The conflict of form & function in ELF:
A consideration of differences in proficiency levels in arising misinterpretations in ELF communication
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Abstract
This thesis empirically researched misinterpretations, in addition to signalling and preventive strategies, in English as a lingua franca through a communicative task for speakers with different proficiency levels in the target language and by conducting detailed pragmatic conversational analyses of recorded lingua franca conversations. The paper distinguished three dialogue dimensions within the domain, i.e. proficient-proficient, proficient-unproficient, and unproficient-unproficient. It addressed questions relating to interdimensional differences in terms of qualitative and quantitative signalling and preventive strategies and to the extent to which misinterpretations arise. This study, thus, clarified the manner in which misinterpretations surface and how they may be resolved. The task consisted of a discussion of ambiguous stories; two interlocutors were to collaboratively establish several scenarios by discussing their ideas. These conversations were analysed for strategies and misinterpretations to find any interdimensional differences. The study argues that a) interlocutors use semantically and pragmatically based strategies, b) interlocutors employ a larger inventory of strategies than anticipated and display interdimensional qualitative differences in strategies, c) interlocutors use more strategies than anticipated and there are interdimensional quantitative differences, and d) insufficient utilisation of strategies and resulting misinterpretations are most often precipitated in the proficient-unproficient dimension. Interlocutors, regardless of their proficiency level, qualitatively and quantitatively adjusted their strategies in an attempt to approximate the linguistic norms of their co-conversationalists. Unproficient speakers in this dimension, however, may be insufficiently able to approximate these norms, which precipitated the misinterpretations; these situations have been resolved by unproficient interlocutors’ increased reliance on strategies.

Keywords: ELF, proficiency level, form-function continuum, conversational domains, signalling and preventive strategies, misinterpretations, CA.
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Interlocutors engaged in any form of communication risk a mismatch of interpretations. Pragmatic interpretations may interpersonally differ as a result of, e.g. varying culture, history, education, and affinity; semantic interpretations may, furthermore, interpersonally differ as a result of differences in adherence to linguistic norms as well (MacKenzie, 2014). Interlocutors who do not share a first language (L1) may encounter problems in interpreting each other’s utterances in communicating. This introduces lexical and grammatical problems to a situation that is already fairly complex in terms of psycho-social variation. An utterance containing language that proves to be difficult for one of the interlocutors may, consequently, be interpreted in a manner unintended by the speaker. Interpersonal psycho-social differences and linguistic difficulties may result in varying interpretations of a single utterance.

Interlocutors are generally able to understand each other’s speech fairly unproblematically and may have meaningful conversations in which few communicative difficulties hinder mutual understanding; the different communicative partners may, however, encounter instances in which linguistic items, utterances, or ideas are interpreted differently, which may eventually result in misunderstandings. Conventional deviations may, thus, precipitate various pragmatic effects (Willman, 2009, p. 444). Interlocutors may have different realisations of pragmatic definitions and may, resultantly, construct differing realisations of the conversation at hand. Misinterpretations and misunderstandings arise in all forms of communication in which interlocutors attempt to establish a communicative common ground, i.e. a situation in which all participants in a conversational setting contribute to a mutual understanding of the conversation at hand.
Differing interpretations may result from interpersonal psycho-social differences and from both differing personal histories and various personal characteristics permeating a conversation (Scollon, 2001); a greater number of interpersonal differences would, logically, imply a greater difficulty in establishing a communicative common ground and result in more miscommunications. This situation may best be depicted though conversations between two interlocutors with different linguistic backgrounds, cultural backgrounds, and personal histories who communicate through a foreign or second language (L2) that they have in common. L2-L2 communication in which English is used as a vehicular language may be defined as English as a lingua franca (ELF) (Berns, 2009, p. 194; MacKenzie, 2014, p. 1). Interlocutors in ELF communication may, as a result of a great number of interpersonal differences, display more miscommunications than those in L1 communication (Bae, 2002).

Surprisingly, considerable research has presented that miscommunications are less common in ELF than they are in L1-L1 or L1-L2 conversations. (Firth, 2009; Mauranen, 2006); the combination of an imperfect command of the English language and a great number of interpersonal psycho-social and linguistic differences may not have the negative effects on the interpretability of speech as initially expected. Mauranen (2006) and Firth (2009), however, contradict the findings that misinterpretations are more common in ELF than in any other conversational dimension (Bae, 2002). The different views on miscommunication in ELF precipitate a lack of clarity with respect to the concept.

Despite the differing views on misinterpretations in ELF, the phenomenon does appear to affect discourse between ELF users with substantially different proficiency levels in the target language: proficient speakers may misunderstand the intentions of unproficient speakers and vice versa; these misunderstandings may result in dangerous, or even fatal, incidents. Alderson (2009) discusses several fatal air traffic incidents as a result of miscommunication between ELF speaking pilots and traffic controllers. The first incident
concerns a misunderstanding at the part of a pilot, the less proficient speaker of the two: the pilot failed to interpret the phrase ‘at take-off’ correctly, which resulted in the fatal crash (p. 171). The second incident “showed the Chinese pilot’s English to be incomprehensible, and he also failed to understand the native-English-speaking air traffic controller. However, the latter also failed to use standard phraseology to communicate with the pilot and his lack of sensitivity to the Chinese pilot’s problems reveals a degree of communicative incompetence” (Alderson, 2009, p. 170). Miscommunications in an ELF situation with speakers of different proficiency levels in the target language may work both ways: the less proficient interlocutor may misunderstand the proficient speaker and vice versa. Misunderstandings in ELF require more attention, since, on the one hand, the phenomenon remains to be insufficiently researched and, on the other hand, they may result in dangerous and fatal situations when communication does break down.

Research has not considered the topic of miscommunications in ELF sufficiently extensively and has not been consistent in the characterisation of proficiency levels in the domain, which has resulted in an interpretation of the field that is incomplete and insufficiently consistent. Research has focussed on verbal signalling and recovering methods in instances in which miscommunications arise in academic ELF (e.g. Mauranen, 2006), but has mostly neglected a number of aspects that may be important in the classification of miscommunications and in the composition of ELF situations. Research should focus on conversational context and, resultantly, on nonverbal strategies relating to signalling the uninterpretability of semantics and pragmatics and on the effect of different proficiency levels; this will result in a more complete analysis of miscommunications in ELF.

Miscommunications have, firstly, only been considered as instances in which the impending breakdown of communication is demonstrably indicated through explicit semantically based verbal strategies, where other, i.e. pragmatically based and nonverbal
strategies, have been neglected (Firth, 2009; Kaur, 2010; Mauranen, 2006). Semantically based verbal strategies may, however, not be the only way in which misinterpretations and misunderstandings may be signalled and prevented. Verbal and nonverbal strategies indicating the uninterpretability of both semantics and pragmatics in addition to conversational context in which miscommunications arise should be considered in the analysis of misunderstandings in ELF.

Misunderstandings in an ELF situation have, secondly, been studied in academic- and non-academic settings; these settings, however, did not account for possible differences in interlocutors’ proficiency levels influencing the course of speech and impending misinterpretations. ELF has been studied in different settings, for example at university (e.g. Mauranen, 2006) and in business meetings (e.g. Firth, 2009). This research, however, analysed interlocutors with equally high or equally low proficiency levels respectively, thus neglecting the effect of interpersonally differing proficiency levels in the target language. Instances in which interlocutors’ proficiency levels substantially differ have not yet been paid sufficient attention to.

Differing proficiency levels may, however influence the course of a conversation and may affect the manner in which misunderstandings arise and strategies with which they are avoided. Various proficiency levels may affect, e.g., the interlocutors’ lexical repertoire, vocabulary size, grammatical accuracy, and production speed, which may result in deviating courses of conversations and in varying extents to which speech is deemed feasible, possible, and appropriate for the interlocutors (MacKenzie, 2014, p. 3). Interpersonal differences in proficiency levels in the target language have been neglected in ELF research, but may fulfil an important role in establishing a more complete understanding of miscommunications in ELF in general and of the manner in which they may be resolved.
ELF communication, as a rule, encapsulates a great variety of situations in which interlocutors interpersonally differ. This results in an interesting approach to linguistic research with respect to miscommunications, but it, simultaneously, complicates the field: ELF is a field in which substantially different communicative situations are compared, which leads to differing empirical results. However, a recognition of the diversity of the proficiency levels in the target language of non-native speakers of English (NNES), which has, until now, been neglected, may prove to be beneficial for the comprehensibility of the field.

This study recognises differences in semantic and pragmatic strategies between people who display substantially different proficiency levels in English; the differences in strategies are accounted for by the classification of interlocutors according to proficiency level, i.e. proficient in the target language versus unproficient in the target language, and by the analysis of misunderstandings in different dialogue dimensions. Misunderstandings are analysed in three different dialogue compositions: a dialogue between interlocutors who are both proficient in the target language, between interlocutors who are both unproficient, and between interlocutors who have substantially different proficiency levels. The study, thus, accounts for ELF users’ different proficiency levels in the target language in analysing these separately for possible differences in both the quality and the quantity of miscommunication between the aforementioned groups.

This thesis considers misunderstandings in ELF conversations between interlocutors whose proficiency levels in the target language differ: miscommunications are qualitatively and quantitatively analysed with respect to the conversational dimension; in accounting for possible differences between the groups, this thesis recognises the importance of context and of real-time speech in the analysis of miscommunications and, therefore, uses conversation analysis (CA), which will be elaborated on in chapter 2.
Keeping in mind, firstly, that ELF is a broad conception in which interlocutors with substantially different proficiency levels in the target language are analysed as if they are the same and, secondly, the aforementioned research gap with respect to the sole focus on semantic verbal strategies in the analysis of miscommunications, proficiency levels in the target language should be acknowledged and accounted for in ELF. The following research questions have been formulated in order to address these issues:

(1) In which verbal and nonverbal strategies may interlocutors in ELF situations engage in signalling and preventing miscommunications?

(2) How do realisations of misunderstandings qualitatively and quantitatively differ between ELF users with similar proficiency levels in the target language and ELF users who substantially differ in this respect?

These two questions serve to structure this thesis and provide a basis for its empirical nature. This study considers miscommunications in ELF situations, but acknowledges interpersonal differences relating to proficiency levels in the target language; these are considered and analysed to pinpoint conversational differences precipitated by linguistic variability.

Hypothesising with respect to the first research question, miscommunications may be expected to be signalled and recovered from in both verbal and nonverbal ways. Interlocutors may verbally cue misinterpretations and miscommunications to prevent the breakdown of communication (Mauranen, 2006; Mauranen, 2009). Research, however, has allocated attention to semantic strategies to avoid misinterpretations and to corpus data, thus obscuring analytical depth that may be obtained through the analysis of context (Have, 2007). Misinterpretations may, thus, be avoided by other, nonverbal ways, as well (Have, 2007);
interlocutors may not be able to reach a communicative common ground and present nonverbal strategies to re-establish speech that is mutually understood.

Hypothesising with respect to the second research question, then, ELF users with different proficiency levels in the target language may use both a qualitatively different inventory of strategies to signal and prevent misunderstandings and a higher quantity of miscommunications than interlocutors with similar proficiency levels. Interlocutors who are highly proficient in the target language may rely on the same semantic and pragmatic strategies to establish a communicative common ground (MacKenzie, 2014; Mauranen, 2006); interlocutors who are substantially less proficient, furthermore, may rely similar strategies as well (e.g. MacKenzie, 2014; Smith, 1992). However different these strategies may be from those employed by proficient speakers, they also result in an increased interpretability of speech (MacKenzie, 2014; Smith, 1992). Highly proficient ELF users may not encounter many problems in conversations as a result of a considerable lexicon, a well-developed semantic and pragmatic understanding, and a substantial exposure to the target language; less proficient interlocutors may, furthermore, benefit from similar semantic and pragmatic strategies to maintain a communicative common ground (Blum & Levinston, 1980, p. 48; MacKenzie, 2014, p. 5; Mauranen, 2012, p. 30). The strategies employed by interlocutors with substantially different proficiency levels in the target language may, consequently, differ and may conflict; the interpretability of a linguistic common ground may be affected by mismatched proficiency levels, which may result in a greater quantity and different quality of strategies in addition to a greater number of miscommunications.

This paper introduces English as a lingua franca; in chapter two, I elaborate on the respective concept and turn to interpersonal differences in L1-L2 speech and between ELF users, in which specific attention is paid to differences in proficiency levels in the target language. In this chapter, I explain possible conflicts in constructing a mutual understanding
of speech between proficient and less proficient interlocutors in ELF situations in their relying on the form or on the function of a language respectively. The chapter, then, turns to the explanation of miscommunication and, thereafter, explains CA and its function in this study.

