeiro Martín-Cejas, 2006). The trip becomes re-interpreted as a singular unit and is referred to as such in personal narratives and storytelling (Hsu, Dehuang, & Woodside, 2009; Mei, 2014; Woodside, Cruickshank, & Dehuang, 2007). While touristic experiences and memories form part of everyday life, returning home and the associated routines has been found to be fast; feelings of happiness or relaxation associated with the trip also have been described to fade in a matter of days (Gilbert & Abdullah, 2004; Nawijn, Marchand, Veenhoven, & Vingerhoets, 2010). Doing tourism thus becomes an extraordinary event that is yet deeply ingrained in everyday life (Larsen, 2008). While a guest is staying at the hotel, the individual blocks of separate timeframes have distinct interactional relevance. Departing from the hotel produces an implicated coherence which begins to express how the three phases work together. Leaving the organisation invokes patterns of speech that are oriented t the guest being no longer "here", but going to "there". This can be expressed in topic choice, such as making leaving (e.g. time of bus departure) explicit. Conversations also contain formulaic utterances (e.g. farewells). The orientation of the interactions is directed at the *past*.

The graphic below shows how leave-taking is constructed as a pivot point between the guest's stay at the hotel and their return to their home life.
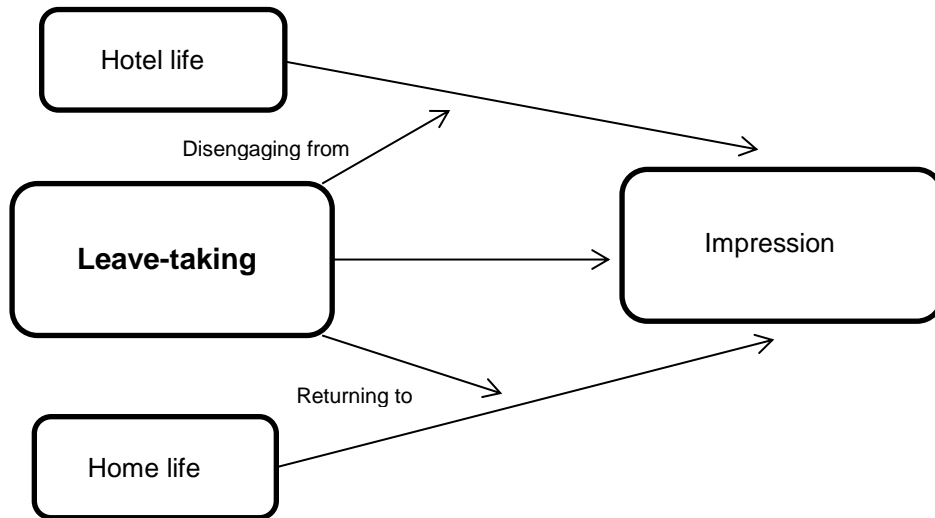
*Figure 9: Leaving the hotel*

Leaving the hotel was seen in the data as a form of a guest's final disengagement from the organisation. In the interactions, this was made relevant by an orientation to the hotel and a guest's home life. This was seen as a last manifestation of relational engagement management between guest and receptionist which is actualised as knowledgeable items addressed in the interaction.

### 8.4.2   Departure in context of the literature

Analysis chapter 3 identified features of the last interaction that occurs in a hotel between a guest who is leaving the organisation (Adato, 1975). The duration of a guest's stay at a hotel is usually pre-arranged, thus, a guest knows when the last conversation with a member of staff will occur, and so does the organisation (e.g. different cleaning procedure, reservation in the restaurant). Leaving the "bubble" of the hotel (Jacobsen, 2003), external factors such as travel arrangement and appointments become important for the guest again and are oriented to by both sides of the interaction. Guests have made arrangements to return to their homes or travel onwards much like they did for traveling to their destination in the first place.

While arrival and stay sequences intrinsically invoke the possibility of additional interactions in the foreseeable future, departure sequences do not carry the same connotation. Instead, checking out as a procedure implies the termination of the interaction between guest and hotel. Even for regulars to the hotel, the departure means an interruption in the relationship for a considerable amount of time. The routine and regularity of the stay in the hotel is terminated which elicits a specific interactional mechanism to fully conclude the stay at and within the

organisation (O'Leary & Gallois, 1985). An effective interaction for both parties needs to complete a number of practical aspects. Interactional aspects in conversational behaviour reflect the mutual need to end the guest's stay in the organisation. Receptionists orient to the business at hand by allowing conversations to be brief and efficient, invoking the assigned roles to emphasise behavioural structures (Hall et al., 1999). Effectiveness is also related to receptionists' ability to demonstrate an availability to continue the interaction for as long as the guest is effectively in the hotel space. Thus, as long as a guest displays a need or want to engage with the hotel, the receptionist is required to be responsive. This has been shown in interactional evidence in the chapter and is also present in the as an interest in business oriented literature (Bendapudi & Berry, 1997; Blanton, 1981; Brislin et al., 2006).

The analysis has shown that asymmetries about knowledge regarding the organisation change from the arrival to the departure in various dimensions. The temporal ordering of activities in talk and staying at a place provide a structure for orientation to participants. Politeness and rapport building activities in the interactions reflect the development of relationship dynamics. While politeness has been described as interactional behaviour at odds with what is considered efficient language use (Lakoff, 1972), established rapport at the departing stage allows turns-at-talk to reflect the development.

## 8.5   Combined Analysis: blocks of timeframes as a cohesive whole

The analytic chapters demonstrated how canonical instances of arrival, stay and departure are constructed across the data corpus. The evidence in the three chapters provided information on the interactional order of these phases. It was shown that the interactions display certain characteristics that make them recognisable to the participants and to the observer or researcher to perform certain tasks relevant to a particular time of staying at a hotel. Interactions were shown to be relevant to each other and produced salient information for subsequent encounters. The duality of access to information from both naturally occurring and recorded interactions as well as ethnographic observations produced insights to service encounters at the hotel front desk that can take into account the wider social and institutional context in which they occur. The results address concern present in both interactional and business-related literature on service encounters. This approach has implications for how and what can be extended from the discussion chapters. It is shown that rapport is used as one resource in interactions to manage the relationship between guest and hotel (Spencer-Oatey, 2002). The present study sees rapport as evident in interactions as a form of engagement. Unlike other studies (e.g. Spencer-Oatey, 2002), this is not understood as areas of concern in interlocutors' perceptions, but rather as a

constructive frame found primary in interactions and their micro-analysis, and further evidenced in observational notes.

Goffman (1961b, p. 312) ascribes "encompassing tendencies" to organisations. Behaviours found within them describe as much as promote the overarching structures in the hotels. Thus, interactions are rational (Rojek, 1997). The particularities of the three phases can be seen as functioning in accordance with this. They can be differentiated into two categories: functional (arrival and departure) and problem solving (stay) (see Sørensen & Jensen, 2015). The functional elements, check-in and check-out encompass the problem-solving aspect and provide a start and end point. Behaviours can be observed to serve different purposes for the production of what constitutes the institution and the three phases are not only linked, but rather interconnected where certain aspects are interwoven within the fabric of the organisation.



**Arrival**

- Receptionist-lead
- Receptionist as expert
- Initiation into organisation
- Establishing of norms
- Functional

**Stay**

- Initiated by guest
- Problem solving
- Negotiation of appropriate behaviours
- Rapport as interpersonal
- Negotiation of granting requests
-Engagement as sustained

- Engagement as initiated

- Rapport building
- Impression management
- Pre-formulated goal
- Co-production of belonging
- Functional
- Pre-granted
- Social cohesion
- Engagement as institutional

- Engagement maintaining
- Socialisation

**Departure**

- Open-ended nature
- Rituals
- Rapport as established
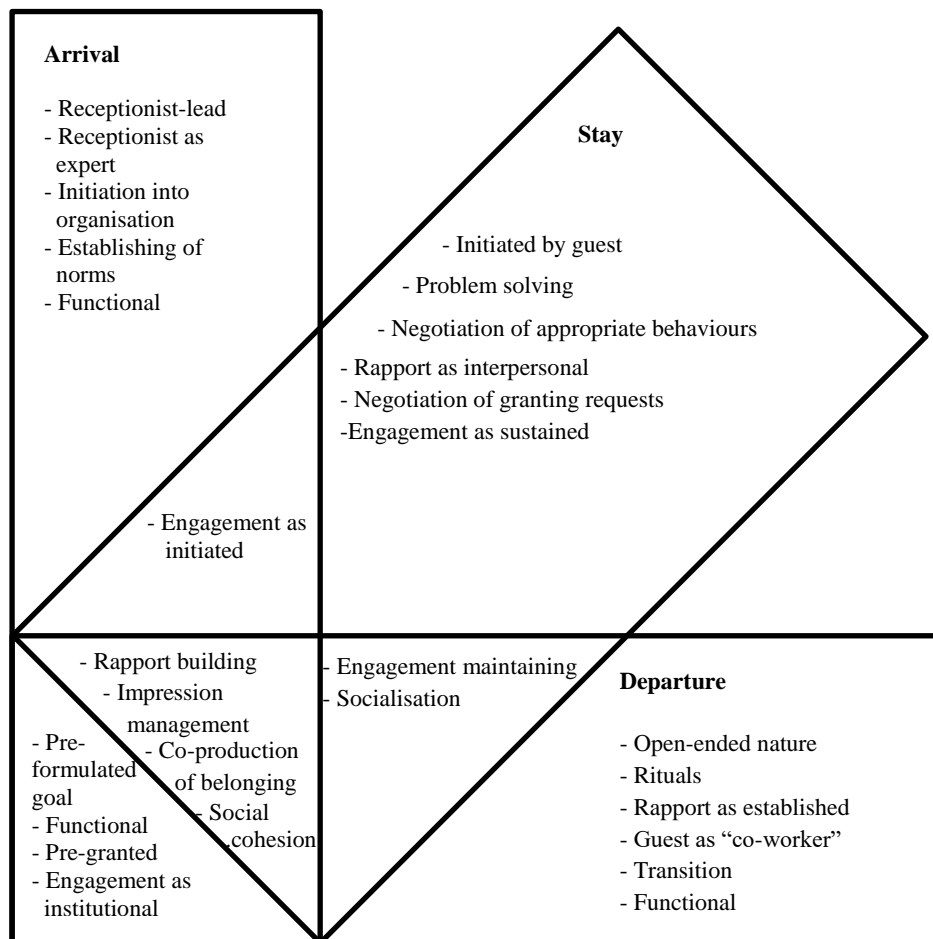- Guest as "co-worker"
- Transition
- Functional

*Figure 10: Characteristics of arrival, stay and departure*

The analysis of the individual blocks of timeframes within a string of contingent interactions found that there are differences and similarities between the phases. The actions

pertaining to them establish social order by rendering the interactions predictable, reliable, and legible to the participants (Misztal, 2001). Interactions in the three phases occur over a fixed period of time (Ryan, 1997d). They are highly mobility-sensitive (Jensen, 2006) and governed by the shared understanding that participants will move into interaction with the organisation and move out of it at a precise and pre-determined moment. How these interactions are carried out at a given point during these blocks of time is not subject to an individual, but governed by an overarching formula (Sacks, 1995b). The interactions in the different phases are oriented towards and have implications for specific times within the interactional project:

*Future:* Arrival sequences occur as a first encounter and foreground what is to come. Interactions here have implications for the guest's stay.

*Present:* Stay sequences address problems and queries as they happen. They are concerned with matters that are important now and are addressed accordingly. They cannot be raised before an issue has happened, or information has become relevant, nor can they be rectified after a stay has terminated. Requests are highly time-sensitive in this phase.