The following chapters focus on the empirical study. In chapter three I introduce the present study by explicating the methodology by means of a consideration of the empirical design and the data analysis. The ELF dimensions and their common communicative task are elaborated on, which are analysed in chapter four. In chapter four, I focus on the three aforementioned proficiency dimensions and consider the quality and quantity of signalling and preventive strategies employed by adhering to CA. This chapter, furthermore, incorporates an analysis of misinterpretations. In chapters five and six, I discuss the findings and conclude this thesis respectively.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a theoretical basis for the empirical research of miscommunications in ELF. The chapter, firstly, introduces lingua franca, compares and contrasts ELF both with native speakers of English (ENL) and interdimensionally, and argues for a continuum of relying on the form and on the function of a target language. The English language is most commonly used as a vehicular language between two NNES (Bhatt, 2001, p. 530). These interlocutors, however, may conform to linguistic norms less extensively, as a result of great interpersonal psycho-social differences (MacKenzie, 2014); ELF users may, consequently, adopt strategies to ensure mutual comprehensibility, where ENL speakers do not require such methods (Blum & Levinston, 1980, p. 48; MacKenzie, 2014, p. 5; Muraunen, 2012, p. 30). The former domain is, consequently, much less restricted than the latter in allowing more comprehension strategies and in being more flexible in lexically and grammatically phrasing utterances (MacKenzie, 2014). In addition to differing from native
speakers of English (NES), ELF users differ interpersonally as well: ELF users have, e.g.,
different backgrounds, L1s, and proficiency levels in the target language (MacKenzie, 2014).
As a result of the interpersonal differences and, more specifically, following the different
proficiency levels, ELF users may rely on either the form or the function of a language to a
greater extent. This, however, remains to be a continuum on which speakers may shift in
different situations. Different contexts may precipitate a shift on the form-function continuum
and may, consequently, result in ELF users’ adhering to different strategies to ensure mutual
comprehensibility.

The chapter, secondly, focusses on NNES’ interpersonal differences in proficiency
levels in the target language. The interpretability of speech is established through several
linguistic aspects that are determined by the interlocutors in situ rather than by linguistic
norms (Smith, 1992). Difficulties in interpretability may, however, arise following
interlocutors’ adhering to different norms and their having different expectations. ELF
encompasses a great many differences, one of which, insufficiently considered in previous
literature, is proficiency level in the target language. ELF users with different proficiency
levels in English may rely on different aspects of the language, may have different semantic
and pragmatic realisations, and may, consequently, have varying interpretations of the
conversation at hand. Interlocutors with substantially different proficiency levels in the target
language rely on either the form or on the function of a language to a greater extent, which
may precipitate difficulties in semantic and pragmatic interpretability.

The chapter, thirdly, turns to miscommunications in ELF, to signalling and preventive
methods for miscommunications, and to the increased probability of misinterpretations arising
in the proficient-unproficient dimension. Researchers do not agree on the frequency with
which misunderstandings occur in ELF, which leads to contradicting results (e.g. Bae, 2002;
Mauranen, 2006). Research has, until now, only considered semantic strategies, where
pragmatically based signalling and preventive strategies have been neglected (e.g. Bae, 2002; Firth, 2009; Mauranen, 2006). Mauranen (2006) has established multiple verbal semantically based signalling and preventive strategies for miscommunication, which, in combination with nonverbal signalling and preventive methods, prove to be useful in identifying conversational difficulties within ELF conversations. The nonverbal strategies may be identified by using a conversation analytic approach to ELF dialogues. This section introduces signalling and preventive strategies, which are elaborated on in chapter four.

Chapter two, fourthly, introduces CA and shows how it may be beneficial in researching miscommunications in ELF. CA is an ethnomethodological and socio-linguistic approach to researching verbal communication (Chatwin, 2004). This method may prove to be beneficial in the analysis of interlocutors’ semantic and pragmatic understanding of utterances, since it exposes structural conversational rules for the organisation and composition of everyday conversations (Chatwin, 2004). Any continuations of conversations that are out of the ordinary may, consequently, be identified by means of a conversation analytical approach. CA, thus, proves to be beneficial in recognising verbal signalling and preventive strategies by taking Mauranen’s (2006) methods as a starting point, in identifying nonverbal strategies for miscommunication, and in determining instances in which interlocutors are unable to create a communicative common ground and misinterpret pragmatic intentions.

2.2 Introducing English as a Lingua Franca

2.2.1 English as a lingua franca. The English language has developed to be one of the world’s most influential languages in both a social and in an academic sense (Mesthrie & Bhatt, 2008). The spread of the English language is not a new phenomenon: international trade, religious crusades, and colonisation have precipitated the scale on which interlocutors communicate in the English language today. Varieties of the English language have come to
be established as the native languages of multiple nations and a second- or foreign language for many others (Bhatt, 2001, p. 529). Kachru (1988), furthermore, constructed the concentric circle model in which the spread and diffusion of English was classified in an inner, an outer, and an expanding circle (as cited in Bhatt, 2001, p. 529). The inner and the outer circle represent the nations in which English is the native and the second language respectively (Kachru, 1988), but include not nearly as many speakers as the expanding circle in which English is used as a foreign language (Bhatt, 2001, p. 530). The English language has come to be a global language, used not only by NES, but by NNES to a great extent as well.

Speakers of English in the expanding circle use English to communicate with NES as well as with NNES. The most widespread use of English is its functioning as a language of wider communication between NNES, where they may not be able to communicate in a common native language (Berns, 2009, p. 194; MacKenzie, 2014, p. 1). This use of ELF may, for example, be a Dutch student consulting an Italian professor in English in a study abroad situation, the German president of the European Parliament addressing French members in English, or any other situation in which two or more people who do not share a first language engage in a common second or foreign language: English. Jenkins (2006), furthermore, states that “[s]peakers of European Englishes are typically also ELF users, to the extent that they learn and use English more for interlingualcultural communication than to communicate with speakers who share their first linguaculture” (p. 164). ELF, thus, encapsulates communication in English between NNES with different first languages and cultures (Seidlhofer, 2011, p. 1; Mauranen, 2012, p. 5) and is used by interlocutors who may be classified as belonging to Kachru’s expanding circle (Berns, 2008, p. 327).

The extensive use of ELF, however, has precipitated a discussion with respect to the form of English used in NNES communication. The Quirk and Kachru controversy considers the two opposing camps who have as a main point of their discussion the form of English that
should be used in English language teaching (ELT). This controversy, firstly, clarifies the
different views on the use of English of NNES and on ELF and, secondly, displays a clear
distinction between English based on NES norms and on NNES’s use of English.

Quirk (1990), on the one hand, states that outer and expanding circle varieties of
English should not serve as forms of English that may be taught in an ELT situation, but that
NNES should adhere to inner circle norms to uphold the common standard of English; a
common standard, according to Quirk (1990), was necessary in both written and spoken
English, which argued for a common standard in NNES communication as well as in
teaching. English language teaching and, consequently, ELF communication should be based
on inner circle English to uphold a standard for mutual interpretability and to minimise
inequality (Quirk, 1990).

Kachru (1991), on the other hand, considers sociolinguistic aspects of non-inner circle
varieties and argues for the teaching of the form of English with which NNES feel associated
in their contexts. NNES should, according to the Kachru (1991) side of the debate, choose the
form of English with which they feel most comfortable and with which they may bring their
message across in the best possible manner. NNES should, consequently, not attempt to speak
like NES, since non-native English is inherently different from, but not inferior to, native
English (MacKenzie, 2014, p. 2). The English language, and English in an ELF situation may,
thus, be variable and different from inner circle varieties in order for speakers to be able to
represent their ideas in the best possible manner.

NNES forms of English are different from NES varieties, but may be equally
intelligible. Native speakers of English, naturally, have a better command of the language
than speakers who have not acquired the language from birth and who, in general, do not have
as much language contact as NES. The forms and varieties of English in a lingua franca
situation are, consequently, different from native varieties of English, but may nevertheless be
interpretable and communicatively valuable. ELF speech manifests approximations of native varieties of English, which prove to be sufficiently close to their native counterparts to be interpreted in communication (Mauranen, 2009). ELF is, thus, different from conversations involving NES in the manifestation of approximations, but it is an effective means of communication in L2-L2 communication.

Speakers in an ELF situation do not conform to NES rules, but adopt semantic strategies in order to make speech more comprehensible for both themselves and their interlocutors. MacKenzie (2014) states that “[r]ather than imitating the norms of NES, users of English as a lingua franca […] should adopt ways of speaking (with their bi- or multilingual English-speaking interlocutors) which aid mutual intelligibility and successful communication” (p. 1). These ways of speaking may be mutually established in order for information to be communicated efficiently and effectively. ELF communication has, consequently, been characterised as a robust, cooperative, and consensus-seeking form of communication (Firth, 2009); ELF users, other than ENL, adopt strategies to ensure the comprehensibility of a conversation.

2.2.2 Systematic differences between ELF and ENL. ELF users, thus, speak differently from native English interlocutors (Kachru, 1991; MacKenzie, 2014; Quirk, 1990). ELF users display a great amount of non-standard forms and linguistic variation (MacKenzie, 2014, p. 2). These systematic differences, i.e. forms that differ from inner circle forms of English, may be sufficiently interpretable for the interlocutors not to encounter any communicative problems; these differences are the main focus of ELF researchers (Jenkins, 2006, p. 161). ELF users’ imperfect command of the English language and the probability of their being unfamiliar with each other’s cultural background as well as with Anglo-American cultures precipitates several systematic differences in terms of linguistic processes in ELF communication that are different from linguistic processes in native varieties of English.
Trudgill (1986), firstly, argues that ELF users substitute marked and irregular features by unmarked and regular alternatives (as cited in MacKenzie, 2014). The respective language is, consequently, likely to be simplified both in the lexical and in the grammatical domain (Blum & Levinston, 1980, p. 48; MacKenzie, 2014, p. 5; Mauranen, 2012, p. 30). The speaker, for example, avoids words that are difficult to master or returns to the L1 for both lexical and grammatical properties (Blum & Levinston, 1980). Simplification of the English language in ELF communication may contribute to the comprehensibility of the respective conversation for both the speaker and the listener. Simplification, admittedly, has been stated to occur in all situations of language contact, i.e. both interlingual and intralingual, and the extent to which it occurs may be subjective (Mauranen, 2014, p. 30), but ELF presents to be a form of communication in which this occurs to a greater extent.

ELF users may, secondly, be unfamiliar with the lexicogrammatical norms of different varieties of English, which results in the unrestricted use of forms of English that may otherwise have been restricted for a particular speech community (MacKenzie, 2014, p. 2). NNES in an ELF situation may use forms of speech, expressions, and lexical items from varieties of English that they have encountered and may not distinguish between these varieties (MacKenzie, 2014). This may, consequently, result in levelling, i.e. the convergence of grammatical systems (Mauranen, 2012, p. 31); grammatical systems, i.e. both of the L1 and of multiple varieties of the target language, merge into one system of representation. Merging grammatical systems may result in more comprehensible speech for the speaker.

An ELF speaker may, thirdly, borrow lexical items, which may contribute to the comprehensibility of a conversation (Mauranen, 2012, p. 30). An ELF speaker may struggle to find the right English words in a conversation. This person may, consequently, consult the inventory of a first, or of a possible second or nth, language in order to find a representative word where it may not be accessed in English. The interlocutor, thus, engages in the linguistic
process of code-switching as a result of being unable to access the required lexical form in the target language.

Despite these differences between ELF and native varieties of English, ELF has many similarities in the realisation of English and should be regarded as equally valuable. Seidlhofer (2009) argues for the perception of ELF and world Englishes, i.e. a variety of forms of English as an L1, to be compatible as a result of their many similarities (p. 236). The compatibility, however, should not serve as a basis for similar treatment, since there are many differences in terms of sociohistorical contexts and linguistic processes (Seidlhofer, 2009, p. 243). ELF and ENL should, thus, be analysed and treated in different ways, but these communicative forms are to be regarded as equally valuable in terms of communicative purpose.

ELF users behave differently from NES in applying different rules to and relying on different processes in communication. ELF users conform to norms different from those of NES to expand what is feasible, possible, and appropriate in communication (MacKenzie, 2014, p. 3). ELF communication is, consequently, much less restricted than ENL in having expanded the possibilities of the grammatical system and the norms of appropriateness of communication. Widdowson (2004) states that the “[f]unctional range of the language is not […] restricted, but on the contrary enhanced, for it enables its users to express themselves more freely without having to conform to norms which represent the socio-cultural identity of other people” (Widdowson, 2004, p. 361). ELF users use strategies to be able to communicate without the occurrence of many communicative problems.