*Past:* Departure sequences mark and construct the end of the time spent at the organisation. They provide a reflection of the completeness of an experience between guest and hotel. The phenomena occurring in the individual stages are consistent and observable behaviours. They are observable at an interpersonal level, yet the data suggests that it is not relevant if or how much a particular hotel guest has engaged with a particular receptionist. The service relationship may be described as embedded within the institutional engagement, and invested personal relationships (e.g. closeness or strength of interactions through repeated interactions) (Bove & Johnson, 2001) exist, but are not the principal requirements for interactions to unfold the way they do. This suggests that customer loyalty is not necessarily based on a de facto personal relationship with a particular employee (Bove & Johnson, 2006). Literature has investigated customers' motivations to become invested on a personal level with the front line staff (Bendapudi & Berry, 1997; Coulter & Coulter, 2002). The literature review in this project (e.g. Beatty et al., 1996; M. J. Bitner, 1995; Price & Arnould, 1999; Solnet, 2007) has addressed this focus of research in the business sector. Service encounters are consequently understood as social occasions where both parties are relevant to the outcome of the interaction (Locke, 1996).

### 8.5.1 Effectiveness and efficiency: empirical definition

The three analytical chapters provided an in-depth description of the social context that characterises interactions at the hotel front desk. The interactional structures that have been identified as relevant to constructing the social order in the three distinct phases form a cohesive

whole. The analysis in the previous chapters has provided a basis for an empirically based definition of the concepts introduced within them. The analytic observations proposed efficiency and effectiveness as interactional concerns for achieving conversational goals at the front desk. These two concepts address both tangible and intangible aspects of communication at the reception, thus, encompassing the multimodal social reality. This chapter aims to tie the three analytical chapters together to a discursive whole, utilising literature and premises made in earlier chapters in this thesis. Efficiency and effectiveness are developed into overarching concepts that entail the interdisciplinary nature of this project. The concepts are understood as ordering structures which can be used to describe the interconnection between pragmatic, interactional aspects of conversations and the social construct of a business context.

**Efficiency**

Efficiency as a structural concept within this project is understood as related to communicative and linguistic components. Individual behaviours when they occur together can be seen to become efficient. It is related to *negotiated structures* of an interaction. Interactions at the front desk have been shown to contain robust patterns, yet it has also been shown that these behaviours must be accomplished throughout the interaction in the form of intersubjective social behaviours. The result of efficiency at work in hotel front desk interactions has been developed in the description of canonical encounters in the analytic chapters. The "efficient" flow of communication has been attributed to specific observable traits in the chapters that achieve "normality" within the conversational work:

*Arrival phase*

Canonical interactions in this phase where seen to favour a very specific level of engagement and aspects of normality were demonstrated in this relational work. Arriving at a hotel depends on cooperation between receptionist and guest which follows the receptionist's agenda guiding the interaction. This was described as the "ceremonial order" (Strong, 2001) governing the interaction. It was shown that hotel guests orient to this order by producing acknowledgment tokens as latched or overlapped responses to every new aspect of information produced by the receptionist. This was also seen to extend to gaze alignment, nonverbal orientation and behaviour in gestures and the handling of objects and artefacts. As a result, it was noticed that noticeable silences and interactional unavailability must be accounted for through communicative behaviour.

*Stay phase*

Efficiency is understood as a continued effort, thus as a continued orientation to the overarching interactional project that staying at a hotel involves. Efficiency is negotiated and evolving. Interactions in this phase were shown to follow a strict goal orientation in which requests are immediately granted by the receptionists, while hotel guests still maintain the negotiable order by providing an account to legitimise any produced request. Activities and turns start latched or in overlap. Tasks are co-constructed through gaze orientation. Face concerns are mitigated and shared laughter has become a permissible interactional resource.

*Departure phase*

Efficiency is treated as established and as visible through continued engagement. Guests are treated *and* act as competent co-members in the interactions. Interactional behaviour was seen to reflect the development of the interactional relationship. Abbreviations, mumbling and truncated utterances, much like silences and interactional unavailability become admissible and are no longer accounted for as potential sources of trouble. Gestures can also become actuated through verbal renditions. Closing and leave-taking from the interaction and the hotel is co-constructed by participants.

**Effectiveness**

Effectiveness as a structural concept within this project is understood as related to mechanisms on the business or management side of behaviours which also constitute a reproducible system (Normann, 2000). It is related to *normative structures* and situational implicatures and processes. It describes "how things are done here". Effectiveness contributes to what constitutes normality in the interactions by providing the normative structure in which the interaction takes place. As such, it takes into account physical space and available resources and demonstrates how interactants make these interactionally relevant. This concept is situated at the surface of the interaction.

*Arrival phase*

It was shown in the analytic chapters that each phase of interaction at the hotel front desk is related to particular goals and outcomes that need to be achieved in a conversation, which constitutes the service encounter. Effectiveness is embedded in the overall environment which for the accomplishment of a service is also related to the physical space in which it occurs. This is complemented with other hard- and software, including technology and its setup. The interaction

at the hotel front desk revolves around what is available to interactants. In some cases, set ups may enhance interactions, in others set requirements by an organisation may increase or decrease the duration of an encounter. The interactional goal remains the same and needs to be negotiated around these available resources. The analysis of the encounters has shown that participants demonstrate a preference about what is important and the order thereof:

In order to be classed as "check-in", a number of interactional items have to be addressed and resolved between receptionist and guest which are dependent on the establishment in which the interaction takes place. Interactional effectiveness can be observed in how information exchanges are accomplished: the hotel has established protocols and processes that need to be negotiated by receptionists' and the guests' preferred organisation regarding: (a) the order of information provided; and (b) the information provided as an interactionally observable negotiation process.

The canonical examples in the first analytical chapter demonstrate this interactionally established effective order. Extract 17 (p. 125) presents a situation which demonstrates how different understandings of "when" is "what" to be important is dealt with in a conversation. In this case, the guest attempts to insert a topic into the receptionist's current effective structure, here concerning a parking space. The guests do not wait until the registration process has been completed in order to attempt to pre-empt the structure of the situation. In communication, it is not necessary for guests to wait for the termination of a speech activity or phase in order to migrate from the established pattern; the turn-taking system that is central to CA provides other opportunities, like the natural boundaries of completed sentences, for participants to attempt to interject the current topic (Heritage & Clayman, 2010). Although participants engaged in the encounter have been seen to pursue the same ultimate communicative and physical goal, the concept of context is not static – nor is it one-dimensional (Schegloff, 1997). It also does not take into account asymmetries in knowledge about the organisation (Heritage, 2006c). As a result, the guest may initiate talk on a matter that is highly important to them as an individual. However, this item could be scheduled to arise much later on the agenda, because the routine of the interaction has been structured with the knowledge that the item is in fact not important. Yet, the guests do not know this. In the data set of Hotel C, one such item occurs with a very high frequency: it is very common for hotel guests in this hotel to enquire about parking as early as possible in the encounter. In this excerpt, it can be observed that guests orient towards parking before they have even completed the initial task of filling in and signing the registration form. Receptionists and guests have a different level of knowledge about the subject of parking at this hotel: the hotel is situated directly in the town centre, on the historic market square. There are no apparent parking

possibilities nearby, which forces hotel guests to park on the market square when they arrive for the check-in. As a result, guests are worried about receiving a ticket for unauthorised parking. The receptionists at the hotel know of course that the guests will not be fined, and they also know that finding the car parks is somewhat difficult and is preferably dealt with after the guests have not only checked-in, but also checked into their rooms. Thus, this topic is usually adjourned for the duration of the initial service encounter. In all cases in the data (including ethnographic observations), guests are required to initiate a subsequent service encounter, after they have moved their luggage to their room. Heritage and Clayman (2010) remind that the professional becomes skilled in how to deal with recurring issues and problems with their customers by negotiating them repeatedly, so that they learn strategies that will help them in these situations – making interactions and knowledge exchange effective for them and their guests.

*Stay phase*

During the stay, a guest may decide to interact with the front desk. For an effective encounter, participants need to demonstrate understanding as to what constitutes an acceptable request in the particular organisation in which the exchange is taking place. The request is negotiated at the front line, thus by receptionist and the guest. The receptionist acts as the granting body. Goals are not pre-established, which makes stay encounters somewhat peculiar and thus invokes different strategies. Effectiveness is co-constructed by participants. In order to be effective, the receptionist needs to fully understand what is being requested by the guest. Section 6.2.1 suggested that guests may perceive a receptionist's attempt to be more effective by clarifying a request or providing options to the guest (see extract 26, p. 141: Do you want the item now or later?) as less efficient or not as competent. In the present data corpus, it is only during this phase that there may be a trade-off between efficiency and effectiveness; the two concepts are otherwise always treated as harmonious by participants.

*Departure phase*

As the logical opposite to the "check-in", "checking-out" is also a highly regulate process which depends largely on how it is constructed in a particular hotel. In this study, Hotel A had no dedicated check-out sequence or interaction as a required conversation. In Hotel D, the activity of "checking-out" is initiated by phone calls to departing guests a day before their departure date. The phone interaction is set up as a reminder and further instructs guests on the check-out procedure in the hotel. Checking-out is recognised as the final leave-taking of the organisation. Effectiveness is demonstrated in participants' orientation to the termination of the guests' stay. Analysis chapter 3 demonstrated that participants orient to the transition between staying in the

organisation and returning to their normal place of residence, which entails that any subsequent interaction invokes the initiation of phase 1, "arrival", again (see Figure 12: Blocks of timeframes, p. 229). Effectiveness in departure sequences is interactionally achieved through invoking routine and procedural behaviour that was established throughout the guest's stay and engagement with the organisation. Previous encounters with staff and the physical environment of the hotel form the basis of an effective interaction. It was noted that arrival sequences are led and effectively constructed by the expert in the interaction, thus the receptionist. In departure sequences, guests have been established as knowledgeable about the organisation (Johnston, 1989) and are treated as collaborators. The shared knowledge of leave-taking to occur suggests that the ending point of the interaction lies with the guest, since they are the participants who will physically withdraw from the shared space. Effectiveness can then be seen (a) in receptionists orienting to business relevant to terminating the guest's stay (e.g. Extract 33 and section 7.3), and (b) in the provision of an interactional space after business is dealt with to introduce other or new topics (e.g. Extract 36, section 7.4).

**Delays of progression**

The analytical chapters not only examined canonical interactions, but also addressed how certain interactional resources can delay the progression of the service encounter. Due to the business settings of these conversations, non-canonical interactions may cause potential implications for the hotel industry. A main problem that is observable can be found in technology and/or a hotel's normative organisation of the processes may be at odds with the interactional requirements of a receptionist or a guest. The analysis chapters, however, have shown that the hotel's normative organisation and the social reality is negotiated through social interaction. As a result, it was shown that miscommunication is very infrequent, because both parties were seen to work towards a common interactional goal that is to be accomplished in the encounter.

The analytical chapters have shown that interactional resources which may delay the progress are commonly found when the level of engagement between participants is at odds with conversational requirements. Any shortcomings in the hotel's normative organisation and the social reality are negotiated through social interaction.

*Arrival phase*

The analytic chapter provided two examples which showed deviations from the characteristics described in the concepts effectiveness and efficiency. One example showed too much engagement, the other two little. Too much engagement in the example was demonstrated

in the example to be done by the guest, but the corpus also includes examples where the receptionist is the engaging party. The example in the chapter addressed both aspects of efficiency and effectiveness. Deviating from the agenda is treated by participants as a repairable instance. In these cases, participants initiate repair to return the conversation back to the original trajectory of the agenda (efficiency). The topic in the example revolves around normative structures and how they are different in various establishments (effectivenenss). The guest utilises his knowledge about hotels using key cards or keys to initiate a side sequence which describes normative structures under which organisations work to increase their managed effectiveness.