2.2.3 Differences between ELF users. There is, furthermore, a great amount of variation among ELF users. MacKenzie (2014) argues that spoken ELF contains an assimilation of linguistic differences, which results in great interpersonal linguistic variation between ELF users (p. 2). This argument is supported by Mauranen (2012) in her stating that
interlocutors may have different realisations and expectations of appropriateness, of the expression or interpretation of friendliness, and of the realisation of a continuation or termination of a dialogue (p. 15). ELF users are, thus, different from ENL speakers, but differ interpersonally within the ELF continuum as well.

These interpersonal differences stem from a number of possible interactive phenomena. English, firstly, is globally integrated in the social and academic world and is used by interlocutors of different nationalities and different first languages. Conversational ELF is, as mentioned in the previous section, influenced by external factors, e.g. various first languages. ELF is widespread and includes many different first languages, which results in a great many differences in the realisation of English in an ELF situation (MacKenzie, 2014, p. 4). The form of spoken NNES is lexically and grammatically influenced by a speaker’s L1. The aforementioned simplification of the respective language, levelling, and borrowing of lexical items are, consequently, realised in different ways by speakers from different nationalities.

Interlocutors in an ELF situation may, secondly, have different cultural or religious backgrounds, or may simply have been raised to adhere to different behavioural norms. The interlocutors’ different backgrounds may precipitate differences in what is deemed to be feasible, possible, and appropriate in conversation. These differences, consequently, are not only present between NES and NNES, but surface in ELF communication as well (MacKenzie, 2014, p. 4). Social, cultural, and religious backgrounds influence interlocutors’ definitions of appropriateness in conversation; a variety in these backgrounds precipitates an adherence to different norms and interpersonal differences in ELF communication.

ELF users may, thirdly, have different proficiency levels in English, which may influence the features mentioned above. A speaker’s proficiency level in the target language influences not only the fluency of the speech, but also what is deemed feasible, possible, and
appropriate in communication in addition to the amount of simplification, levelling, and code-switching (MacKenzie, 2014). Section 2.3 elaborates on differences in proficiency levels between speakers in an ELF situation, but for now these aspects suffice in illustrating the great number of differences between speakers in ELF communication.

ELF displays many differences between what speakers do and do not find appropriate in a conversation as a result of many varieties of backgrounds and proficiency levels. Mauranen (2012) states that “[t]he cognitive load in ELF is unusually heavy on account of the variety and unpredictability of language parameters: interlocutors’ accents transfer features, and proficiency levels” (p. 7). The great linguistic differences within the domain of ELF have been mapped in this section, but require clarification. Section 2.2.4 discusses ELF users’ focus on the function of a language rather than the form, which may clarify the aforementioned linguistic differences between NES and NNES. Section 2.3.4, below, elaborates on this phenomenon, which may clarify the interpersonal linguistic differences between ELF users.

2.2.4 Form and function of a language. ELF users rely on the function of a language rather than on its form. Seidlhofer (2011) argues for a functional definition of ELF, since it is a variable way of using the English language rather than a fully fletched language (p. 77). The grammatical, lexical, and semantic forms are, consequently, less relevant than the pragmatic function of the respective language. ELF users are, first and foremost, language users rather than language learners, regardless of their backgrounds in learning the respective language (MacKenzie, 2014, p. 5; Mauranen, 2012, p. 4). These language users, consequently, focus on intelligible, successful communication, where language learners may make a conscious effort to produce standard forms. However, ELF users “will find a way of not only carrying out their business with each other, but also dealing with the subtler aspects of social interaction”
(Mauranen, 2012, p. 15). The function of a language, i.e. the intelligibility of a language, may, thus, be more important than its form.

A speaker, however, never solely relies on the form or function of a language; these aspects may be regarded as existing on a continuum with form at the one end and function at the other. Every speaker of a language may be represented on some point of this continuum in any situation. The speaker, consequently, relies on both the form and the function of a language to some extent. A teacher of English as a second language, for example, may be represented near the form-end of the continuum in relying on, and teaching of, the form of the language; this teacher, however, also considers the language’s function in order to bring information across. The representation of the English of a Dutch baker selling bread to an English tourist, on the other hand, may be realised near the functional-end, since his main concern may be selling a baguette rather than having a grammatically correct conversation with the tourist. Speakers of any (first, second, or nth) language rely on both the language’s form and its function; the extent to which a speaker relies on form or function depends on the contextual components of the interaction, e.g. mutual consciousness of grammatical correctness and adherence to NES linguistic approximations.

The realisation of language on a form-function continuum, furthermore, precipitates the possibility of speakers’ shifting on this continuum in different situations; the possibility of shifting positions on the continuum, however, is limited, since less proficient speakers of the language may, naturally, not be able move to the far ‘function’ end of the continuum as a result of insufficient linguistic capabilities. The possibility of moving on the continuum, however, implies the possibility for a speaker to gradually shift towards the ‘form’ end. This gradual movement may take place by using language for different purposes in different situations; both proficient and unproficient NNES may shift on the continuum, but the latter may encounter more restrictions as a result of limited linguistic capacities.
Less proficient ELF users focus on bringing their message across, have expanded the possibilities of doing so, and, consequently, focus on the function of a language over its form (MacKenzie, 2014); more proficient ELF users, however, may focus on form over function as a result of approximating NES norms (MacKenzie, 2014). The arguments presented for ELF users relying on function over form do not consider differences in proficiency levels between the respective speakers (e.g. Berns, 2009; Seidlhofer, 2001). It has, however, been stated that ELF users may differ in many ways, one of which is proficiency level in the target language. Fluent ELF users, furthermore, present to have many similarities with native speakers of English (MacKenzie, 2014, p.6), which may precipitate the greater possibility of shifting on the continuum for proficient speakers than for less proficient speakers. Proficient ELF users may shift on the form-function continuum, which may result in their focusing on the form of the target language to a greater extent than on its function.

The notion of the form-function continuum is acknowledged in this study and serves to indicate, firstly, the diversity between speakers with different proficiency levels in the target language and, secondly, the variability in linguistic norms within a single speaker when placed in different situations. A situation in which a proficient NNES converses with an unproficient NNES could precipitate a shift on said continuum: the proficient speaker adopts a greater number of functional strategies than in equal situations, where the unproficient speaker introduces more aspects relating to the form of a language. The effect of the different speakers’ shifts on this continuum is researched.

The aforementioned continuum may apply to ELF users as well as to NNES in L1-L2 communication across the domains of world Englishes. Interlocutors who prove to be less proficient in the target language may be limited by the ranges of their vocabularies, but they have expanded linguistic possibilities, feasibility, and what may be considered to be appropriate in a conversation. These speakers may turn to non-standard forms of speech, use
nonce items, and rely on code-switching, but may do so to a different extent in speaking with a similarly unproficient NNES than with a speaker who is proficient in the target language. More proficient NNES may, similarly, shift on the continuum in different contextual situations. Different contexts may precipitate shifts on the form-function continuum for both proficient and unproficient NNES.

2.3 Differences in Proficiency Levels in ELF

2.3.1 Intelligibility, comprehensibility, and interpretability. NNES interlocutors with different L1s who choose to speak in English are classified as ELF users, but this domain may be seen to comprise a great many varieties; section 2.2.3 considered differences between ELF users in terms of background and briefly touched upon differences in proficiency levels. This section discusses differences between ELF users, and specifically differences in proficiency levels, more elaborately.

The interpretability of speech is constructed through both speakers and listeners; interlocutors should, consequently, have similar expectations and realisations of interaction. Smith (1992) states that the understanding of speech is established through three categories, which should be considered prior to analysing differences in proficiency levels in ELF users (p. 76). The respective categories, shown in figure 1, may be interpreted as “degrees of

1. intelligibility: word/utterance recognition;
2. comprehensibility: word/utterance meaning (locutionary force);
3. interpretability: meaning behind word/utterance (illocutionary force).

Figure 1. Degrees of understanding in interaction (Smith, 1992, p. 76).

understanding on a continuum” (Smith, 1992, p. 76). Smith (1992) argues that the first category, i.e. intelligibility, is the lowest degree of understanding, which needs to be fulfilled
for the other degrees to be reached. The second and third degrees, i.e. comprehensibility and interpretability, are the highest degrees of understanding which should be fulfilled for a full understanding of communication (p. 76). When interlocutors’ expectations and realisations in any of the three categories differ significantly from one another, realised speech may come to be uninterpretable for the listener or could invoke an individually constructed interpretation of an utterance that differs from the speaker’s intent. Mutual understanding may be realised on a continuum, through which intelligibility, comprehensibility, and interpretability define the degree of understanding.

The understanding of cross-cultural and international communication is established through three categories: intelligibility, comprehensibility, and interpretability (Smith, 1992). The first category that has to be fulfilled on the continuum of understanding is intelligibility (Smith, 1992, p. 76). This category argues for the importance of word and utterance recognition. The second category that requires explaining concerns the comprehensibility of words and utterances (Smith, 1992, p. 76). On this part of the continuum, referents are linked to ‘what is said’, i.e. semantics, through the locutionary force (Birner, 2013, p. 187). The final understanding may only be realised by fulfilment of the last category, i.e. interpretability, in which the intention is linked to the word or utterance (Birner, 2013, p. 76); this is the pragmatic understanding of an utterance. A full understanding of an utterance may, thus, only be realised by recognition of the words in combination with its semantic and pragmatic understanding.

This understanding may, however, not always be realised in an ELF situation, for a number of reasons. ELF users display a great many interpersonal differences in speech, competence, and realisations of utterances. The most prominent features that may differ interpersonally, i.e. the prerequisite of phonetic intelligibility and proficiency differences that result in differing expectations, are illustrated in the following sections.
2.3.2 Phonological intelligibility. A prerequisite of the common understanding of an utterance is its intelligibility, which may be affected by a deviant pronunciation; differences in phonological representations between ELF users may precipitate difficulties in realising both semantics and pragmatics which may result in uninterpretable speech. “Speakers need to be confident that their accents will not prevent them from understanding the propositional content of one another’s utterances (even if they then go on to misinterpret each other in a pragmatic sense)” (Jenkins, 2006, p. 36). The interpretable pronunciation of communicative aspects proves to be an important prerequisite for the intelligibility, and the eventual semantic and pragmatic interpretation, of an utterance; incomprehensible phonology of a lexical item may precipitate the unintelligibility of semantics and, resultantly, pragmatics, which may result in a lack of understanding or misunderstanding.

Speakers with lower proficiency levels in a second or foreign language may display more difficulties in uttering speech in a phonologically intelligible manner. Mutual intelligibility in ELF communication through pronunciation is a factor that the ELF users should create for themselves and that cannot be imposed on the NNES, or on NES who substantially differ in their forms of English, by standardised native speaker norms, i.e. inner circle English (Jenkins, 2006, p. 36). Pronunciation should, consequently, be adapted thusly, so that all interlocutors may interpret speech in a similar way. The norms for pronunciation, however, are constructed in the conversation itself, since NES norms may not be equally interpretable for every speaker.

ELF users with different proficiency levels rely on different aspects of the language and may, consequently, rely on different interpretations. Proficient ELF users are, as explained above, similar to NES and may rely on NES norms in terms of pronunciation (MacKenzie, 2014). Less proficient ELF users, however, may rely on their own norms and ideas of phonological interpretability in a conversation, which may deviate significantly from
native speaker norms (Blum & Levinston, 1980). Unproficient ELF users may, consequently, experience difficulties in producing phonologically interpretable utterances in a conversation with proficient NNES as a result of conflicting norms.

### 2.3.3 Proficiency differences between ELF users

There is a great variety between ELF users in terms of what may be expected from a conversation. “X’s grammar is just what X’s mind constructs” (Chomsky, 1981, p. 6). Chomsky’s (1981) statement relates to the idea that an internal grammar and the resulting knowledge of a language is constructed from the mind’s abilities in that respect. A person who is more proficient in a language will, consequently, be able to construct a more elaborate and complex grammar that a person who is less proficient. The more proficient person, consequently, focuses more on the form of a language, i.e. linguistic rules and regularities, where a less proficient person relies on this form less extensively.

ELF speech incorporates a great many proficiency levels in the respective language, and thus a great variation in the extent to which speakers focus on form or function of a language, which results in different semantic strategies. Mauranen (2012) argues that a “common experience of second-language speech is that it is less fluent than speaking in the native language” (p. 38). This statement applies to some ELF users who may not be fluent in the respective language to a greater extent than to fluent, or proficient, speakers of English in the same situation. MacKenzie (2014), however, states that, following corpora, proficient ELF users prove to have many similarities with NES (p. 6). Proficient speakers of a target language in an ELF situation may, thus, very well be fluent. The systematic features of ELF discussed in section 2.2.2, i.e. simplification features, consequently, mostly apply to less proficient ELF users, where more proficient speakers adhere to native speaker norms.

Less proficient ELF users differ from native speakers, and, consequently, from more proficient ELF users in, e.g., being dysfluent and more hesitant. Several differences between
NES and ELF users have been provided in section 2.2.2: ELF users, firstly, substitute marked and irregular features by unmarked and regular alternatives (Trudgill, 1986), they may, secondly, use community bound forms of English without constraints (MacKenzie, 2014), and, ELF users, lastly, borrow lexical items from other languages, where NES use neither of those strategies to ensure comprehension (Mauranen, 2012). These differences between NES and ELF users, however, do not clarify why less proficient ELF users are expected to adhere to norms other than NES norms (MacKenzie, 2014, p. 1). The form and function of a language have been stated to be indicated as two extremes on a continuum rather than the sole reliance of a speaker. Dysfluencies, Mauranen (2012) states, follow the same principle; however instinctively reasonable it may sound to classify L2 speech as being more dysfluent than speech in a first language, it is more likely to be a continuum (p. 38). The extent to which the dysfluencies ‘distort’ speech is indicated in a similar way as relying on a language’s form or function.

Dysfluencies in speech serve less proficient NNES in ELF in providing a time-frame in which the speaker may attempt to phrase an utterance that may be interpreted more easily for both the speaker and the listener. Biber et al. (1999) stated that “we may refer to the grammar of speech as ‘dynamic’, in the sense that it is constructed and interpreted only through hesitations, false starts, and other dysfluencies” (as cited in Mauranen, 2012, p. 38). Mauranen (2012) provides two reasons for the occurrence of dysfluencies, i.e. hesitation phenomena, the first of which is that they mark boundaries in speech and the second of which is that they indicate processing problems in the mind of the speaker (p. 38-39). ELF users who focus primarily on the function of a target language may benefit from grammatical rephrasing, which results in their relying on dysfluencies to a greater extent than more proficient speakers.

A major difference between ELF users is the extent to which they display dysfluencies in speech. The difference in relying mostly on the form or on the its function in combination
with the greater number of dysfluencies displayed by less proficient ELF users than by more proficient speakers may precipitate differences in expectations of a conversation between these respective speakers and, consequently, a conflict between relying on form and function.

**2.3.4 Form versus function.** ELF users’ differences in proficiency levels and in terms of phonological interpretability may signal a conflict in relying to a greater extent on the form of a language or on its function. Smith (1992) stated that speech in English needs only be interpretable for the interlocutor in direct contact with the speaker (p. 75). The aforementioned categories of interpretable speech, i.e. intelligibility, comprehensibility, and interpretability, may not only be judged as being sufficiently interpretable by native speakers of the language, but also by the direct interlocutors.

Proficient speakers, however, have received a substantial amount of input from other proficient NNES or NES and have, thus, adapted phonology to approximate inner circle norms (MacKenzie, 2014). An increased proficiency, consequently, means an increased ability to distinguish between phonemes that are difficult to produce for less proficient speakers. A phoneme that does not exist in a NNES’s L1 will be difficult to pronounce for the unproficient speaker and, consequently, difficult to interpret for the proficient NNES: the dental fricative /θ/ in ‘thorn’, for example, is absent in Dutch; the word is, consequently, often pronounced as ‘torn’, which complicates a mutual semantic and pragmatic understanding. The mutual comprehensibility between NNES may, consequently, be compromised by differing norms resulting from a varying quantity of formal training and input. When speakers’ proficiency levels in the target language differ, it may be more difficult to adjust speech to reach a communicative common ground.

The difficulties in reaching a communicative common ground may work both ways, since both proficient and less proficient interlocutors may have different ideas of interpretable speech. The greater reliance on either form or function of a language may precipitate
differences in ELF users’ expectations of a conversation and in their assessment of what is feasible, possible, and appropriate. A common communicative ground for interlocutors with significantly different proficiency levels may be difficult to be found, since they have different ideas and realisations of interpretability.

Proficient speakers’ adherence to native speaker norms goes hand in hand with a greater reliance on the form of a language; more proficient ELF users may be inclined to focus on the form of the English language to a greater extent than on its function, where less proficient ELF users do not have this option. The differences between the greater focus on form by proficient ELF users and the greater focus on function by less proficient ELF users may precipitate differences in expectations and, consequently, difficulties in understanding.

2.3.5 Dimensions in ELF communication. ELF users may differ in many ways, which may result in the possibility of adhering to different dimensions on the form-function continuum. Mauranen (2006) states that “it is important to note that the native vs. non-native situation, especially as concerns the L1 speaker vs. the L2 learner, is not really comparable to two individuals communicating via a vehicular language: the native–non-native (L1–L2) situation is asymmetrical with respect to command of the target language, while in non-native–non-native (L2–L2) interaction this is not so” (p. 124). Interlocutors in an ELF situation may, thus, have similar expectations as a result of not having the target language as a first language. In stating this, however, Mauranen (2006) seems not to consider the aforementioned possible interpersonal differences in proficiency level of the respective language; an ELF situation may well be proficient NNES speaking with unproficient NNES.

The proficient NNES ELF speaker may display many similarities to a NES speaker in a linguistic sense, where the less proficient speaker has constructed norms and possibilities other than those displayed by NES (MacKenzie, 2014, p. 6), which precipitates differences in ELF situations with respect to different proficiency levels in the respective language. These
differences, however, have not been discussed in literature, which precipitates inconsistencies in studies that research miscommunications in ELF and an incomplete image of interpersonal differences. The respective studies have, furthermore, mostly focussed on multiparty situations in which participants could remain silent during an impending misinterpretation (e.g. Mauranen, 2006). Dialogues in which different proficiency levels are represented may present situations in which miscommunications are signalled and prevented more clearly, since the interlocutors cannot rely on other participants to avoid the breakdown of communication. The dialogue dimensions that are considered in this study are shown in (3), (4), and (5):

(3) Lingua franca communication between interlocutors who are proficient in the target language.

(4) Lingua franca communication between interlocutors who are unproficient in the target language.

(5) Lingua franca communication between interlocutors with substantially different proficiency levels in the target language.

The levels on the continuum are represented as dimensions rather than types, since interlocutors may shift on the continuum as a result of relying on the form or the function of a language. The continuum may, consequently, contribute to the understanding and classification of interlocutors with different proficiency levels in the target language.

2.4 Miscommunications in ELF

2.4.1 Frequency of miscommunications. Misunderstandings may arise in any type of interaction in which two or more people engage in communication; ELF communication, however, proves to display fewer miscommunications than may be expected (e.g. Firth, 2009;
Misunderstandings in conversation are instances in which communication experiences turbulences and may, potentially, break down (Mauranen, 2006, p. 128). Miscommunications may, furthermore, be realised in different ways by arising in the various degrees of understanding, i.e. intelligibility, comprehensibility, and interpretability (Mauranen, 2006, p. 128; Smith, 1992, p. 76). Misunderstandings may occur in different degrees of understanding in communication, which argues for an inventory of strategies in both L1-L2 and in ELF communication to signal and recover from these instances of communicative turbulence.

Miscommunications are relatively unexplored in the field of ELF. Miscommunications in an ELF setting may, furthermore, be different from misinterpretations occurring in L1-L2 encounters and have been suggested to either not be frequent, (e.g. Firth 2009; Mauranen, 2006), or, contradictorily, to be more frequent than in other communication types (e.g. Bae, 2002). Misunderstandings in ELF have been considered, but a consensus on quantity and quality has not yet been reached. These differences may have resulted from mismatched ideas on the manner in which both ELF communication and misunderstandings should be researched. The researchers varied in the participants’ proficiency levels and only accounted semantic misunderstandings, where pragmatic misunderstandings have been neglected.

ELF speech may, on the one hand, be expected to be more vulnerable for miscommunications. The vulnerability may be a result of interlocutors’ limited lexical range and an imperfect command of the language (MacKenzie, 2014; Mauranen, 2006). A second reason for expecting a larger number of miscommunications in ELF than in L1-L2 communication may be interlocutors’ linguistic and cultural differences as a result of differing L1s and nationalities. Miscommunications in ELF, however, prove not to be as common as one might expect them to be: interlocutors usually employ manners to signal or prevent impending misinterpretations (Mauranen, 2006).
ELF speech may, on the other hand, be expected to enjoy a wider range of possibilities and fewer restrictions, which may result in fewer misunderstandings. Mauranen (2012) stated that “ELF users engage in various interactive strategies to achieve mutual comprehensibility; they seem to be prepared for the possibility of misunderstanding and take steps to pre-empt that, which in effect results in misunderstandings being rare” (p. 7). The sections above have argued for a number of strategies in ELF communication which may contribute to the small number of miscommunications.

ELF users, firstly, collaboratively construct interpretable and meaningful utterances, which may not conform to native speaker norms; the interpretability, however, is agreed upon among the interlocutors rather than by NES (Smith, 1992, p. 76). These approximations of L1 linguistic forms have, secondly, been distinguished as simplifications in a robust, cooperative, and consensus-seeking form of communication (Firth, 2009; MacKenzie, 2014; Mauranen, 2006). Miscommunications may, thirdly, be less common than expected as a result of the expansion of what is deemed feasible, possible, and appropriate in a language (MacKenzie, 2014). These aspects are conjoined in the aforementioned statement of an increased focus on the function of a language over its form, which is presented as the main argument for the lack of miscommunications in ELF (e.g. Berns, 2009).

2.4.2 Miscommunications as a result of differences in proficiency levels.

Interlocutors may not always have similar expectations in an ELF conversation. There are, as argued in 2.2, many differences between ELF users. ELF users who display significant differences in proficiency levels in the target language may experience a larger number of miscommunications in communicating than ELF users who display a similar proficiency level. The latter group may have similar expectations of the conversation and similar communicative strategies, where the former group may display differences in both aspects. Interlocutors with significantly different proficiency levels in the target language may, thus,
reveal a greater number of miscommunications than interlocutors with similar proficiency levels.

Different expectations in a conversation and varying communicative strategies as a result of different proficiency levels in ELF may conflict and may result in miscommunications. Communication between a proficient and an unproficient NNES may display more miscommunications than communication between two NNES of equal proficiency levels. L1-influenced speech of the proficient interlocutor in combination with unfamiliarity with these respective structures of the less proficient interlocutor, firstly, is one of the main causes of miscommunication in an ELF situation (Kim & Billington, 2016); the inability of the proficient speaker to interpret the intentions of the less proficient speaker, secondly, may result in miscommunication as well. Miscommunications occur most often in mismatched ELF settings in terms of proficiency levels.

Miscommunications may be more common in situations in which interlocutors have different expectations of a conversation and different realisation of (NES) norms. There are, however, means to signal and recover from miscommunication. Mauranen (2006) has established signalling and recovery strategies in ELF situations that may apply to interlocutors with significantly different proficiency levels as well.

2.4.3 Signalling of and recovering from miscommunication. Interlocutors in any form and type of conversation may be confronted with unintended miscommunications; despite the fact that they are not common in everyday speech, interlocutors engage in strategies to prevent, signal, and recover from misunderstandings. When misunderstandings arise in an ELF situation, interlocutors ensure mutual intelligibility, comprehensibility, and interpretability by applying various clarification and repair strategies (Mauranen, 2006, p. 123). Jung (2005), furthermore, states that speakers and listeners benefit from interactional contextualisation markers (p. 1929). The lack of contextualisation markers may,
consequently, precipitates difficulties in interpretation and the necessity of signalling and prevention methods (Jung, 2005, p. 1940). These contextualisation markers may be incorporated in various signalling and preventive methods for misunderstandings to ensure a fruitful recovery from miscommunication. The breakdown of communication in instances of misunderstandings is, consequently, prevented by the interactive strategies that interlocutors apply.

Misunderstandings may arise in several degrees of understanding, which argues for a wide inventory of signalling methods in ELF communication. Mauranen (2006) identifies three ways in which interlocutors may signal miscommunications (p. 132-140). Interlocutors may, firstly, signal misunderstandings by asking specific questions (Mauranen, 2006, p. 132). They may, secondly, signal a misunderstanding by repeating specific lexical items (Mauranen, 2006, p. 133). Misunderstandings may, thirdly, be signalled through other, indirect, means that indicate problems in processing utterances (Mauranen, 2006, p. 134). Several semantically based verbal strategies to signal and prevent misunderstandings have been provided.