*Stay phase*

The second analytic chapter showed that delays of progression are not normally present in the corpus. It was noted that the corpus does not contain any recordings of complaining behaviour. Complaining was defined as for the purpose of this study as the complete breakdown of interactional opportunities between guest and receptionist; thus, situations in which legal action is threatened or the interaction is continued away from the front desk, usually with (senior) management personnel. It was noted, however, that while is seems unlikely for a guest-receptionist dyad to encounter progression delays, delays can become possible in cases in which a request is presented over the course of several encounters. Here, the guest remains the constant in the interaction whereas the receptionist constitutes a variable, since a guest may encounter a different receptionist to deal with the problem each time they visit the front desk. Extract 28 provides such an example: the hotel guest is attempting to receive a key to the connecting door between the two rooms they booked. The guest needs to interactionally establish their expertise on the project with any new member of staff they engage with, or the situation will otherwise be treated as a singular request, thus dealt with from the beginning. Both sides are concerned with constructing an efficient encounter: (a) the guest by re-establishing the current situation and (b) the receptionist by attempting to produce an actionable interaction point as soon as possible. As a result, effectiveness is compromised partially through the design of service encounters in hotels, where conversations between a guest and the same receptionist are not guaranteed and information flow about current guest issues is dependent on communicative action between members of staff (this may extend beyond communication between receptionists, as is also demonstrated in the example here: housekeeping have been involved to produce the missing key, adding an extra variable to the interaction).

*Departure phase*

The third analytic chapter showed that progression is only part of the encounter; guests are interactionally entitled to decide on the length of the overall interaction, according to the corpus. A delay in progression is thus not oriented to as a delay in the encounter. However, this is not to say that *perceived* delays in progression do not occur: it was argued throughout this thesis that service encounters at the hotel front desk are semi-private, thus, bystanders actively disengage from the interaction. This, however, does not mean that they are not present and waiting for their turn. A busy check-out time can thus lead to a guest's perception that the encounter is delayed due to the waiting period.

The analytic chapters demonstrated that any delays in progression are generally unlikely, but may occur mainly in arrival situations. It is thus connected in this study to first interactions. It was argued that initial interactions for first time visitors occur without a frame of reference for the guest for this particular establishment (even if they are likely to have stayed at a hotel before), which makes a delay in progression both more likely and noticeable. Following the initial checking-in, a guest becomes immersed in the hotel through their continuous engagement with the physical space, facilities and a range of staff. The context for any subsequent interaction at the front desk is thus greatly extended, beyond what would normally be achieved in a singular following interaction.

## 8.5.2 Interpersonal engagement with the institution and its relation to efficiency and effectiveness: analytic observations

Efficiency and effectiveness are interwoven as key concepts in all three analytic chapters. Ritzer's (2015) seminal work on the notion of "McDonaldization" of modern society depicts key concerns for a desire to render communication efficient. A similar argument is extended to tourism in form of a "McDisneyization" (Ritzer & Liska, 1997). Much like in the original work, the authors argue that people today express little tolerance for inefficiency in their day-to-day life, as much as on travel occasions. In order to be efficient vacations and travel need to be (a) controlled; (b) predictable; (c) calculable; and (d) controlled (adapted from Ritzer & Liska, 1997, pp. 69-70). Ritzer and Liska mainly observe aspects of standardisation in service as made visible by globally recognisable brands and associated expectations (cf. also Ang & Massingham, 2007; Jacobsen, 2003). These observations are also reflected within communication theories, where it is argued that uncertainty in conversations need to be managed (Gudykunst & Nishida, 2001; Hofstede, 2001). The management of epistemic stance, certainty/un-certainty of knowledge and ensuing asymmetries is done through interactions. The present study provides this link between micro-interaction, theoretical paradigms and its connection to a macro-context.

While effectiveness and efficiency are observable at a micro-level, the way in which they are made relevant differs between them. Ultimately, establishing a communicative environment which may be described in the terms of Ritzer and Liska (1997) is an *achievement*. It is accomplished inter- and intra-sequentially (Márquez-Reiter, 2008) and can be observed in real-time across the phases of staying at a hotel. Together, they form a cohesive picture of what is relevant in relational work at different stages in service encounter and are represented in the literature. In this corpus, it has been demonstrated that only departure sequences display closing sequences as have been described in the literature (especially telephone closings). The "natural progression" that seems to be apparent in interactions over the course of a guest's stay in a hotel may mean that participants treat their stay as one prolonged encounter, or at least as encounters that are contingent on the events that have occurred prior in their stay. The literature on service encounters (e.g. doctor – patient) interactions has addressed knowledge of participants gained in previous interactions of the same kind (Bladas, 2012; Button, 1991; Collins, 1987). However, both stay and departure sequences have been seen to be more preoccupied with the organisation at hand (guests are building "relationships" with the organisation in their speech behaviour, rather than with individual receptionists) than with what is to be expected in a particular event. Guests might choose a particular behaviour that has proven successful in similar situations, the concept of previous knowledge is not being dismissed. However, the stay and departure chapters attempt to put forth a different kind of "generic-ness" than what can be found in both tourism and CA/sociolinguistic literature to date. In this sense, service encounters at the hotel front desk are peculiar and thus salient examples for discovering new patterns in asymmetrical interactive settings. They display attributes common to institutional and mundane interactions, while at the same time feeding back to their unique setting and deploying a mobile global now.

Efficiency and effectiveness and relation to engagement in relation building in the analytic chapters have been seen to have the following characteristics:

- *Analysis 1: initiating/establishing engagement*
    o Efficiency and effectiveness are demonstrated in relational work through cooperation between receptionist and guest (e.g. minimal response tokens, following of receptionist's agenda in the interaction, gaze alignment, nonverbal behaviour in gestures, handling objects)
    o Collaborative construction of mandatory encounter
    o Receptionist treated as expert in the interaction
    o Interactions are grounded in expectations of the *future*

- *Analysis 2: maintaining/sustaining engagement*
    - Efficiency and effectiveness are co-constructed and depend on both parties; guest displays behaviour that feeds forward and sustains rapport; requests are solved collaboratively, as are "pre-complaints"; complaints (not part of corpus) are understood as communication breakdown in regards to efficiency and effectiveness
    - Maintaining a relationship is based on the knowledge that a subsequent interaction with a party will occur. Requests are treated as a face-threatening act that may invoke a conflict situation, which is adversary to continuing a relationship. In formulating a request, guests utilise preparatory moves before they articulate the request. These moves help in establishing the legitimacy of a claim to a service or product, and further construct the receptionist as the appropriate target of the utterance (March & Olsen, 1998). Thus, despite a service encounter constituting an environment in which assistance has been paid for, guests demonstrate a necessity to employ face saving strategies, for both them and the recipient. Maintaining face has been described as the "result of fitting in" (Lerner, 1996, p. 319) and actionalised in interactions.
    - Expertise is shared
    - Interactions are grounded in the *present*


- *Analysis 3: continued/established engagement*
    - Efficiency and effectiveness are treated as established. Greater pauses are admissible; shared laughter; verbal renditions of gestures are still adhered to by guests; final closing of conversation more important than apparent efficiency
    - Established engagement is made visible in departure sequences in the use of abbreviated language, orientation to knowledge about the organisation, and often an explicit mentioning of a desire for continuation of the established relationship. The guest may be physically leaving the institution, but participants in the conversation perpetuate their established level of engagement through their communicative actions (Grove & Fisk, 1997). Rituals are used to preserve these established collective identities even though guest and receptionist are transitioning out of their engagement (Hermanowicz & Morgan, 1999).
    - Expertise is assigned to guest upon departing
    - Interactions point to the *past*

The building of relationships and interactional engagement in the literature is described to exist in conversations that are in sync. In the present study, this is true for analysis chapter 1 (arrival sequences) and analysis chapter 3 (departure sequences). This premise however, is not observable in the second analytic chapter (stay sequences). Analysis chapter 2 explicitly uses "awkward communicative situations" (Bernieri & Rosenthal, 1991, p. 407) which are commonly used to characterise a lack of engagement – but that instead is seen to facilitate engagement and rapport building in the second analytic chapter. People demonstrate involvement to create engagement. Service quality and its anticipated effect on customer-staff relationship is frequently closely managed under a corporate umbrella, or even certified against an international standard. Such manifestos of what is to be produced as excellent customer care appear in light of the present study as somewhat removed from everyday front-line conversations. Compare the following service contract premise made about the ibis hotel chain:

> The "15 minutes satisfaction" contract is a unique illustration of ibis's commitment to customer service. If a little hitch threatens to cloud your stay, do not hesitate in letting us know at any time, day or night. The ibis teams have 15 minutes on the clock to sort it out. And if they do not manage to chase away this pesky cloud in the specified time, that service is on the hotel. ("Accor Hotels: Brand portfolio," n.d.)

This study is not associated with the above mentioned brand. However, the excerpt is used here to demonstrate a common preoccupation of hotels with recovering from a service failure (Hoffman, Kelley, & Rotalsky, 1995). The analyses for this study have shown that the reality of functioning service encounters at the hotel front desk are distinctively concerned with maintaining a communicative flow conducive to the overarching goal of the interaction, rather than correcting a state of affairs. Service failure does not occur in the collected data corpus at all. Interactional moves appropriate to a specific phase of an interaction ensure a consensual outcome even, or especially in situations that may seem likely to end in a failed communicative attempt. Achieving routines within the ceremonial order in such situations often allows for any mistakes to be integrated in such ritualistic behaviour (Goffman, 1997b). The overarching forms of mutually achieved understanding of etiquette become thus not a mere matter of communication at a micro-level, but has implications for the social order at large (Strong, 1988). Competence is made visible in the corpus through participants' "dutiful" (Giddens, 1988, p. 268) orientation to the communicative practice within conversations as is observable within the corpus in this study. As such, the study does not seek to make claims about establishing truth about the discipline of tourism (Tribe, 2006), but rather demonstrates what is observable in interaction in order to promote dialogue between disciplines (Przecławski, 1993). Concerns for face are situated and acted upon within interactions (Goffman, 1967; Kasper, 2009). Potential trouble sources are conventionally pre-empted by assuming a non-serious construal of a problem, such as not having

heard the utterance in question (Svennevig, 2008) to retain relationships. A micro-analysis can provide insights in how rapport is formed through insights into how the notion is socially constructed (Pentland, 1993). Different phases in which rapport occurs require different communicative actions. Some are rooted in the institutional act, others occur in maintaining interpersonal relations. What constitutes the organisation is thus locally achieved through engagement between contact employee and hotel guest (Wilkins & Ouchi, 1983).

Asymmetries in knowledge within interactions at the hotel front desk are observable and oriented to by participants. Not least for competitive reasons, some knowledge must remain within the institution[36] (Scott & Laws, 2006). Research has shown that service encounters benefit from including customers into their overall processes (Gill et al., 2011; Johnston, 1989; Kerekes, 2007; Tat Keh & Wei Teo, 2001; van De Mieroop & Schnurr, 2014). Guests are interactionally introduced to expected norms of behaviour which allows conversations to progress smoothly (Ye, 2015). This from of engagement incorporates what Spencer-Oatey (2005, p. 117) identified as key elements of rapport: (a) interactional wants; (b) behavioural expectations; and (c) face sensitivities. The concern for face is an overarching goal to maintain social cohesion in conversations between hotel guest and receptionist. Rapport as understood here can be maintained and enhanced, or it is damaged (Spencer-Oatey, 2005). This occurs not solely within a singular discourse, but is observable across a string of interactions. Interactional engagement and with it rapport is thus built over time. Understanding in conversation is based on information delivered turn-by-turn and the structures they are delivered in. Singular utterances interact with the overarching context to provide meaning (Harley, 2014). Inference is further established across conversations, creating a cooperative link between interacting parties. The construction of turns in conversations is a collaborative affair, where both parties work together to tailor their utterances to the specific audiences. Comprehending language is not solely based on the stimulus provided through an utterance, but is also influenced by prior knowledge (Harley, 2014) informed by human desire in a modern, unpredictable and complex society to establish normality (Misztal, 2001). Interactions function as units which are not only relevant as they occur, but further implicate the context in which they occur, both on a micro- and macro-level.

## 8.6 Observable phases as blocks of timeframes

The overall aim of this study was to discover overarching patterns in communication across interactionally linked situations in various comparable situational contexts (hotels). This chapter developed how the analytical chapters showed the interactional connections. These

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[36] This may include discretionary practices, but also common industry procedures, such as overbooking available hotel rooms.

patterns may be seen as initial evidence that Schegloff's (2006b) concept of "routine as achievement" provides the basis for "normality" in hotel front-line interactions. Normality may then be linked to the institution's and the guest's actions in creating a sense of community and belonging. Ultimately, the fine-grained analysis of individual encounters provides insights into how an abstract concept such as "service quality" is actionalised and actualised between the delivering party and the recipient in real time. Questionnaires and other methods administered post-hoc are unable to establish genuine insights into touristic experiences as they unfold (Nawijn, 2011).

The analysis is derived from a string of interactions which creates an overarching interactional project (Robinson, 2006). The premise of an interactionally dependent string in which conversations occur is further supported by the methodology employed in this study of CA which is supported by ethnographic field notes and observations of the data collection site. The connection between the three analytic chapters is described as each reporting on specific "blocks of timeframes" ('arrival', 'stay', 'departure') in which specific interactions occur. They present individual social episodes as they occur in time and space and make explicit how coherence is achieved across multiple interactions (Bourdieu, 1985). Social episodes are understood as recurring sequences of interactions that are contained in naturally occurring conversational units of behaviour which can be separated using symbolic, social, temporal and/or physical boundaries (Forgas, 1981; Stebbins, 1981). The term of individual "phases" to address the individual times of observation was chosen to provide a place for the form of analysis utilised here from terminology employed in the relevant CA literature. Further, the notion of both phase and timeframe highlight the continuity inherent in these episodic interactional units that occur across interactions. The approach develops an appreciation of how a common vision of a profession in time is constructed among participants Goodwin, 1994). Further, it allows for further evaluation of a common feature in interactions where larger interactional projects are constructed (Reed & Szczepek Reed, 2013; Robinson, 2013). Service encounters, much like mundane interactions occur in larger episodic structures which follow a sequential ordering. Thus, the ordering is not only observable inter-sequentially as is demonstrated in CA (Engeström, 1995), but also across multiple encounters, or intra-sequentially (cf. Orthaber & Márquez-Reiter, 2011).
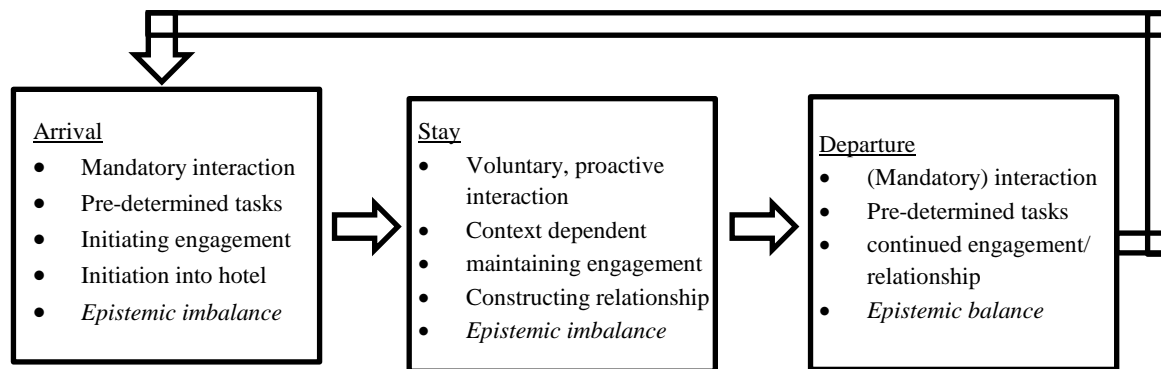
*Figure 11: Blocks of timeframes*

Situations in the phases analysed in this project are defined socially. They are given a definition so as to allow communication within and about them. Service encounters at the hotel front desk have particular goals and the encompassing social situations are defined as such. However, these definitions are malleable (Perinbanayagam, 1981). The service encounters here are susceptible to these social interpretations. Arrival and departure at a hotel provides a common and recognisable definition of such encounters. Stay interactions are also recognisable as service encounters, but are reconstructed within a slightly different social interpretation that allows for interactional goals to be negotiated during the interaction. Interactions, including highly ritualised ones, are never identical. Situations are thus unique embodiments of interactional conventions (Bell, 1999; Stebbins, 1981). The "block of timeframes" approach is loosely inspired by an exploratory, theoretical framework introduced by Blue and Harun (2003). Blue and Harun's model is circular and attempts to explain similarities between mundane and commercial interactions. They proposed that staying at a hotel and staying with family can be broken down into phases as the popular understanding of arrival, stay and departure suggests. The authors argue that arrival is characterised by formality, stay by re-familiarisation between the parties and departure by re-established notion of familiarity and promises for a return visit. The present study re-examines the premises put forth by these authors and combines them with empirical data within a CA framework to produce the visualisations of interactions found in the figure above. The tourism literature's fascination with guest/staff interactions (cf. Cohen, 1972) is put into a new perspective through the use of naturally occurring data, one which does no longer require the use of made-up or imagined scenarios (Beamer & Valentine, 2000; Bhawuk & Brislin, 1992).

## 8.7    On micro and macro structures in the analysis

Links created between a hotel guest and employees by the end of the customer's stay are clearly differentiable to interactions that may occur between two strangers. The guest has become a regular to the organisation. According to Morgan (2009), the tag of "regular" is assigned to a

customer by either a fellow consumer, or by the service provider. For the present study, however, interactions may be more adequately described as positioned between the notion of regular and Morgan's illustration of fleeting acquaintances. Morgan describes a situation involving a regular tends to have one of the participants in a more static state. Established acquaintanceships between service provider and guest also have a fleeting character. They retain an asymmetrical notion partly due to the static or anchored position in a particular physical location that is so characteristic of globalised activities in tourism. Fleeting acquaintances are sensitive to, yet dependent on time and space. Hotel guest and receptionist co-assign a social relationship to each other based on competencies the guest displays after having been exposed to the institutional norms. The relationship is therefore not (or at least not necessarily) based on a guest and a receptionist having communicated with each other on multiple occasions, but rather based on shared knowledge, and established trust through role acceptance of both parties enacted in salient, normative activities (Morgan, 2009; Scott, 1971). Conversation is orderly and participants orient to it (Sacks et al., 1974).

Behaviours in the individual phases are different, yet similar enough to be categorised under the umbrella of hotel service encounters (Akman, 2007; Magnusson & Ekehammar, 1981; Ryan, 1997c). The combined analysis has also shown that the context and its physical actualisation as a scene have a behavioural impact. Bennett and Bennett (1981) refer to this space for social interaction as a container. Bennett and Bennett propose that the arrangement of it conveys (non-verbal) meaning the same way that verbal and gestural interaction does. This containing unit constraints behaviour in a physical manner, but also places symbolic limitation on the interpersonal contact. The gatekeeping activities at the hotel front desk are thus actualised through the physical space as much as through the verbal communication. The analysis has addressed both of these aspects; politeness and rapport building activities as they can be observed in the communication as well as appropriate conduct with the physical barrier that is the reception desk. While distinctive roles are assigned to the participants based on their status (paid employee vs. paying guest), physical boundaries (indicated by which side of the desk participants are on), and communicative action (information giver vs. information receiver). The participants have different social roles depending on what is to be accomplished in the particular interaction. Here, parallels can be found between what this study has found and Goffman's first (unpublished) ethnography in which he describes the conflicting roles a service-station dealer has to negotiate in his day-to-day work (see Manning, 1992), a notion of role description that reoccurs and is developed further in some of his earlier publications (Goffman, 1961a, 1967, 1969). Communication, much as displaying trust interactionally, is a decision made by participants (Bachmann, 2006). Decisions made in the interactions have been seen in the analysis to carry

forward through future interactions (Myllyniemi, 1986), ultimately affecting and changing the social reality of communicating parties (Boden, 1994). Institutional interaction is using these salient mechanisms (Drew & Heritage, 1992a).
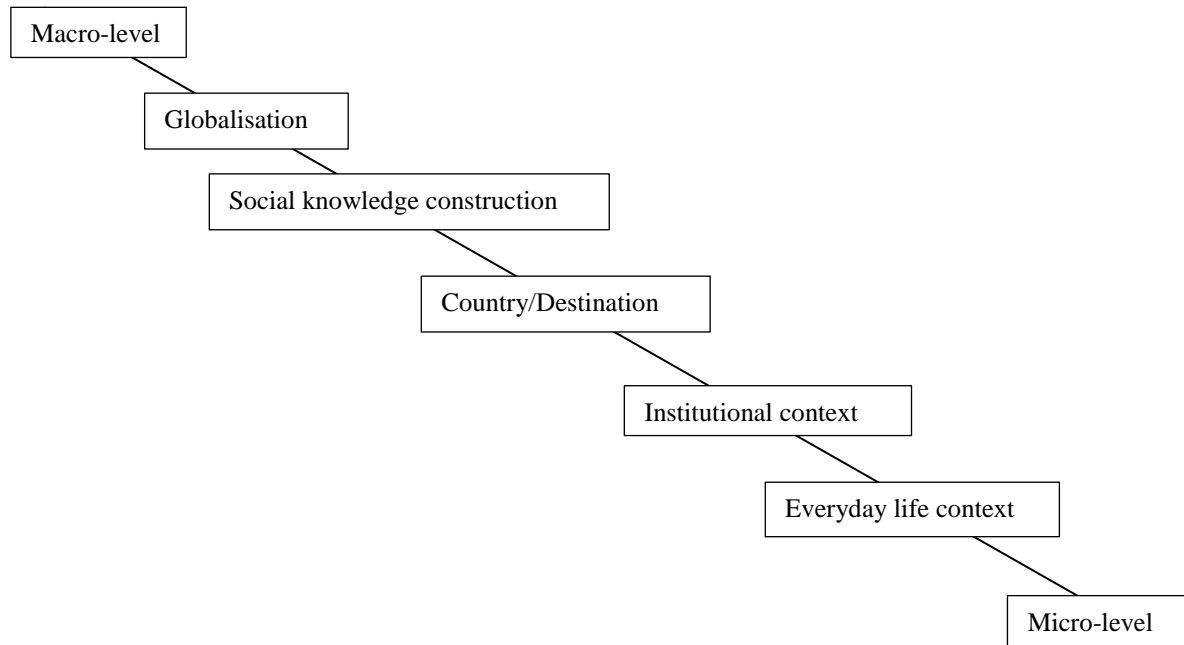


*Figure 12: Connection of analytical themes*

Tourism is a global phenomenon that occurs in specific contexts. Being a tourist is experienced in interactional moments, with a place and commonly other people. It is these micro interactions that construct an intimate understanding of practices and forms of conduct in an organisation. These interactions always occur in a context (Labov, 1972). Context is not a static concept (Schegloff, 1997). Additional information that a guest acquires through conversations at the hotel front desk, other employees, fellow guests and the exploration of a place lead to the formation of an image about an organisation (Heritage, 2006b) and also a destination (Abram & Waldren, 1997; Pearce et al., 1996), an impression which is carried in memories and retellings (McCabe & Stokoe, 2010) to the everyday life. Such impressions have been used both in tourism (Urry, 2005) as well as in interactional studies (Hernández-López & Blitvich, 2014) to describe a collective's view of a place or a country (us vs. them) (Edelheim, 2007). Interactions occur in places which are used by individuals to construct knowledge (Crouch, 2000). These views become part of what constitutes the social representation of touristic endeavours, both in the visiting and the visited (Pearce et al., 1996) and connect individual moments to a broader social reality (McCabe & Marson, 2006). Here, communication between individuals connects with a wider globalised audience (Blommaert, 2003; Heller, 2003; Jaworski & Thurlow, 2013, 2010). The outside world enters into social representations through conversations (Blommaert, 2015;

Fox, 2014). Thus the current conceptualisation of tourism as an economic factor aids in comprehending how tourism addresses cultural aspects of interaction (Lanfant & Graburn, 1992).