Next to the different signalling strategies for misunderstandings, several preventive methods have been established as well. Methods to prevent misunderstandings may, firstly, be realised by confirmation checks (Mauranen, 2006, p. 136). The second preventive strategy is divided in two sub-strategies: interactive repair and self-repair. Both interactive- and self-repair, however, rely on rephrasing of what has been stated and has or may be misunderstood (Mauranen, 2006, p. 139-140). Interactive repair relies on rephrasing of something that the interlocutor may have misinterpreted, where self-repair constitutes rephrasing of utterances of one’s own that may be thought to be interpreted wrongly (Mauranen, 2006, p. 139-140).

Mauranen (2006) has established multiple ways in which misunderstandings may be signalled and prevented; these strategies may, however, not suffice in the analysis
miscommunications as a whole, since misunderstandings may be established in ways other than the aforementioned strategies. Mauranen (2006) argues for multiple means to signal misunderstandings, i.e. asking specific questions, repeating a problematic item, and indirect signalling, and for prevention strategies for miscommunication, i.e. confirmation checks, interactive repair, and self-repair (Mauranen, 2006, p. 132-140). These semantically based verbal strategies may, however, prove to be insufficient in analysing miscommunication by proving to be unfit in instances in which miscommunications may be established by the direct context rather than by verbal strategies. The analysis of miscommunications may, consequently, benefit from the consideration of context and pragmatics, which may be realised through a CA approach; section 2.5 elaborates on the advantages of CA in analysing miscommunications.

2.5 Conversation Analysis in Analysing Miscommunications

2.5.1 Conversation analysis. CA “is a socio-linguistic approach that is largely concerned with the analysis of the verbal communication that people routinely use when they interact with one another” (Chatwin, 2004). There are, however, two distinct forms of CA: Goodwin and Heritage (2004) state that one CA approach researches interaction as an entity in its own right, where a second approach examines the manner in which an interaction is managed through social institutions within interaction. The latter, i.e. applied CA, will be the focus of the following sections.

Applied CA encompasses a number of methods that differ from other approaches, which may be beneficial for the analysis of discourse. Researchers adhering to CA, firstly, prefer naturally occurring speech over interview data and corpora (Kok, 2008). More traditional forms of linguistics have mainly focussed on written language and corpora rather than spoken language in context (Have, 2007, p. 10). CA, however, is a method to analyse naturally occurring speech in situ: it focusses on talk-in-interaction (Have, 2007). Analysing
naturally occurring data as it is used is beneficial in providing a more encompassing image of discourse: the natural flow of interaction, emphasis, hesitations, nonverbal communication, and context may be considered in CA, where written language and corpora are limited in not providing these communicative aspects.

CA, secondly, embraces interaction as organised and procedural rather than as a series of individual acts (Have, 2007, p. 9). CA represents utterances as objects used in achieving social tasks (Chatwin, 2004, p. 132). A combination of utterances may form an emergent organised event, the process of which reveals the ways in which a collective social task is achieved (Have, 2007, p. 9). The focus on the social tasks precipitates the importance of context in CA: multiple utterances eventually lead to a social task, which implies that sequences of utterances affect the communicative common ground. Communicative context proves to be an important factor in CA and should be considered in the analysis of interactions.

Verbal communication may be analysed in several ways, but CA provides a means to do so in a more encompassing manner than other linguistic approaches. Most studies concerning miscommunications have adhered to a narrow approach in analysing corpora (e.g. Firth, 2009; Mauranen, 2006). CA, however, provides an ethnomethodological manner to analyse conversational aspects and includes conversational context. Conversational context enables researchers to establish the manner in which a social task is approached and, consequently, the ways in which misinterpretations arise.

2.5.2 Conversation analysis and mismatched interpretations. Interlocutors’ mismatched interpretations of an utterance require a method additional to than Mauranen’s (2006) signalling and recovery methods. Not all misunderstandings may be accounted for by Mauranen’s (2006) signalling and recovery methods, since simply not all misinterpretations are accompanied by verbal strategies. Some misinterpretations may be represented as a
‘normal’ continuation of speech in which the interlocutors appear to have different ideas and representations of the conversational purpose. A speaker’s intention may be interpreted differently by the listener, since the social actors are influenced by other historical, cultural, and personal aspects.

Linguistic competence may, furthermore, be a factor that influences the possibly differing interpretation. This may result in a response that semantically and pragmatically differs from a speaker’s intention. The speaker may, however, decide not to overtly return to the original statement, but may choose to go along with the interlocutor’s interpretation. These mismatched utterances may be identified and analysed as miscommunications by means of CA. The interlocutors may, thus, have differing representational systems in which information may be processed differently; the different processes, however, may not always be explicitly stated, which requires CA to provide a full understanding of miscommunications in ELF.

CA may contribute to the understanding of miscommunications in a more enveloping manner than signalling and preventive strategies alone. CA may be a more suitable method for the identification and analysis of miscommunications in taking into account a more complete image of a conversation and, consequently, the pragmatic understanding of both interlocutors. Nonverbal signalling and preventive methods may be accounted for by a CA approach to discourse, as well as instances in which interlocutors adhere to different interpretations of utterances. These misinterpretations, or pragmatic difficulties, may be signalled by CA. Instances of miscommunication that may not be indicated by verbal cues, i.e. Mauranen’s (2006) signalling and preventive methods, may be established by an CA approach.

Misinterpretations may be indicated by verbal strategies, for which Mauranen’s (2006) signalling and preventive strategies prove to be a useful unit of analysis; miscommunications
may, however, arise in more instances than those indicated by verbal signalling and prevention methods alone. CA provides a method with which nonverbal instances of misinterpretations as well as verbal signalling and preventive strategies may be identified and analysed; miscommunications may, consequently, be analysed in a more enveloping manner.

3. Methodology

In order to investigate miscommunications between ELF users with different proficiency levels in English and, simultaneously, a possible conflict between relying on the form or on the function of the respective language, empirical research was conducted. Participants were to complete a semi-naturalistic task, which was goal oriented, communicative, and linguistically challenging, whereas it was not overly demanding cognitively. The participants were required to pursue a common accomplishable goal by engaging in a dialogue. This dialogue setting, consequently, incorporated the risk of participants’ misunderstanding each other’s explanations. These instances in which participants displayed signalling- and preventive strategies for miscommunications could, then, be analysed in order to support or refute the aforementioned hypotheses.

A semi-naturalistic setting in which participants were requested to perform a common goal was chosen to be the most suitable environment for the analysis of miscommunications in ELF, where other studies have focussed on corpora. Miscommunications in ELF occur in real time speech in a naturalistic setting, where interlocutors apply signalling- and prevention strategies to prevent the breakdown of communication and the misunderstanding of linguistically propagated information. Previous literature has focussed on corpora to research miscommunications in ELF (e.g. Firth, 2009; Kaur, 2010; Mauranen, 2006). Corpora, however, prove to be limited: studies, firstly, often incorporate brief abstracts in which interlocutors’ storylines and conversational themes may not be fully developed and, consequently, may not reveal mismatched interpretations and possible misunderstandings, e.g.
in Firth, 2009; Kaur, 2010; Mauranen, 2006; the corpora, secondly, give no insight into nonverbally indicated misinterpretations. Corpora were, consequently, not considered, but an ethnomethodological study in a semi-naturalistic setting was deemed to be the most suitable.

Analysing miscommunications in naturalistic settings, however, proves to be a task in which many difficulties may emerge: the observation, recording, and testing procedures are costly in addition to their being time-consuming. Consequently, a semi-naturalistic setting was deemed to be more suitable for the present, non-funded study. The semi-naturalistic setting, i.e. a classroom setting in which participants are to perform a common task, ensures a less costly environment in which participants are more easily instructed, observed, and recorded. The task will be explained in full in section 3.2.

The researcher was not present in the room at the time of the conversation to allow the setting to be as naturalistic as possible; the interlocutors, however, were recorded by means of a video-recorder. Labov (1972) argued for the observer’s paradox, which states that a researcher’s presence, and a speaker’s awareness of being observed, may influence the phenomenon that is being researched (p. 209). A researcher’s being present at the setting may, consequently, influence the communication and the respective interlocutors’ manners of speaking. In order to limit external interference, the researcher stepped out of the room at the time of the conversation. The interlocutors were, however, video-recorded, which may have influenced the phenomenon that was being observed. The participants may have been influenced by the video-recorder even when the researcher was not present. The recorded data, however, did not show a techno-observational effect and few demonstrable orientations towards the camera. The camera, furthermore, was an empirically unavoidable necessity for the analysis of the interlocutors’ language in use in context. The participants were instructed prior to the recording of the conversation and were to communicate without the researcher’s
being present; the observer’s paradox was, consequently, brought down to a minimum with the mere presence of a video-recorder.

3.1 Participants

Eighteen participants (fifteen female and three male), recruited at the Radboud University Nijmegen and the University of Twente, participated in the present study. Nine of these participants were native speakers of Dutch, where the other nine were native speakers of German; the participants could, consequently, form Dutch-German ELF pairs. In order to further specify the study, the participants from both nationalities were selected with respect to age and socio-economic class. The native speakers of Dutch as well as the native speakers of German were 20 to 26 years of age and have lived, and were raised, in a middle class environment (n = 18, mean age = 23, SD = 1.6). The dependent variable between the participants, next to nationality is proficiency in the English language.

3.2 Design

The participants were requested to perform a text-based, communicative, and goal oriented task. Goal orientation was organised to motivate language in real-time: the compatible communicative goals of the interlocutors served as a means to avoid dictating dialogue structure. The communicative task was a variant of a story-completion task, in which the participants collaboratively constructed multiple scenarios to an ambiguous excerpt of a text and, consequently, engaged in a meaningful conversation.

ELF is a functional language in which the goal often is to accomplish material things (e.g. MacKenzie, 2014; Seidlhofer, 2011). The design of this study, consequently, mirrors these settings in which the goal precipitates a communicative need. The interlocutors in this study were to exchange information and establish a communicative common ground, i.e. a common understanding of a scenario, to accomplish a goal.
Three ambiguous fragments of three different stories were provided, shown in full in appendices 1.3.1, 1.3.2, and 1.3.3. The three fragments, the first of which is shown in full in figure 2, consisted of a brief excerpt, which presented the participants with a story that may

“PLEASE, God, let him telephone me now. Dear God, let him call me now. I won't ask anything else of You, truly I won't. It isn't very much to ask. It would be so little to You, God, such a little, little thing. Only let him telephone now. Please, God. Please, please, please.”

_Figure 2. Fragment of the story-completion task (Parker, 1947, p. 665)._ 

have been interpreted in different ways and which, thus, presented multiple possible scenarios for each of these fragments. The participants were to collaboratively establish two scenarios in which they specified the characters, their relation, the situation at hand, and the reason for this situation to have developed. This is explained more elaborately in section 3.3.3 below.

The independent variables in this research were, thus, the introductions to the short stories in addition to the participants’ characteristics defined in section 3.1 and the participants’ proficiency levels in the target language. The dependent variables in this research were the possible scenarios to the stories and the ways in which the interlocutors encountered and approached impending misinterpretations.

The participants were selectively placed in a dialogue setting with respect to their nationalities and their proficiency levels in English. The aforementioned semi-naturalistic setting was a classroom situation in which two participants were requested to complete the said task. A dialogue setting was chosen over a classroom setting, since the interlocutors are encouraged to speak and discuss difficulties in the former where they some be inclined to remain silent and let other participants resolve difficulties in the latter.
The two participants of different nationalities were selected according to their proficiency levels in order for three types of dialogues to be formed: dialogues between participants of a roughly equally low proficiency level, dialogues between participants of a roughly equally high proficiency level, and dialogues between participants with considerably different proficiency levels. Differences in the number of miscommunications were, resultantly, measured between the different types of dialogues and allocated to the respective proficiency levels.

### 3.3 Procedure

**3.3.1 Selection of participants.** Two groups of participants from two nationalities contributed to the analysis of qualitative and quantitative differences in terms of miscommunications in dialogues between interlocutors with either similar or varying proficiency levels in the target language. The participants were selected with respect to their nationalities, i.e. Dutch and German, and to their proficiency levels, i.e. low proficiency and high proficiency. Dutch, German, and the target language, English, are linguistically closely related (e.g. Henriksen & Auwera, 1994), which resulted in the interlocutors’ having linguistically close grammatical structures and lexical items. The interlocutors may, furthermore, have had a shared knowledge of each other’s L1s. The proximity of the languages and the shared linguistic knowledge, however, may minimise the possibility of miscommunication. Four groups were created, shown in (6), (7), (8), and (9):

- (6) Native speakers of German with low proficiency levels in English.
- (7) Native speakers of German with high proficiency levels in English.
- (8) Native speakers of Dutch with a low proficiency levels in English.
- (9) Native speakers of Dutch with high proficiency levels in English.
The Dutch and German participants were divided in the four aforementioned groups, which precipitated dialogues in an ELF setting; to be classified as a member of either group, however, the participants’ proficiency levels were to be established, so that the groups displayed a clear difference in linguistic competence in the target language. A full proficiency test was, unfortunately, impossible to be carried out, since the study relied on volunteers of whom the researcher could not expect to sit an hour-and-half test. Consequently, the proficiency levels were measured by means of a translation of Dunn & Dunn’s (1997) Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT-III) in addition to both a consideration of the participants’ backgrounds and a self-report of their respective proficiency levels. The proficiency levels in English of the participants may, resultantly, not be indicated on a CEFR scale, but they are referred to as being either ‘highly proficient’ or ‘less proficient’; rough equivalents of the proficiency levels, however, are C2 and B1 on a CEFR scale respectively.