Thus, a service encounter as described in the study of various components in which rules ac as constraints, resources, and indeterminate guides to action where: (a) interactants must display situational propriety; (b) interactants must gauge the appropriate level of involvement for an encounter; (c) interactants must be accessible to all ratified participants; and (d) interactants must display civil inattention in the presence of strangers (Manning, 1992, after Goffman). Interactions contain multiple elements: (a) a technical part; (b) a contractual part; and (c) a sociable part (Goffman, as cited in Strong, 1988, p. 231). The interactants within the encounter are thus bound by the rules as set by the society in which they are accomplished (Goffman, 1997a). Place and hierarchy may be developed on a fluid scale (Duranti, 1992) where effectiveness is portrayed through role distance (Goffman, 1997d).

The study has been built on the basis that a rich literature exists describing communication and its practices at micro- and macro-levels in organisations and tourism. However, it has been observed that research commonly addresses either the point of view of a customer or the service provider (Bradley et al., 2013). The analytic goal for this study was to provide some evidence for presenting the duality within the interactive moments present in service encounters between participants. The mature literatures found in the adjacent fields aid the discussion in providing the institutional or bureaucratic context of these interactions that are so vital to understanding underlying practices (Strong, 2001). Addressing language use, while also developing organisational and economic understanding, encourages dialogue between disciplines (Heath & Luff, 2000). This focus then allows for the achievement of ceremonial order to be manifested from the analysis to the present discussion (Strong, 1988). This study introduced the notions of situational conventions and conventional situations, a notion which has guided the choice of literature utilised, as well as the analysis. The three analytic chapters showcased some of the structures and interactional richness found in hotel front desk interaction. This chapter addresses communalities across the sections and integrates the findings with the literature addressed in the overall study.

Engagement and with it rapport has been seen to be constructed situationally within the conversations. The context in which they occur is created by the social situation. The analytic chapters were structured according to these situational contexts and discussed as findings particular to individual analytic chapters and further develops features of interactions that are valid across the different phases (Meier, 1995; Techtmeier, 1984). Organisational discourse exists

on various levels and can be analysed as such through observations in interactions as demonstrated here (Roberts, 2005).

# Chapter 9:     Conclusion

## 9.1    Aim of the chapter

This chapter summarises the main findings of the thesis and how they relate to the overarching goals of this study. Real world applications for the results are developed and limitations of the research described.

## 9.2    Overview

The study aimed to identify and describe in detail the specifics of communicative behaviour at the hotel reception that establish the institutional character of the interaction to accomplish a service encounter. The focus in the study was placed on communication in which social action facilitates understanding (Habermas, 1998b). Engagement and rapport building mechanisms in interactions were shown to be used by interlocutors to establish communality (Goodwin, 1996). Social structure was shown to be accomplished through actions for which social actors hold each other accountable (Zimmerman & Boden, 1991). Tourism is constructed as a key sector of today's world order (Piller, 2007). Tourism has been described as one of the largest peacetime movements of people, commodities and money (Greenwood, 1972) and as such constitutes an important indicator for social cohesion in today's global society.

Almost everything that is done in today's society occurs in organisations (Grey, 2013) and the hotel desk in the present study has shown how service encounters are part of everyday life and form a continuing narrative within social activities. Communication was understood as a means of organising social activities (Fineman et al., 2010) which plays a central role in accomplishing an interaction at the hotel front desk. The hotel as a research context was used as a "practical place for tourist interest" (Goffman, 1953, p. 30) which provided a natural laboratory for social science research (Berno & Ward, 2005) and a point of access to front desk interactions as a form of international dialogue. The gatekeeping environment is construed in a hotel through the provision of a service space in which the basic requirements of life are supplied by others (Rojek, 1993). The findings in the study showed that communication towards these requirements is done in specific ways throughout a guest's stay in a hotel.  Service encounters in hotels were seen to be related to notions of space (Urry, 2003) and interpersonal involvement (Ryan, 2000). It is argued that service encounters at the hotel front desk are treated interactionally by participants as semi-private (Kerbrat-Orecchioni, 2006). The analysis of discourse provides access to experience and performance in the tourism industry (Pritchard & Jaworski, 2005). The study developed the notion of 'service' as an encounter in which service and transactions are interactionally negotiated (Dumas, 2008; Kerbrat-Orecchioni & Traverso, 2008).

Tourism is a global phenomenon that is enacted in local contexts, such as conversations at the hotel front desk. The present study has shown that macro contexts are interwoven into micro interactions and language in micro interactions influences macro understanding of organisational and cultural contexts. Social life is performed based on a society's norms as they are constructed, reformulated and applied within social interaction to achieve routine within institutional arrangements. CA as a framework shows how the social world emerges through interactions.

The present study started with established conceptual and theoretical notions of politeness and employed them as grounds throughout the analysis. The study followed Haugh and Culpeper's (2015) suggestion for an integrated middle ground approach in studies associated with politeness research, rather than adhering to dichotomies in approaches created in the literature over the past decades. Sociocultural knowledge is exhibited in contexts and situations which is accomplished through mechanisms inherent to the scene or context. Meaning in interaction was pursued within the analysis through a combination of conversation analysis and ethnographic notes (Kecskes, 2015). It was shown how receptionists and hotel guests navigate interactions through ascribing activities and ascriptions in conversations (Haugh, 2015).

The research questions of how the specifics of communicative behaviour at the hotel reception establish the institutional character of a service encounter precipitated an analysis of how the interactions are constructed turn-by-turn. The findings showed that service encounters at the hotel front desk occur in phases and are oriented to by participants.

This study has begun to show the usefulness of utilising established concepts in CA, communication and tourism to contribute to further academic discussion. The results of the study will be useful in facilitating interdisciplinary discourse between research focused on language and research situated in business contexts. The study has developed a reflexive approach to bridge academic research and practitioners in a corporate environment, through the facilitation of mutual understanding and interpersonal trust within a collaborative discourse centred on the service encounter (Brady, 2009). While the study has not explicitly detailed the application of this reflexive line of engagement, future research will be able to draw on findings and more directly apply the approach and develop practices oriented to Schön's (1983) 'reflective practitioner'.

## 9.3   The context of the current research

Researchers have begun to investigate how institutional and mundane interactions affect behaviour in commercial encounters (Sikveland & Stokoe, 2015). First experiences cannot be repeated (Senft, 2015). The study has shown that this is observable in the data corpus, but also in being the researcher within the environment. Interactions occur in social contexts and

communication between two parties (e.g. a receptionist and a guest) is only novel in a first conversation. Communication between people occurs in utterance, turns at speech, sequences and conversations. Turn-taking is a universal system, whereas language is subject to cultural variations (Levinson, 2015). This study has demonstrated means by which people in asymmetrical interactions demonstrate how they are aware of their, and their interlocutors, current stance and standing in the conversation (Du Bois, 2015). Participants in interaction, even in routine situations, make conscious choices every time they interact (Mitchell & Haugh, 2015). Their realisation in speech has been shown to differ linguistically across languages (House & Kasper, 1987). At the hotel desk, interactants need to be clear about their intentions and needs for the service encounter, but at the same time ensure that face concerns are maintained (Powell & Placencia, 2015). Hence, politeness and effective behaviour are not necessarily aligned (Johnson, 2008). A form of analysis is required that captures and reveals these potentially competing elements.

CA was used in the study to understand conversation as "a vehicle for social action" (Drew & Heritage, 1992a, p. 17). Conversation analytic data has been complemented with ethnographic findings in this study (Moerman, 1988), so as to access and utilise social reality as it is present in a hotel. Common advice on constructing research projects (e.g. Spencer-Oatey, 2008a) recommends a focus on researcher anticipated miscommunication. Arguably, such an approach may foreground phenomena that do not necessarily represent a social situation, and may ascribe some properties which rely on the researcher's lay perspective. Rather than taking this line, the present data corpus allows for an exploratory analysis of the social context of service encounters. Service encounters may seem fragmented at a first glance, but upon analysis in a series of conversations at the hotel front desk demonstrates how artfully interaction is ordered, both turn-by-turn and in connection to a larger social context or order (Fishman, 1972; Terkourafi, 2005), of how conversations in hotels construct the notion of locally achieved tourism. Understanding becomes a situationally and sequentially ordered process (Frankel, 1984) which unfolds for participants and researcher alike. The blocks of timeframes described in this study shows how understanding in conversation is accessible to interactants and observing party. Halkowski and Gill (2010) refer to this as 'practical epistemics' (p. 212) in which CA uncovers social and temporal structures within turns and sequences. What constitutes understanding is understood as a practical concern for interactants. It is oriented to and resolved by them through their engagement, and intentions are not ascribed by the researcher (Halkowski & Gill, 2010). In this study, these situations were described as *situated conventions* and *conventional situations*.

## 9.4 Main findings

Current research has taken to address minute details of service encounter interactions. Some address previously unaddressed components in conversations developing new ways of understanding what aspects constitute a service encounter (Kuroshima, 2015). Others transpose well-researched aspects in mundane interaction into institutional contexts, such as the use of requests in a service encounter (Halonen & Koivisto, 2015; Mondada, 2015; Raevaara, 2015), thus developing a new sub-genre of literature.