3.3.1.1 Linguistic background. A selection of participants had been made before the PPVT-III was conducted. Firstly, the linguistic background of the participants was checked: a prerequisite for the participants who were to be assigned to groups (7) and (9) was that they had to have had schooling in the English language at university level. Most of the participants who were approached were enrolled in third year of the BA English Language & Culture, in the MA English Linguistics, or in the MA Communication Coaching at the Radboud University Nijmegen. Other participants who qualified for group 2 had completed a proficiency test in the English language as a prerequisite for international students to be accepted at the Radboud University Nijmegen. These programmes and proficiency tests guaranteed sufficient knowledge of the English language for the students to be able to communicate at least at a C1 level.

Naturally, there were constraints for the members of the other groups as well. A prerequisite for the participants who were to be assigned to groups (6) and (8) was that they
should barely have to communicate in the English language; they should, furthermore, display considerable difficulties in the understanding of the English speech outside of that used in their fields of profession. These difficulties were established by answers to a series of statements in a semi-structured interview, provided in appendix 1.2.1, in the respective participant’s native language. At least four of these statements should have been responded to in the affirmative in order for the participant to be eligible for the ‘low proficiency groups’.

The participants’ linguistic backgrounds served as an indication of their respective proficiency levels in English. This check served to select participants more appropriately.

3.3.1.2 Self-report. In addition to the linguistic background check, the participants were to self-report their English proficiency levels. This self-report served as a further constraint to select the participants who were as eligible as possible prior to the PPVT-III. All participants were to indicate how proficient they thought they were in English on a scale from 1 to 10 (1 = extremely unproficient; 10 = native-like). The participants who had been selected as being eligible for the ‘high proficiency’ groups by means of the linguistic background checks and who had self-reported their proficiency level at eight out of ten or higher were selected to participate in the PPVT-III. Furthermore, the participants who had been selected for eligibility for the ‘low proficiency’ groups by means of the linguistic background check and who had self-reported their proficiency levels to be at five out of ten or lower were to participate in the PPVT-III as well.

3.3.1.2 PPVT: Receptive Vocabulary Test. Each participant’s proficiency level in English was to be individually tested after they had been selected. The criteria for the proficiency test selected for the establishment of the participants’ proficiency levels were a combination of brevity, low costs, and quality. The first criterium of the proficiency test, i.e. brevity, encapsulates the willingness of the participants to cooperate in this study and their time available for the respective research; both of these are generally limited, which resulted
in a brief proficiency test in addition to the actual study. The second criterium, i.e. low costs, is the result of this test’s being incorporated in a non-funded study. In order to obtain reliable results, and to further establish whether or not the participants’ proficiency levels were high or low enough for them to be eligible to participate, the third criterium, i.e. quality, was to be an important aspect of the proficiency test as well. The proficiency test was to fulfil three criteria, i.e. brevity, low costs, and quality, to be applicable for this non-funded study; the PPVT-III was deemed to be eligible.

The PPVT was available at the Testotheek at the Radboud University Nijmegen free of charge. This test was, unfortunately, only available in Dutch, which required a reliable and decent translation that was not to affect the validity of the test substantially. A translation of the test was deemed to be possible, since the PPVT-III-NL itself is a translation as well; the test retained most of its original pictorial images, though some culturally specific images had been changed in addition to a number of changes in the order of these respective images were made in translating to Dutch (Schlichting, 2005, p. 29-31).

The validity of the PPVT-III-NL’s translation was tested by a native speaker of English with the same characteristics as the participants for this study: any words which this native English participant identified wrongly were changed or removed from the test; the only word removed was ‘succulent’ in the final set. This test was to be used as an indication of the participants’ proficiency levels in English and existed in combination with a check of their linguistic backgrounds and a self-report of their proficiency levels; sufficient testing for the reliability of this translation in combination with the consideration of linguistic backgrounds and self-reported proficiency levels precipitated reliable indications of either highly proficient or less proficient participants.

The PPVT-III-NL fulfils all three of these constraints in taking an acceptable fifteen minutes of the participants’ time, in being accessible to the researcher free of charge, and in
resulting in a reliable indication of the participants’ semantic knowledge, which may be interpreted as a rough indicator of the participants’ respective proficiency levels. The PPVT-III-NL, furthermore, is a COTAN approved test (Egberink, Janssen, & Vermeulen, 2005) and functions as a means to test the receptive knowledge of the vocabulary of the native language, but may be used to test the receptive knowledge of the respective language as a second- or foreign language as well (Schlichting, 2005, p. 9). The translation of the PPVT-III-NL may, thus, serve as an indication for the participants’ respective proficiency levels of English.

The PPVT-III-NL consists of seventeen different sets, which serve as an indication of one’s receptive knowledge of the vocabulary of the respective language. Each set consists of twelve pages with four pictorial images. Only one pictorial image on every page relates to a respective word. The participants were required to identify the corresponding image when the researcher called out the respective lexical item (Schlichting, 2005, p. 24). The PPVT-III-NL indicates an age-limit for every set, which meant that all participants of the present study were required to start with set thirteen. Following the guidelines of the PPVT-III-NL, a participant may end up either before or after the initial set (Schlichting, 2005, p. 12-15). To be eligible for the present study, the highly proficient participants were to finish the test and end up in set seventeen; the participants who were less proficient were to make an excessive number of mistakes, which resulted in their failing set thirteen and their prematurely dropping out, i.e. before set sixteen.

Each participant was requested to individually take the PPVT-III-NL test with the researcher in a room that had been booked at either the Radboud University Nijmegen or the University of Twente. The room provided a secure environment with as little distractions as possible, so that the participants could all concentrate on the test without having external influences. The test was conducted by following the guidelines of the PPVT-III-NL, which provided exclusion criteria for the initial set, i.e. five mistakes, and for the final set of the
participant, i.e. nine mistakes (Schlichting, 2005, 13-14). The participants were, consequently, either included in or excluded from the main test. The PPVT results of the participants who participated in the conversations have been provided in appendix 1.2.2.

3.3.1.4 Participant pool for conversations. The aforementioned tests, naturally, excluded a number of participants, since they scored outside of the mandatory ‘high proficiency’ or ‘low proficiency’ range. A total of 26 participants had been selected prior to the proficiency tests, 18 of whom scored within the obligatory proficiency ranges. Three native speakers of German scored within the range of a low proficiency level and six scored within the range of a high proficiency level; six native speakers of Dutch, furthermore, scored within the range of a low proficiency level and three scored within the range of a high proficiency level. Participants who scored in between the constraints of being eligible for either the ‘highly proficient’ group or the ‘less proficient’ group have deliberately not been considered, since these speakers may rely on both the form and the function of a language in communication. Consequently, a total of eighteen participants were selected to participate in the study, the details of which have been shown in table 1.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant group</th>
<th>Proficiency</th>
<th>Self-reported</th>
<th>PPVT-III Set</th>
<th>Number of participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>&lt; 6</td>
<td>&lt; 13</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>8 &gt;</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>&lt; 6</td>
<td>&lt; 13</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>8 &gt;</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. All participants have been selected with respect to nationality and proficiency level. They share the same characteristics regarding the variables ‘age’ and ‘socio-economic class’.
3.3.2 Story-completion task. The participants who were decided to be eligible for the study were placed in different pairs, all of which consisted of a native speaker of Dutch and a native speaker of German who had never met prior to the story-completion task. The composition of the different groups has been shown in table 2, which depicts that ELF communication has only been measured between participants of different nationalities. This was done in order to prevent the participants to functionally communicate in their native language, i.e. code-switching, when they encountered miscommunications. Both German and Dutch participants, however, may have had a background in their conversation partner’s L1, which resulted in a certain knowledge of this language and a possibility of functional code-switching. Functional code-switching, here, is communicating in a language other than the target language in order to communicate information and establish a communicative common ground. Thus, three groups were formed, two of which consisted of participants with roughly equal proficiency levels, i.e. either high or low, and one of which consisted of participants with significantly different proficiency levels.

These different groups were each scheduled to have a session of approximately twenty minutes in which they were to collaboratively construct meaningful and coherent stories. A session was divided in three parts. Firstly, the researcher provided the participants with an explanation of the story-completion task. They were, however, not informed on the to the
purpose of the task, which prevented any, conscious or unconscious, manipulation of the
dialogue. The participants were, then, each given the ambiguous texts on three different
handouts. The handouts, however, were ordered thusly that only the first story was visible; in
order to not overload the participants with information the stories were to be approached one
by one. To account for the participants’ individual reading speeds, furthermore, the
ambiguous stories provided were brief, i.e. approximately four lines. The instruction to the
task and the handing out of the introductory texts took fewer than five minutes, after which
the participants were to start the task.

The participants were, secondly, requested to individually consider multiple possible
scenarios for the first ambiguous story. The participants were given approximately one minute
to clarify the story for themselves, which guaranteed that they would not be cognitively
overloaded during the course of the conversation. However, twenty to thirty seconds often
proved to be sufficient for the participants to develop an understanding of the story; the
participants often moved to discuss a scenario relatively quickly. The participants were, thus,
introduced to the excerpts of the stories, which allowed them to contribute to the conversation
in the next phase of the task.

Thirdly, the participants were requested to collaboratively provide several scenarios to
the ambiguous story by discussing the possibilities that they had individually constructed in
the previous section of the task. The interlocutors were given a common communicative goal,
for which they were to exchange information and communicate bidirectionally. The
participants, thus, collaboratively constructed multiple scenarios to the story. Both this phase
and the former were repeated twice in order for all three ambiguous stories to be considered
separately.

3.3.3 Data analysis. The story-completion task established a common,
communicative, and linguistically challenging goal that was not too demanding in a cognitive
sense. The participants, furthermore, had been selected by means of a proficiency test, after which they were placed in pairs. Each pair consisted of a native speaker of Dutch and a native speaker of German, who were to complete the common task by collaboratively constructing multiple scenarios for an ambiguous story. The participants were recorded in the process of collaboratively achieving their common goal. The different dialogues were, furthermore, transcribed and textually rendered into clauses.

Miscommunications and signalling and preventive methods that were recorded in these conversations were qualitatively and quantitatively analysed. The recordings of 18 participants, naturally, resulted in a great amount of superfluous data. Therefore, only miscommunications within these respective conversations were considered in the analysis. The transcriptions were analysed by identifying verbal cues and by means of CA.

The transcripts were analysed in terms of Mauranen’s (2006) signalling and prevention methods for miscommunication, after which the pragmatic context was considered through a CA approach. The consideration of pragmatic context comprised of the analysis of instances of signalling and preventive methods that were not introduced by verbal cues and the interpretation of interlocutors’ talking at cross purposes. The nonverbal strategies, firstly, were considered through the analysis of the use of language in context: stretches of discourse that presented a nonstandard continuation of speech, e.g. the premature termination of ideas, or contextual aspects that hinted at impending misinterpretations, e.g. lengthy pauses followed by self-induced further explanation of a previously uttered idea, were identified as nonverbal strategies. Interlocutors’ talking at cross purposes, secondly, were considered by the consideration of pragmatic context: instances in which interlocutors showed a demonstrably different interpretation of discourse were analysed and identified as misinterpretations. Instances in which no verbal cues were recorded, but where interlocutors did not appear to
have established a common ground in terms of linguistic comprehensibility, were considered and analysed.

4. Results

4.1 Introduction

The different conversational dimensions were analysed separately, which allows for a comparison and contrast in terms of quality and quantity of miscommunications between the different group compositions. The three dimensions were analysed structurally following the CA approach, firstly, by the identification of verbal strategies to avoid miscommunication, secondly, by the analysis of nonverbal strategies and, thirdly, by the consideration of misinterpretations that had not been prevented.