This study has identified a number of key characteristics of service encounters at the international hotel front desk as they are observable in the blocks of timeframe in the three discovered phases in the encounters (arrival, stay, departure). These include:

1. Asymmetries in speech are observable (demonstrated in orientation to knowledge which parties are held accountable for in different phases; compare arrival, and departure (see also Figure 10, p. 225)

2. Asymmetries in speech change in real time as demonstrated in the block of timeframe approach (see Figure 11, p. 239).

3. Asymmetries are addressed collaboratively and co-constructed together (arrival: see 5.4.1, p. 109; stay: see p. 149)

4. Asymmetries are used as relational building block to construct co-membership (rapport building). Non-synchronic interaction is central to building service relationships (conversations happen in a series, compare p. 152)

5. Asymmetries are necessary to build routine (compare e.g. Extract 27, p. 149)

6. The service encounter is characterised by a 'spectrum of engagement': arrival sets the scene for the guest's stay (see 5.3.1, p. 100; stay continues and develops the interaction (see focus on requesting, see 6.2.1, p. 137; departure affirms and extends the relationship beyond the current encounter, and to potential future encounters (see 7.3.1, p. 177)

7. The spectrum of engagement is salient and oriented to by participants (see 5.3, p. 99)

8. Leave taking from an interaction is constructed differently than leave taking from the organisation (upon departure) (departing from a conversation, see e.g. p. 139; leave-taking from the organisation, see p. 181)

9. Appropriateness as to how conduct service in interaction is salient and established in every encounter (see Analysis 2, p. 149)

10. Efficiency and effectiveness are monitored and oriented to by both parties

11. Effectiveness may be related to personal attributes of each party and their level of experience (as being a guest in a specific hotel (developed over a stay and engagement

with a hotel, see e.g. Extract 27, p. 149)/as being a guest in hotels in general (prior experience with hotels, e.g. offering payment before it is made explicit by a receptionist, see e.g. Extract 32, p. 170)

12. The organisation of encounters as demonstrated in patterns of interaction is observable across different hotels, different cultural/national dyads (native, non-native) and different countries (as applicable to the study) (compare examples across the analyses)

13. Expertise is shared among service provider and recipient: it is evoked in different situations according to interactional relevance (arrival sequences: receptionist as expert, see e.g. Extract 11, p. 110; stay sequences: guest as expert , see e.g. Extract 26, p. 144)

14. Interactions are subject to collaboration and oriented towards the want to belong and get along with fellow interactants (see preference for request patterns, see 6.2.1, p. 137 and avoidance of complaints, see 6.2.3, p. 138)

## 9.5    Wider relevance of findings

Robinson and Heritage (2014) noted that CA insights have shown to constitute useful material in physicians' communication training. Findings from naturally occurring conversations appear to aid trainees to practice interventions "correctly" (p. 210). In this matter, academic insights from CA into workplace settings provide direct suggestions for practice. These could include suggestions for sustainable organisational change in form of altered patterns of behaviour. Insights into interaction between staff and customer may act as information on how particular patterns might be linked to the outcome of an encounter (cf. also Drew et al., 2006). Although research on workplace interaction in CA has shown particular interest in medial settings, the results are still of significance for other situations. This is due to CA's understanding that how talk relates to a particular setting is highly reflexive. Language is used across communicative contexts (Levinson, 2015). Although a setting or context is used by interactants as a communicative resource, speech is produced and understood turn-by-turn, thus, reconstructing the social reality and particular speech event in an interaction (Whalen & Zimmerman, 2006).

A similar argument may be made for the findings of the present study. The block of timeframe approach may be useful in training apprentices in hotels by highlighting interactional practices pertinent to specific times during a guest's stay. Learning a job often focuses on handling physical details for executing tasks which leaves little to no time for training of communicative skills. The findings here may be useful in providing small, actionable items to be included in training.

The present study has shown how knowledge about a communicative environment can aid in allowing conversational data to be treated as an underlying context, and not as based on a

researcher's lay experience with a research setting (Cruz, 2015), that is prior experience as being a guest in a hotel.

The study contributes to the advancement of academic knowledge of service encounters, and its findings could also be applied to real life contexts of globalised tourism (cf. Frankel & Beckman, 1989; Robinson & Heritage, 2014). The study utilised the reception desk as a pivot point of communicative planes between a representative of a business, the receptionist, and a service consumer, the guest. The reception desk and its gatekeeping function provide a physical and an interactional pivot. As such, the findings show how service is enacted in real world situations and are useful in differentiating between theoretical, managerial and frontline perspectives of what service quality is and how interlocutors orient to it. Hotels are designed for a specific purpose in which a particular type of service is sold to its customers. The present study is timely as popular publications regarding the effective handling of communicative situations in work and family life, such as Gallo (2016), demonstrate. The study presents empirical insights to an example of how conversations are constructed in an asymmetrical context between receptionists and hotel guests across a number of hotels and countries as summarised in in the previous section.

In addition to these main contributions to the service encounter literature, the substantial amount of German data in the corpus also provides valuable insights to research in CA on service encounters in German. The study has thus been able to address a number of gaps in the current literature. The study has shown that interactions which take part in an apparent interactional context do not necessarily make this notion relevant in the associated conversations; intercultural as a theme cannot be assumed on the basis of context, participants or location of an interaction. CA literature now also features a growing body of cross-cultural studies; the study presented here contains a substantial collection of German interaction, but allows for comparisons between native and non-native engagement at the same time.

## 9.6   Viable directions for future research

This study has shown that blocks of timeframes in a string of interactions can provide meaningful insights into how social relationships develop. The analysis of the data has established three phases of interaction as foundation for an interactional relationship. Each of the phases may be relevant for other communicative situations and may provide a starting point for future research: Arrival sequences and the establishment of normality may be of interest to investigations of switching service providers. The concept may also be useful in investigation miscommunication, or relationships that have gone awry. Principles of engagement found here may be transferred to other realms of service encounters (see e.g. Näslund, 2016).

Stay sequences and the planes in which requests are constructed may be useful in bridging customer expectations and service provision by granting insight into a process turn-by-turn in real time. Principles of expectations and accountability may aid in comprehending construed obstructions in understanding (see e.g. Odebunmi, 2016)

Departure sequences and impression management may be relevant for exploring orientation to physical spaces in talk. Managing time and space interactionally could be explored as possible starting or ending points of an interaction (see e.g. Berger, Viney, & Rae, 2016).

The method of investigation developed for this study could be more generally adapted to be used in situations where the differentiation between the individual phases is less obvious to an observer. In a follow up project, it might be addressed how people negotiate talk about places (e.g. a town as a destination) that they are unfamiliar with and how the lack of reference points diminishes over time.

Further, the present study could aid in other explorations of the social construction of "time" in interactions. The blocks of timeframes approach could be used to explore notions of cognitive distance and how and to which goal it is negotiated and used as an expression of social reality by participants.

## 9.7 Limitations of the study

The corpus for this study consisted of naturally occurring interactions that were collected using an opportunistic approach. The exploratory nature of this method meant that the data recorded did not address a predefined phenomenon, but instead consisted of a wide range of interactions recorded based on availability.

The study has addressed *in situ* interactions at the hotel front desk without a distinct focus on native or non-native speaker considerations which have been assumed in studies focused on intercultural miscommunication (cf. Spencer-Oatey, 2008a). However, although robust patterns were discovered, the generalisability to other populations, such as hotels in general or other service encounters remains to be further explored.

The material came from institutions that were willing to participate. All had confidence in their staff and their communication abilities. While this has allowed patterns to be more robust in the data, the study does not address communicative environments at the hotel front desk that are flawed or problematic. Future study would look to record these types of instances. This would need to be based on the development of trust between researcher and hotel owners.

The corpus does not contain any formal complaints to the hotel for ethical reasons. While it has been argued, that they do not form part of the 3-phase system, they are still regular occurrences at the front desk that form part of the day-to-day interactions and should be investigated in a separate piece of research. In line with the literature, complaints at the hotel desk were found to create liability (financially, but also interactionally) (Orthaber & Márquez-Reiter, 2011). Complaints may be construed as obstacles in communication (Johnson, Roloff, & Riffee, 2004) and warrant separate study.

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# Appendix A: Transcription and glossing

## Transcription Symbols

Punctuation markers represent the 'usual' intonation, thus:

| | |
|---|---|
| . | falling intonation |
| , | level intonation |
| ? | rising intonation |

| | |
|---|---|
| ↑ | rise in pitch |
| ↓ | fall in pitch |
| __ | underline indicates emphasis |
| : | lengthening of a sound (number of :: indicates length) |
| wo- | cut-off of a word represented by a dash |

WORD loud utterance in comparison to surrounding talk is represented by upper case letters

| | |
|---|---|
| [ | begin of overlap |
| ] | end of overlap |
| (.) | micropause (0.2 seconds or less) |
| (1.0) | silence (timed in tenth of a second) |
| = | no break or gap between utterances |

| | |
|---|---|
| °° | talk inside the dots is spoken quieter than surrounding talk |
| < > | indicates slower pace of talk than surrounding talk |
| > < | indicates faster pace of talk than surrounding talk |

| | |
|---|---|
| .h | audible in-breath (number of letters indicates length of inhalation) |
| h | audible out-breath (number of letters indicates length of aspiration) |

( )        utterance in doubt

(( ))      transcriptionist's comments


#          creaky voice

(see Jefferson, 2004)




**Glossing: verbal utterances**

PRT    modal particle

COL    colloquial

HON    honorific (e.g. form of address)

FAM    familiar (form of address)

TAG    tag

+        tying: e.g. *zum* (*zu dem* in written language) = to+the

mit$_{tying}$ 'with' used to tie (topical) utterances of talk together

≠        grammatical errors in non-native talk

(see also Bücker, 2012; Golato & Fagyal, 2008, Leipzig Glossing Rules)




**Glossing: non-verbal**

① time stamps for pictures in transcript

∇ token moments in transcripts

Pictures are anonymised




_____            party is gazing at the face of the co-participant

– – – – – – – – –            longer dashes indicate the party looking at an object

,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,            party is turning away from a participant

……………..             party is turning towards a co-participant

-------------------            close dashes represent movement (Heath, 1986)

;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;            co-participants gazing at each other

# Appendix B Consent forms

## Information for receptionists (English)

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**Intercultural Communication and Language Use at the Hotel Reception**

*INFORMATION for RECEPTIONISTS*

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Past research has shown that front-line staff is vital in making a hotel guest feel at home in a hotel. The front office is therefore essential for the overall success of a hotel. I am a research student at the University of York, UK and I am conducting an international research project that studies communication between hotel staff and guests.

### *Purpose of the Research*

I am studying the communication between hotel receptionists, focusing on the language that is used during the conversation. The study is designed to understand the *way* people communicate – I am not concerned at all with *what* is being talked about. The aim of the study is to learn more about intercultural communication techniques that work well. Results from the study can contribute to future staff training. The study **will not** evaluate individual job performance.

### *What it will mean for you*

If you agree to take part in this study, I will record your conversations with the guests that you encounter during your work shift. The researcher will explain the study to your guests and ask them if they are willing to partake in the study. If a guest declines, the conversation will not be recorded. Participation in this project is entirely voluntary and you can opt out at any stage.

### *Why I would like to record your conversation*

To identify strategies for best practice in intercultural communication situations, I need to understand how communication works at the hotel front desk. I need to record the conversations so that I can capture exactly how language is used and how individual sentences are formulated. This is an impossible task if relying on observation, or asking you about your work experience. I would like to video-record the conversations, because it will let me know what is happening during silences in the talk. It can also provide information about non-verbal communication – which can be very important in intercultural communication. And from personal experience I know that receptionists can be really creative and effective in the

use of non-verbal communication to help overcome language barriers. I would like to learn more about this in my study

### *Guarantee of confidentiality*

❖ All information will be treated in the strictest confidence.  No personal information, like names or other identifying information will be used in any part of the study.
❖ The data from this study will be only used for research and educational purposes. Conference presentations or research publications will not affect your anonymity.
❖ Recordings will be accessible only to me and those directly involved in the study's management.
❖ Recordings *will not* be passed on to your manager or anyone responsible for evaluating your work.
❖ You can ask for the recording to be stopped at any time – and for the recording to be deleted.

### *What now?*

If you would like to participate in the study, you will be asked to sign a consent form and the researcher will record your conversation with your guests.

I may wish to play short parts of the recordings for training or at presentations. If so, absolute privacy and confidentiality will be ensured. You will be asked on the consent form if you are willing for the recordings to be used in this way. You are free to say no to this request and still take part in the main project.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information! I hope that you will feel able to take part in this research!