This chapter shows four striking results. The chapter, firstly, shows that both semantically based and pragmatically based impending miscommunications may benefit from signalling and preventive strategies. Previous literature relating to ELF has focussed on semantic miscommunications alone (e.g. Firth, 2009; Mauranen, 2006). ELF users’ different backgrounds, histories, L1s, and proficiency levels in the target language, however, may precipitate interpersonal differences in interpretation as well as in what is deemed linguistically feasible (MacKenzie, 2014). ELF users, thus, employ both semantic and pragmatic signalling and preventive strategies to ensure a communicative common ground.

This study, secondly, introduces a number of new strategies to avoid miscommunications. Mauranen (2006) argued for a number of verbal strategies to signal and prevent miscommunications. This study, however, argues for a number of additional strategies that may not be indicated verbally. Next to the additional pragmatic strategies, this study introduces a number of semantically based strategies that have not been regarded by previous studies as a result of the requirement of conversational context (Have, 2007).
The results, thirdly, show a substantial number of strategies, whereas these strategies have been argued not to be common. Previous research has found little instances in which miscommunications were avoided in ELF interactions (e.g. Firth, 2009; Kaur, 2010; Mauranen, 2006). These studies, however, focus on written language and corpora rather than naturally occurring speech, do not consider conversational context, and, most importantly, disregard pragmatic signalling and preventive strategies. This study integrates the aforementioned limitations and reveals a great many more instances in which miscommunications are avoided verbally and nonverbally.

The study, fourthly, reveals that miscommunications are, indeed, not common as a result of interlocutors’ relying on semantically and pragmatically based strategies; miscommunications do, however, arise considerably more often in conversations between speakers with substantially different proficiency levels in the target language. Interlocutors with substantially different proficiency levels may rely on different semantic and pragmatic interpretations of utterances, which results in their talking at cross purposes. Instances in which interlocutors are not able to establish a communicative common ground, and fail to prevent misinterpretations, are argued to be more common in ELF communication between interlocutors with substantially different proficiency levels in the target language than in other forms of communication.

In section 4.2, ELF dialogues between proficient interlocutors are discussed. This section focusses on the qualitative inventory of strategies to avoid miscommunications, after which the quantity of strategies is analysed; the section, then, moves to the consideration of instances in which misinterpretations are not prevented. In sections 4.3 and 4.4, conversations between less proficient speakers of English and dialogues between people with differing proficiency levels are discussed in the same way. These sections discuss only the strategies and misinterpretations that have been found to be common in, or exclusive to, the respective
dimension. This chapter serves as means to gain an understanding of the manner in which qualitatively and quantitatively different strategies are represented in the dialogues and of possible differences in surfaced misinterpretations.

**4.2 Proficient Versus Proficient**

**4.2.1 Quality of signalling and preventive strategies.** This section considers the types of strategies proficient ELF users employed to signal and prevent miscommunication. The section has been organised to account for both verbal and nonverbal strategies. The proficient-proficient dimension, unsurprisingly, proved not to be diverse in employing pragmatic rather than semantic strategies. The proficient interlocutors used self-repairs, confirmation checks and explicit questions with respect to pragmatics, and self-induced further explanation, but occasionally prematurely terminated an attempt to establish a communicative common ground as well. In the following subsections, verbal and nonverbal strategies are discussed.

**4.2.1.1 Verbal strategies.** The conversations in which two proficient speakers of English engaged in a common communicative task contain multiple instances in which verbal strategies signal or prevent impending misunderstandings. Semantically based strategies were rare, but the participants used several verbal strategies to avoid pragmatically based misunderstandings.

**4.2.1.1 Self-repair.** The proficient speakers, firstly, presented a small number of self-repairs. Self-repairs surfaced in all conversations between proficient NNES. Figure 3 shows an excerpt from the respective conversations in which a self-repair was recorded. The self-repairs in figure 3 have been indicated in bold. These self-repairs, as well as others that were recorded, are instances of grammatical rephrasing that do not significantly contribute to the understanding of an utterance, but that were, rather, the result of approximating native speaker norms, as argued for in MacKenzie (2014). The grammatical rephrasing in the dialogue
Figure 3. Proficient-proficient self-repairs.

between S1 and S2, i.e. adjective ‘bad’ rather than the comparative ‘worse’, for example, followed an exclamation of understanding, i.e. ‘yeah’, which signified an understanding prior to the self-repair. The utterance may, thus, have been rephrased with the primary aim to conform to native speaker norms given that there was no demonstrable issue with the first lexical choice.

The instances recorded in both S3 and S4’s conversation and in S5 and S6’s dialogue show similar types of rephrasing, which contributed to the form of the language, where it remained to be equally intelligible, comprehensible, and interpretable, the importance of which is argued for by Smith (1992). S3, firstly, realised that the more appropriate way of phrasing the intended meaning was ‘would help him’ rather than ‘could help him’; this, however, neither improved the comprehensibility for S4, nor was it accompanied by a questioning response. S5, secondly, rephrased the utterance ‘what she thinks is happening’ to fit multiple tenses; this, again, did not improve comprehensibility and it was not commented on. When speakers S3 and S5 had not self-corrected, their respective utterances may have remained to be equally interpretable, which, again, argues for rephrasing to conform to the NES form of the language rather than rephrasing to enhance intelligibility.

4.2.1.1.2 Pragmatic confirmation checks. These conversations, secondly, reveal a number of confirmation checks, which may have been the result of uncertainty with respect to the validity of a constructed scenario in combination with its articulation through language; proficient interlocutors, however, may be argued to employ this strategy to check the
comprehensibility of pragmatics over semantic interpretability. S1 and S2 encountered an instance in which a common ground with respect to the interpretation of the text was established, which is shown in figure 4 in combination with similar instances in the dialogues.

Figure 4. Proficient-proficient pragmatic confirmation checks.

between S3 and S4 and between S5 and S6. S2 remarked that the words provided in the excerpt may not have been ‘dramatic enough’ for the previous scenario to be realistic. The speaker, then, requested the interpretation to be confirmed with the utterance ‘know what I mean?’. S1, consequently, replied with a negation with which the interlocutor confirmed that the words provided may, indeed, not have been the appropriate tone for the previous scenario to have been suitable. S1 continued by constructing a different scenario, which confirmed S2’s concerns and established a common interpretation. The confirmation check was, therefore, not an instance in which the linguistic comprehensibility was questioned, but was, again, an attempt to establish a pragmatic common ground.

The dialogue between S3 and S4 and that between S5 and S6 display slightly different confirmation checks, which map directly unto interpersonal differences in appropriateness of a specific scenario (MacKenzie, 2014). Both S4’s utterance ‘does that make sense?’ and S6’s remark ‘right?’ were preceded by the construction of a scenario. The speakers may not have been entirely confident that the scenarios were suitable for the conversation, or that S3 and S5
had similar ideas, which precipitated the confirmation checks to reach similar pragmatic realisations of the scenario at hand. Instances in which speakers’ utterances were represented as interrogatives rather than declaratives were interpreted as confirmation checks as well. Confirmation checks may exist on a semantic level and a pragmatic level simultaneously, since the comprehensibility of ideas combined with its articulation through language is questioned; proficient interlocutors employed this strategy to collaboratively establish a pragmatic rather than a semantic understanding.

4.2.1.3 Pragmatic explicit questions. Thirdly, the interlocutors used explicit questions to prevent misinterpretations; the questions were, again, primarily intended for further clarification of a scenario and, consequently, for a mutual understanding of the pragmatic intention of a constructed scenario. The conversation between S3 and S4 displays a small number of instances in which the interlocutors required further explanation of a scenario, which are signalled by explicit questions with respect to the content similar to the bolted questions in figure 5. The question ‘how do you mean?’ signalled a request for

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**Figure 5.** Proficient-proficient pragmatic explicit questions.
clarification of the previously constructed scenario. It was, consequently, difficulties in the construction of a common sense of the pragmatics of a scenario rather than difficulties in linguistic comprehensibility that complicated mutual understanding. The explicit question was precipitated by a short, undeveloped, scenario and was followed by an explanation and clarification of the intended meaning. S4, then, concluded by responding to the respective scenario, which confirmed the interlocutor’s understanding of S3’s intended scenario.

Figure 5, furthermore, shows an explicit question in the conversation between S5 and S6, which is a request for confirmation. S6 initiated this instance by constructing a scenario in which S5’s opinion was explicitly requested. S5, then, became aware of the pragmatic meaning of the respective utterance, which he phrased in the explicit question ‘like a metaphor?’. This question encapsulated the desire to know whether or not the interlocutor had correctly understood the pragmatics of the utterance as well as a request for additional information. S6, consequently, responded to the question by identifying S5’s deviating interpretation and by explaining her initial thoughts, after which S5 acquiesced by stating ‘ah, okay, okay’. S5, however, intended to clarify his train of thoughts and started the construction of that scenario by uttering ‘but it’s also-,’ but terminated this attempt prematurely. Premature terminations of establishing common ground are discussed in section 4.2.1.2.

4.2.1.4 Summary. Self-repairs, confirmation checks, and explicit questioning are verbal strategies to signal and prevent misinterpretation recorded in ELF communication in which two proficient NNES communicate. The impending misinterpretations in this type of communication, however, do not appear to be the result of linguistic unintelligibility, incomprehensibility, or uninterpretability, but may be classified as difficulties in establishing a pragmatic common ground resulting in differing interpretations of a constructed scenario.

4.2.1.2 Nonverbal strategies. A CA approach contributed to the possibility of analysing misinterpretations that may not have been indicated by verbal cues but that have
been established by differences in the interpretation of the conversational context, which may have been affected by interpersonally different psycho-social characteristics permeating a conversation.

4.2.1.2 Self-induced further explanation. The understanding of the conversational context through which a conversation is established may, firstly, differ interpersonally as a result of the social actors’ different psycho-social qualities and histories. The varying norms may contribute to the formulation of more scenarios than may be established individually, since some personalities may construct significantly different ideas than others. A similar situation is shown in figure 6, where S1’s utterance, i.e. ‘maybe it’s, like, somebody in love’,

Figure 6. Proficient-proficient self-induced further explanation.

was followed by a pause and required further explanation, possibly as a result of differing historical, psycho-social, and socio-cultural norms affecting the appropriateness of the scenario on a pragmatic level. Research has stated that the necessity of further explanation may be indicated by such pauses and the listener’s nonverbal behaviour in said pause, e.g. gaze, raised eyebrows, and the general absence of speech (Cassell et al., 1994). The initial
utterance was linguistically interpretable, but, thus, revealed a difference in norms of appropriateness, judging by the pause and the necessity of the further explanation. S2, then, uttered an exclamation, i.e. ‘oh, yeah!’, at seeing the appropriateness of the respective scenario. The appropriateness of the scenario may have been contemplated in the pause and accepted during the self-induced further explanation; interpersonal psycho-social differences and history precipitated a cooperative construction of ideas that may not have been constructed individually.

4.2.1.2 Premature termination. Interpersonal differences in socio-cultural and historical influences may, however, result in different interpretations when the differences precipitate varying forms of acceptability for a scenario on a pragmatic level. The recordings show a number of instances in which the interlocutors proved to have significantly different ideas of suitable scenarios, which resulted in different interpretations and eventual terminations of the attempts to create a common ground; one of these instances is shown in figure 7. This excerpt contains an explicit question, i.e. ‘sorry?’, as well as the phenomenon discussed at hand; this, however, resulted from the uninterpretability of the utterance ‘they can be cm... closely related as well’ and will, therefore, be neglected. S3’s attempt to dispute,
but the speaker’s eventual agreement, however, is discussed in the light of interpersonal differences.

Figure 7 displays an instance of interpretational differences between interlocutors that is similar to the communicational difference in figure 6; figure 7, however, displays a premature termination of the task. S3 constructed a short new scenario, i.e. ‘they can be closely related?’, to which S4 replied with the initiation of a dispute: ‘but, you see,’. The dispute, however, was not fully developed and the task was prematurely terminated through ‘next one?’, without having reached the common goal. The premature termination may have been a strategy to prevent misinterpretations, since the interlocutors did not have the opportunity to further discuss the scenario that had proven to be interpreted differently interpersonally.

4.2.1.2 Summary. This section focussed on the types of strategies that proficient ELF users employed in a dialogue setting; the interlocutors had a more diverse inventory of strategies than had been suggested by Mauranen (2006) in their using methods to ensure semantic, but mostly pragmatic interpretability. ELF users who were proficient in the target language used methods to avoid misinterpretations in both a semantic and a pragmatic sense and, consequently, employed a wider range of strategies than had been assumed. The full analyses of the dialogues between S1 and S2, between S3 and S4, and between S5 and S6 are provided in appendices 1.4.1, 1.4.2, and 1.4.3 respectively.