---

*Contact details*
If you have any questions, or would like further information about this project, please contact me:

**Geraldine Bengsch**                                            **email: gb675@york.ac.uk**
**Department of Sociology**
**University of York, YO10 5DD, York, UK**

Project supervisors:
Prof. Paul Drew (paul.drew@york.ac.uk) and Dr Danijela Trenkic (danijela.trenkic@york.ac.uk)

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*This study has been reviewed and approved by the ELMPS University of York Ethics Committee. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Committee elmps-ethics-group@york.ac.uk ).*
*Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.*

**Consent form for receptionists (English)**

> **Intercultural Communication and Language Use at the Hotel Reception**
>
> *CONSENT FORM for RECEPTIONISTS*

I confirm that I have had the research project explained to me and I have read and understand the information sheet given to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

I agree to the video recording of my conversation with the hotel guests.

I understand that the researcher offers me the following guarantees:

❖ I understand that everything I say is confidential and none of the information I give will identify me will appear in any part of the study.

❖ The data from this study will be only used for research and educational purposes. Conference presentations or research publications will not affect your anonymity.

❖ Recordings *will not* be passed on to my manager, anyone involved in evaluating my work, or any third parties; the only persons who will know what I have said will be the researcher and their supervisors.

❖ I can ask for the recording to be stopped at any time – and for the recording to be deleted.

I have had time to consider everything and I give my consent to be a part of this project as outlined above.


*Participant Signature: ………………………….. Date: ……………………………*


The researcher may wish to play short parts of the recordings for training or at presentations. If so, absolute privacy and confidentiality will be ensured.


Please sign here if you agree to short parts of the recordings being played for training and presentation purposes:


*Participant Signature: ………………………….. Date: ……………………………*

> **For the researcher:**
> *I confirm that I have explained the study to the person who has signed above*
>
>
> *Project Researcher: ………………………….. Date: ……………………………*

## Information for hotel guests (English)

> **Intercultural Communication and Language Use at the Hotel Reception**
>
> *INFORMATION for HOTEL GUESTS*

A great holiday starts – and finishes with excellent service at the hotel reception. I am a research student at the University of York, UK and I am conducting an international research project that studies communication between hotel staff and guests such as yourself.

You have received this information, because you have given your consent to participate in the study. Below, you will find some more information about the project. I have also included my contact details, so please keep this information sheet should you find that you have any queries about the study or your participation in it.

### *Purpose of the Research*
I am studying the communication between hotel receptionists, focusing on the language that is used during the conversation. The study is designed to understand the *way* people communicate – I am not concerned at all with *what* is being talked about. The purpose of the study is to learn more about effective intercultural communication so that this can be used for training purposes.

### *What it will mean for you*
If you agree to take part in this study, I will record your conversation with the hotel reception staff. You do not have to agree to this. If you do agree, but then change your mind, you can ask for the recording to be stopped and/or erased at any time.

### *Why I would like to record your conversation*
I need to record the conversations so that I can capture exactly how language is used and how individual sentences are formulated. This is an impossible task if relying on observation, or asking receptionists or you, the guest, about the experience. I would like to video-record the conversations, because it will let me know what is happening during silences in the talk, and also provide information about non-verbal communication.

### *Guarantee of confidentiality*
- ❖ All information will be treated in the strictest confidence. No personal information, like names or other identifying information will be used in any part of the study.
- ❖ The data from this study will be only used for research and educational purposes. Conference presentations or research publications will not affect your anonymity.
- ❖ Recordings will be accessible only to me and those directly involved in the study's management.
- ❖ You can ask for the recording to be stopped at any time – and for the recording to be deleted.

Thank you very much for your time and thank you very much for taking part in my research!

---

**Contact details**
If you have any questions, or would like further information about this project, please contact me:

**Geraldine Bengsch**                                   email: **gb675@york.ac.uk**
**Department of Sociology**
**University of York, YO10 5DD, York, UK**

Project supervisors:
Prof. Paul Drew (paul.drew@york.ac.uk) and Dr Danijela Trenkic (danijela.trenkic@york.ac.uk)

## Information for receptionists (German)

**Internationale Kommunikation und Sprachverwendung an der Hotelrezeption**

*INFORMATION für REZEPTIONISTinnEN*

Bisherige Studien haben gezeigt, dass die Mitarbeiter der Rezeption eine große Rolle spielen damit sich ein Gast in einem Hotel wohl fühlt. Die Rezeption ist somit sehr wichtig für den Erfolg eines jeden Hotels. Ich bin eine Doktorandin an der Universität York in England und erstelle zur Zeit eine internationale Studie, die die Kommunikation zwischen Hotelmitarbeiter und Hotelgast untersucht.

### Sinn und Zweck der Studie

Ich untersuche die Kommunikation zwischen RezeptionistINNen und ihren Gästen, wobei ich mich auf die sprachlichen Kleinigkeiten konzentriere, die in dem Gespräch auftauchen. Die Studie soll dazu dienen zu verstehen, *wie* Menschen miteinander kommunizieren – es interessiert mich dabei nicht, *über was* gesprochen wird. Das Ziel des Projektes ist es, mehr über interpersönliche und interkulturelle Gesprächstaktiken zu erfahren, die sich im Umgang mit Gästen bewähren. Die Ergebnisse können für das Training von neuen Mitarbeitern verwendet werden sowie bereits erfahrenen Mitarbeitern neue Einblicke in ihre tägliche Arbeit liefern. Die Studie beurteilt **nicht** die Arbeitsleistung der einzelnen Mitarbeiter.

### Was die Studie für Sie bedeutet

Sollten Sie der Teilnahme an dem Projekt zustimmen, werde ich die Gespräche, die Sie mit Ihren Gästen führen, aufzeichnen. Ich werde dazu Ihre Gäste fragen, ob sie an der Studie teilnehmen möchten. Wenn ein Gast ablehnt, wird das Gespräch nicht aufgezeichnet. Die Teilnahme ist vollkommen freiwillig, und Teilnehmer können jederzeit abrechen.

### Warum ich Ihre Gespräche aufnehmen möchte

Um "best practice"-Strategien in der Kommunikation aufzeigen zu können, muss ich genau verstehen, wie die Kommunikation an der Rezeption abläuft. Ich muss die Gespräche aufnehmen, so dass ich ganz genau sehen kann, wie Sprache verwendet wird und wie die einzelnen Sätze formuliert werden. Dies ist unmöglich, wenn man sich dabei auf Beobachtungen oder auf Interviews zu dem Thema verlässt. Ich würde die Gespräche gerne mit einem kleinen Videogerät aufzeichnen, um auch Informationen darüber zu erhalten, was in Gesprächspausen passiert. Nicht-verbale Kommunikation kann ebenfalls sehr wichtig für das gute Gelingen von interpersönlicher und interkultureller Kommunikation sein. Aus

persönlicher Erfahrung weiß ich auch, dass die Mitarbeiter an der Rezeption nicht-verbale Kommunikation häufig sehr kreativ und effektiv verwenden, und ich würde gern mehr darüber durch meine Studie erfahren.

### *Vertraulichkeit und Geheimhaltung*
❖ Jegliche Information wird streng vertraulich gehandelt. Keinerlei persönliche Information, wie etwa Namen, werden in der Studie verwendet.
❖ Die gesammelten Daten werden nur für Studien- und Ausbildungszwecke verwendet. Bei Präsentationen auf Konferenzen oder akademische Veröffentlichungen bleibt die Anonymität der Teilnehmer gewährleistet.
❖ Die Aufnahmen werden nur für mich und die Betreuer meiner Studie zugänglich sein.
❖ Die Aufnahmen *werden nicht* an Ihre Vorgesetzten oder sonstige Personen, die Ihre Arbeit beurteilen, weitergeleitet.
❖ Sie können die Aufnahme jederzeit stoppen und selbstverständlich auch löschen lassen.

### *Was nun?*
Sollten Sie an der Studie teilnehmen wollen, möchte ich Sie bitten, auf der beigefügten Einverständniserklärung zu unterschreiben. Dann werde ich werde Ihre Gespräche mit Ihren Gästen aufnehmen.

Es könnte sich ergeben, dass ich kurze Ausschnitte des gesammelten Audiomaterials auf Konferenzen abspielen möchte. In diesem Fall garantiere ich Ihnen absolute Anonymität. Auf der Einverständniserklärung werden Sie gefragt, ob Sie der Verwendung der Aufnahmen in diesem Sinne zustimmen. Es steht Ihnen frei dies abzulehnen und trotzdem an der Studie teilzunehmen.

Ich bedanke mich vielmals, dass Sie sich die Zeit genommen haben, um die Informationen zu meiner Studie zu lesen! Ich hoffe, dass Sie Lust haben, an dem Projekt teilzunehmen

---

**Kontakt**
Sollten Sie weitere Fragen zu der Studie haben oder weitere Informationen wünschen, können Sie gerne mit mir in Verbindung treten:

**Geraldine Bengsch**                                        **Email:** gb675@york.ac.uk
**Department of Sociology**
**University of York, YO10 5DD, York, UK**

Projekt Betreuung:
Prof. Paul Drew (paul.drew@york.ac.uk) und Dr Danijela Trenkic (danijela.trenkic@york.ac.uk)

**Consent form for receptionists (German)**

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**Internationale Kommunikation und Sprachverwendung an der Hotelrezeption**

*EINVERSTÄNDNISERKLÄRUNG für REZEPTIONISTinnEN*

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Ich bestätige, dass mir die Studie erklärt wurde und ich das Informationsblatt gelesen und verstanden habe. Meine Fragen wurden zu meiner Zufriedenheit beantwortet.

Ich stimme zu, dass meine Gespräche mit meinen Gästen mit einem Videogerät aufgezeichnet werden.

Ich verstehe, dass mir die folgenden Dinge zugesichert werden:

- ❖ Alles was ich sage, wird vertraulich behandelt und persönliche Angaben werden nicht in der Studie auftauchen.
- ❖ Die gesammelten Daten werden nur für Studien- und Präsentationszwecke verwendet. Konferenzpräsentationen oder akademische Veröffentlichungen haben keinen Einfluss auf meine Anonymität.
- ❖ Die Aufnahmen *werden nicht* an meine Vorgesetzten, andere Personen, die meine Arbeit beurteilen, oder an Dritte weitergegeben. Die einzigen Personen, die wissen werden, was ich gesagt habe, sind die Doktorandin und ihre Studienbetreuer.
- ❖ Ich kann die Aufnahme jederzeit stoppen und die Aufnahme löschen lassen.

Ich hatte genügend Zeit, um mir Gedanken zu machen, und stimme zu, an der Studie zu den oben aufgeführten Bedingungen teilzunehmen.


*Unterschrift des Teilnehmers: ……………………….. Datum: ……………………………*
Für den Fall, dass die Doktorandin kurze Ausschnitte der Audioaufnahmen bei Präsentationen abspielen möchte, bleibt die Anonymität vollständig gewährleistet.


Bitte unterschreiben Sie hier, wenn Sie dem Abspielen von kurzen Audiopassagen bei Präsentationen zustimmen.


*Unterschrift des Teilnehmers: ……………………….. Datum: ……………………………*

---

*Für die Doktorandin:*

*Ich bestätige, dass ich die Studie der oben unterzeichneten Person erklärt habe.*

*Doktorandin: ……………………………. Datum: ……………………………*

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## Information for hotel guests (German)

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### Internationale Kommunikation und Sprachverwendung an der Hotelrezeption

*INFORMATION für HOTELGÄSTE*

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Ein großartiger Aufenthalt in einem Hotel beginnt – und endet – mit großartigem Service an der Hotelrezeption. Ich bin eine Doktorandin an der Universität York in England und erstelle zur Zeit eine internationale Studie, die die Kommunikation zwischen Hotelmitarbeiter und Hotelgast untersucht.

Sie haben diese Information erhalten, da Sie sich dazu bereit erklärt haben, an meiner Studie teilzunehmen. Hier finden Sie auch meine Kontaktinformationen, sollten Sie Fragen zu der Studie oder Ihrer Teilnahme daran haben.

### Sinn und Zweck der Studie

Ich untersuche die Kommunikation zwischen RezeptionistINNen und ihren Gästen, wobei ich mich auf die sprachlichen Kleinigkeiten konzentriere, die in dem Gespräch auftauchen. Die Studie soll dazu dienen zu verstehen, *wie* Menschen miteinander kommunizieren – es interessiert mich dabei nicht, *über was* gesprochen wird. Das Ziel des Projektes ist es, mehr über interpersönliche und interkulturelle Gesprächstaktiken zu erfahren, die sich im Umgang mit Gästen bewähren.

### Was die Studie für Sie bedeutet

Da Sie der Teilnahme an dem Projekt zugestimmt haben, werde ich die Gespräche, die Sie mit den RezeptionistINNen führen, aufzeichnen. Sie müssen nicht teilnehmen, und falls Sie zunächst zustimmen, sich dann aber umentscheiden, wird die Aufnahme gestoppt und/oder gelöscht.

### Warum ich Ihre Gespräche aufnehmen möchte

Ich muss die Gespräche aufnehmen, damit ich ganz genau sehen kann, wie Sprache verwendet wird und wie die einzelnen Sätze formuliert werden. Dies ist unmöglich, wenn man sich dabei auf Beobachtungen oder auf Interviews zu dem Thema verlässt. Ich zeichne die Gespräche mit einem kleinen Videogerät auf, um auch Informationen darüber zu erhalten, was in Gesprächspausen passiert. Darüber hinaus erhalte ich so auch Informationen über nicht-verbale Teile des Gespräches.

### Vertraulichkeit und Geheimhaltung

- ❖ Jegliche Information wird streng vertraulich gehandelt. Keinerlei persönliche Information, wie etwa Namen, werden in der Studie verwendet.
- ❖ Die gesammelten Daten werden nur für Studien- und Ausbildungszwecke verwendet. Bei Präsentationen auf Konferenzen oder akademische Veröffentlichungen bleibt die Anonymität der Teilnehmer gewährleistet.
- ❖ Die Aufnahmen werden nur für mich und die Betreuer meiner Studie zugänglich sein.
- ❖ Sie können die Aufnahme jederzeit stoppen und selbstverständlich auch löschen lassen.

Ich bedanke mich vielmals, dass Sie sich die Zeit genommen haben, die Informationen zu meiner Studie zu lesen und danke Ihnen sehr herzlich, dass Sie Lust haben, an dem Projekt teilzunehmen

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**Kontakt**

Sollten Sie weitere Fragen zu der Studie haben oder weitere Informationen wünschen, können
Sie gerne mit mir in Verbindung treten:

**Geraldine Bengsch**                                    **Email:** gb675@york.ac.uk
**Department of Sociology**
**University of York, YO10 5DD, York, UK**

Projekt Betreuung:
Prof. Paul Drew (paul.drew@york.ac.uk) und Dr Danijela Trenkic (danijela.trenkic@york.ac.uk)

## Information for receptionists (Spanish)

**Comunicación Intercultural y Utilización de Lenguas en el Hotel**

*INFORMACIÓN para RECEPTIONISTAS*

Investigaciones antecedidas han mostrado que los recepcionistas tienen un parte mayor para que el huésped se siente "en casa" en el hotel. La recepción esta entonces muy importante para que un hotel tenga éxito. Estoy haciendo un doctorado en Comunicación en la Universidad de York en Inglaterra y estoy llevando a cabo una investigación internacional que está dedicada a la comunicación entre recepcionistas y huéspedes como Ud.

### El objetivo de la investigación

Mi proyecto explora la comunicación entre recepcionistas y turistas, focalizando la atención en la lengua usada durante la conversación. La investigación está elaborada para poder comprender como personas comunican – no me interese sobre que la gente habla. El objetivo de la investigación esta descubrir más sobre la comunicación intercultural efectiva y como los resultados se pueden usar en el entrenamiento intercultural. El estudio *no* se preocupe con el rendimiento en el trabajo de recepcionistas individuales.

### Lo que significa para Ud.

Si Ud. consiente participar en el proyecto, voy grabar su conversación con los huéspedes que encuentra en su jornada. La doctoranda va explicar el estudio a sus huéspedes, y preguntarle si quisieren participar. Si un huésped declina la participación, la conversación no está grabada. La participación en el estudio esta voluntaria y Ud. puede decidir de no continuar con el proyecto.

### Porque quiero grabar su conversación

Necesito grabar las conversaciones para poder capturar exactamente como lenguas están usadas y como se construyen las frases individuales. Esta imposible cumplir con observaciones, o conversaciones con recepcionistas. Quisiera grabar las conversaciones porque también indica lo que pasa en partes silenciosos y la comunicación no verbal*.* En cuanto a mi experiencia personal, yo se que los recepcionistas están muy creativos y efectivos en el uso de la comunicación no verbal para trascender las barreras lingüísticas. Quisiera aprender más sobre ese asunto en mi investigación.

### Garantía de la confidencialidad

- ❖ Toda información está tratada con confidencialidad absoluta. No información personal, como los nombres o información que pueda identificar los participantes será utilizado en la investigación.
- ❖ Los datas empericas de la investigación están usado exclusivamente por estudios y finos educativos. Presentaciones o publicaciones no van afectar su anonimato.
- ❖ Las grabaciones solamente están accesible para mí y las personas directamente envueltas con mi investigación.
- ❖ Las grabaciones **no** están mostradas por su gerente o cualquier otra persona responsable por la evaluación de su trabajo.
- ❖ Ud. Puede pedir terminar la grabación a cualquier tiempo – y que la grabación sea borrada.

### *¿Y ahora?*

Si quiere participar en el estudio, necesito que Ud. firme una declaración de conformidad, y después voy grabar sus conversaciones con los huéspedes.

Tal vez quisiera reproducir partes cortas de las grabaciones en entrenamientos o en conferencias. En este caso, su esfera privada y la confidencialidad están guardadas. La declaración de conformidad pregunta si Ud. esta feliz que sus grabaciones están usadas de ese manera. Ud. puede negar este pedido y todavía participar en la investigación principal.

Agradezco su atención –  ¡espero que Ud. quiera participar en mi investigación!

---

**Detalles de contacto**
Si Ud. tiene preguntas, o quisiera recebar más información sobre el proyecto, por favor entra  contacto conmigo:

**Geraldine Bengsch**                                                  **correo electrónico:** gb675@york.ac.uk
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**University of York, YO10 5DD, York, UK**

Profesores tutores:
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*Esta investigación fue aprobada por "ELMPS University of York Ethics Committee". Si Ud. tiene reclamaciones o reservaciones al respecto de la realización ética, Ud. puede contactar el comité (en i inglés): elmps-ethics-group@york.ac.uk ).*
*Todos asuntos detallados sean investigado en confidencialidad, y Ud. receba información sobre la conclusión.*

## Consent form for receptionists (Spanish)

**Comunicación Intercultural y Utilización de Lenguas en el Hotel**

*DECLARACIÓN DE CONFORMIDAD*

Confirmo que la investigación fue elaborada para mí y que he leído y comprendió el folio de información. Todas mis preguntas fueran respondidas.

Estoy de acuerdo con la grabación de mis conversaciones con los huéspedes.

Entiendo que la doctoranda me ofrece las garantías siguientes:

❖ Entiendo que todo lo que digo esta confidencial y no información personal va aparecer en el estudio.
❖ Los datas empericas de la investigación están usado exclusivamente por estudios y finos educativos. Presentaciones o publicaciones no van afectar mi anonimato.
❖ Las grabaciones *no* están mostradas por mi gerente o cualquier otra persona responsable por la evaluación de mi trabajo; solamente la doctorando y sus profesores van saber lo que he dicho.
❖ Puedo pedir que la grabación sea terminada – y borrada.

Tenía tiempo para pensar sobre mi participación y confirmo mi participación según los puntos mencionados más arriba.

*Firma de participante: …………………….…..…….. Fecha: ……………………………*

Tal vez la doctoranda quiere reproducir partes cortas de las grabaciones en entrenamientos o en conferencias. En este caso, su esfera privada y la confidencialidad están guardadas.

Por favor, firme aquí si Ud. confirme que partes breves de las grabaciones sean reproducidas en entrenamientos o en conferencias:

*Firma de participante: …………………………….. Fecha: ……………………………*

*Para la doctoranda:*
*Confirmo que he explicado la investigación a la persona que ha firmada más arriba*


*Doctoranda: ……………………………..…….. Fecha: ……………………………*

## Information for hotel guests (Spanish)

**Comunicación Intercultural y Utilización de Lenguas en el Hotel**

*INFORMACIÓN para TURISTAS*

Las vacaciones fantásticas comienzan – y terminen con una atención excepcional al huésped. Estoy haciendo un doctorado en Comunicación en la Universidad de York en Inglaterra y estoy llevando a cabo una investigación internacional que está dedicada a la comunicación entre recepcionistas y huéspedes como Ud.

Ud. ha recibido esta información porque Ud. ha consentido la participación en esta investigación. Abajo, Ud. va encontrar más información sobre el proyecto. También he incluido mi información de dirección. Por favor, guarda este folio en caso de preguntas.

### *El objetivo de la investigación*
Mi proyecto explora la comunicación entre recepcionistas y turistas, focalizando la atención en la lengua usada durante la conversación. La investigación está elaborada para poder comprender *como* personas comunican – no me interese *sobre que* la gente habla. El objetivo de la investigación esta descubrir más sobre la comunicación intercultural efectiva y como los resultados se pueden usar en el entrenamiento intercultural.

### *Lo que significa para Ud.*
Si Ud. consiente participar en el proyecto, voy grabar su conversación con los recepcionistas. Ud. no tiene cualquier obligación de participar. Si Ud. está de acuerdo, pero cambia su opinión después, Ud. puede pedir que la grabación sea terminada y/o borrada.

### *Porque quiero grabar su conversación*
Necesito grabar las conversaciones para poder capturar exactamente como lenguas están usadas y como se construyen las frases individuales. Esta imposible cumplir con observaciones, o conversaciones con recepcionistas. Quisiera grabar las conversaciones porque también indica lo que pasa en partes silenciosos y la comunicación no verbal.

### *Garantía de la confidencialidad*
- ❖ Toda información está tratada con confidencialidad absoluta. No información personal, como los nombres o información que pueda identificar los participantes será utilizado en la investigación.
- ❖ Los datas empericas de la investigación están usado exclusivamente por estudios y finos educativos. Presentaciones o publicaciones no van afectar su anonimato.
- ❖ Las grabaciones solamente están accesible para mí y las personas directamente envueltas con mi investigación.
- ❖ Ud. Puede pedir terminar la grabación a cualquier tiempo – y que la grabación sea borrada.

Agradezco su atención – ¡mil gracias por su participación en mi investigación¡

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**Detalles de contacto**
Si Ud. Tiene preguntas, o quisiera recebar más información sobre el proyecto, por favor entra contacto conmigo:

**Geraldine Bengsch**                               **correo electrónico:** gb675@york.ac.uk
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