4.2.2 Quantity of signalling and preventive strategies. This section focusses on the number of strategies employed by proficient interlocutors. By taking into account pragmatic as well as semantic strategies, the total number of strategies proved to be substantially higher than previous research had suggested (e.g. Firth, 2009; Mauranen, 2006).

The proficient NNES proved to use a number of different strategies to signal and prevent miscommunications. Of all strategies that have been argued to be used in an ELF
situation in the preceding analysis, proficient interlocutors only used a small number: self-repairs, confirmation checks and explicit questions relating to pragmatics, self-induced further explanation following interpersonal differences, and, sporadically, the premature termination of an idea. Table 3 shows both the different strategies that were recorded in these dialogues.

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>S1</th>
<th>S2</th>
<th>S3</th>
<th>S4</th>
<th>S5</th>
<th>S6</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-repair</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactive repair</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirmation checks</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(semantics)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirmation checks (semantics)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>(pragmatics)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explicit question</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(semantics)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explicit question (pragmatics)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-induced further explanation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Premature termination</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* The proficient interlocutors use a set number of signalling and preventive methods for miscommunications. The impending miscommunications and the respective strategies were the result of interpersonal differences in pragmatic realisations rather than linguistic differences.

and the number of times they were used by each interlocutor. Strikingly, the conversationalists appear to have relied on the same strategies, where other methods were neglected.

A division between pragmatically based strategies and semantically based strategies has been made; to display the quantity of strategies that were used in the proficient-proficient
dimension, the number of strategies per turn should be determined. Table 4 shows the number

Table 4

Proficient-proficient Quantitative Signalling and Preventive Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Number of utterances (N_u)</th>
<th>Pragmatic strategies (N_s-c)</th>
<th>Semantic strategies (N_s-l)</th>
<th>Pragmatic strategies per turn (N_s-c/N_u)</th>
<th>Semantic strategies per turn (N_s-l/N_u)</th>
<th>Total strategies per turn (N_s-t/N_u)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S1</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S2</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S3</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S4</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S5</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S6</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. The strategies have been calculated by dividing N_s by N_u (N_s / N_u = N_s/N_u).*

of strategies per turn. A distinction has been made between strategies to retain a pragmatic common ground and strategies with respect to linguistic interpretability. The former contains self-repair, interactive repair, confirmation checks (pragmatics), explicit question (pragmatics), and self-induced further explanation, where the latter contains confirmation checks (semantics), explicit questions (semantics), functional code switching, and premature termination. The mean number of pragmatic signalling and preventive strategies for this dimension was 0.09 N_s-c/N_u, where the number of semantic strategies was negligible. The total number of strategies per turn was, consequently 0.09 N_s-t/N_u.

Participants used strategies to adhere to the form of the language and to signal and prevent pragmatically based misinterpretations rather than semantically based misunderstandings. In establishing a common ground, the form of the language appears to be
important, since the interlocutors used grammatically correct sentences and self-repair when sentences were not constructed according to NES norms; four out of six participants self-repaired in order to either form sentences that were grammatically more correct, but which did not contribute to the interpretability of the utterances. The interlocutors, furthermore, used confirmation checks and explicit questions relating to the pragmatics of a statement as well as further explanations following phases in which the suitability of an utterance was contemplated. These strategies were, thus, not employed to signal or prevent semantically based misunderstandings, but served as a means to resolve interpersonal differences and establish a pragmatic common ground.

The interlocutors displayed two instances in which the construction of a communicative common ground was prematurely terminated; these instances, however, primarily resulted from interpersonally different psycho-social norms. The recorded premature terminations served as strategies to prevent pragmatically based misinterpretations: the interlocutors were unable to further discuss a scenario that had proven to precipitate different views on the matter. These instances, however, proved to be rare in this dialogue dimension.

The proficient interlocutors did not, however, rely on lexically based strategies in order to retain a communicative common ground, where interlocutors with lower proficiency levels in the target language did. Proficient ELF users neither corrected each other when an occasional ungrammatical sentence was uttered, nor used confirmation checks and explicit questions with respect to semantics. The lack of the latter two strategies suggests that the recorded interlocutors do not encounter any semantically based misinterpretations.

The total number of strategies used to signal or prevent miscommunications in this conversational dimension is relatively high in comparison with previous studies (e.g. Firth, 2009; Mauranen, 2006). The proficient interlocutors, however, mainly employed
pragmatically based strategies to ensure a mutual understanding of the uttered scenarios; semantically based strategies are rarely used and may be neglected in this dimension.

**4.2.3 Misinterpretations.** This conversational dimension shows no apparent misinterpretations; the signalling and preventive methods appear to have been sufficient aids in retaining a communicative common ground. In this form of ELF communication, neither semantically based misinterpretations nor pragmatic misunderstandings have been recorded. The strategies that have been recorded are means to retain a pragmatic common ground and to resolve interpersonal differences.

**4.3 Proficient Versus Unproficient**

**4.3.1 Quality of signalling and preventive strategies.** This section considers the type of strategies in the second dimension, i.e. proficient versus unproficient interlocutors. This section has been structured in the same way as the previous and argues that both proficient and unproficient interlocutors relied on semantic and pragmatic strategies to signal and prevent impending miscommunications. Some of the pragmatic strategies appeared to have a more elaborate function in the proficient-unproficient communicative dimension than they had in the dialogues between interlocutors with similarly high proficiency levels in the target language.

The proficient and less proficient interlocutors used different strategies, but appeared to deviate from the strategies they used in a situation in which they communicate with an equally proficient interlocutor. The proficient participants in these dialogues used self-repairs, interactive repairs, semantically and pragmatically based confirmation checks, pragmatically based explicit questions, self-invoked further explanations, and premature terminations and did so more extensively than interlocutors with similarly high proficiency levels in English. The less proficient interlocutors used self-repairs, semantically and pragmatically based confirmation checks and explicit questions, self-invoked further explanations, and premature
terminations. The quantitative differences will be clarified in section 4.3.2, where this section focusses on the quality of the strategies.

4.3.1.1 Verbal strategies. The proficient-un proficient dimension displayed verbal strategies to signal and prevent miscommunications that were similar to those recorded in the dialogues in which proficient NNES conversed. This section only considers the strategies that were not recorded in the proficient-proficient dialogues and those that prove to have a more elaborate function.

4.3.1.1.1 Interactive repairs. The dialogue between S7 and S8, firstly, contained an instance in which an interactive repair re-established a common ground. Figure 8 shows the interactive repair, which shifted focus from a misinterpreted scenario to the originally intended scenario constructed by S8. S8 initiated a new scenario which may have been misinterpreted by S7, judging by S7’s response and S8’s utterance ‘Or, I meant more that’. That interactive repair was followed by an explanation of how S8 had intended the scenario to be interpreted, which was finalised by a confirmation check. S7, finally, conveyed an understanding of the explained scenario by uttering ‘[Yeah], yeah, yeah’. A pragmatic

\begin{verbatim}
S8: [The first,]
    because, maybe he just wants to let pass a few days
    before he calls?
S7: [Yeah, yeah, timing]
    Like this ["three or four days before you"]
S8: Or, I meant more that
    if you,
    or, well, if it's a date
    or a boy
    because it's
    The first scenario is like a [boyfriend]
S7: [Hrm hrm], yeah.
S8: Err, or a date!
    And then you ask
    for numbers
    and then he doesn't call for three days,
    maybe to make him more interesting,
    [you know?]
S7: [Yeah], yeah, yeah!
\end{verbatim}

Figure 8. Proficient-unproficient interactive repair.
common ground was established through an interactive repair of a misinterpreted scenario followed by an explanation of the initial intention and a confirmation check which was responded to in the affirmative.

#### 4.3.1.1.2 Semantic and pragmatic confirmation checks

The conversations, secondly, presented a substantial number of confirmation checks and requests. Figure 9 shows one of

![Conversation Transcript](image)

**Figure 9.** Proficient-unproficient semantic and pragmatic confirmation checks.

the recorded confirmation checks in each of the respective conversations. The figure reveals that confirmation checks may be used to confirm mutual semantic and pragmatic agreement. The confirmation checks relating to pragmatics have been discussed in section 4.2.1.1.2 and are, therefore, not repeated, but the those related to semantics are elaborated on below.

In the first conversation, i.e. the dialogue between S7 and S8, a confirmation check is preceded by an explicit question. The question is discussed below, but the confirmation check, i.e. ‘like a well!’ proved to be important in establishing a common ground in the dialogue as well. The less proficient interlocutor, S7, appeared to have been unable to find a lexical item needed to reach a consensus and attempted to describe the item; the speaker, then,
requested S8 to confirm the idea and to provide the respective lexical item. S8 uttered the lexical item, which may, simultaneously, be interpreted as a confirmation check to reach a semantic and a pragmatic common ground. A common ground appears to have been established by the confirmation check and the following agreement, i.e. ‘yeah, someone like that’, but S7 reinforced the common ground by uttering a second description of the confirmed lexical item ‘well’ in ‘it seems like a mine with- with water’. S8 uttered a confirmation check after the explicit question for a lexical item; mutual semantic and pragmatic understanding were precipitated by this check and reinforced by a second description of ‘well’.

The dialogues between S9 and S10 and between S11 and S12 reveal confirmation checks similar to the checks in the dialogues between highly proficient ELF users. These are unrelated to linguistic intelligibility, but, rather, related to the confirmation of a pragmatic common ground. These confirmation checks have been elaborately discussed in section 4.2.1.1.2 and will, therefore, not be treated separately.

4.3.1.1.2 Semantic and pragmatic explicit questions. The conversations, thirdly, contained instances in which interlocutors explicitly asked questions to prevent miscommunications; these questions were either related to specific lexical items or to the content of the scenarios. Figure 10 shows instances in which the less proficient speakers

**Figure 10.** Proficient-unproficient semantic and pragmatic explicit questions.
requested lexical items. Both S7 and S11 requested a lexical item through ‘how do you say... Very deep thing with water?’ and ‘How do you say that?’ respectively. The explicit questions served two functions. The less proficient interlocutors may, firstly, have established a semantic common ground, which served as a conceptual basis for the mutual understanding of the utterance; they may, secondly, have constructed a pragmatic common ground through elaboration on the respective semantic concept. By providing the lexical items that had been requested, the more proficient interlocutors both clarified the semantics of an utterance and, consequently, established a pragmatic understanding of the constructed scenario.

4.3.1.1.3 Summary. Self-repairs, interactive repairs, and confirmation checks and explicit questions relating to both semantics and pragmatics are verbal strategies to signal and prevent impending misinterpretation were recorded in this ELF dimension. A number of these strategies were not exclusive to this dimension: these were employed in a similar fashion to those used by equally proficient ELF users. These strategies appear to be the result of difficulties in establishing a pragmatic common ground, whereas others appear to be the result of semantic difficulties; the latter appear to be more prominent in ELF communication in the proficient-unproficient dimension.

Verbal strategies that appear to be more prominent in this ELF dimension are semantically based confirmation checks and semantically based explicit questions. These are mostly used by proficient and less proficient speakers respectively. There is a clear distinction between the types of strategies used by the speakers with different proficiency levels, which is, in addition to the number of employed strategies, elaborated on in section 4.3.2.

4.3.1.2 Nonverbal strategies. Interpretational differences between interlocutors not indicated by verbal cues were recorded as well. Similar to the dialogues between proficient speakers, differences in backgrounds proved to be influential in misinterpreted scenarios.
This, comparably, resulted in the necessity of an additional explanation and in the premature termination of establishing a communicative common ground.

4.3.1.2.1 Self-induced further explanation. Interpersonal differences in terms of personality, culture, and first language may have precipitated misinterpretations or uninterpretability; the realisation of these difficulties may have resulted in an attempt to provide additional information or explanations, most of which resulted in a premature termination of the common goal as a result of a linguistic incapability of resolving the respective differences. Figure 11 shows instances between S9 and S10 and between S11 and S12 in which the less proficient interlocutors encountered difficulties in communicating their ideas. Consequently, their providing a dispute for the scenario established by their respective interlocutors resulted in the premature termination of their attempts. The premature terminations have been interpreted as instances in which the interlocutors proved to be
incapable to establish a pragmatic common ground as a result of linguistic difficulties; the necessity for further explanation has been interpreted as instances in which interpersonal psycho-social differences precipitated differences in interpretation.

The excerpt of the conversation between S9 and S10, firstly, shows S9’s acquiescing to S10’s constructed scenario following difficulties in communicating ideas. S10 put forward a number of possible scenario and ended with ‘that it’s just this ‘him’ said he would call, but did not so far’. S9, firstly, agreed with the great diversity of possibilities with the utterance ‘could be anything’, after which the speaker elaborated, and further explained the idea, in stating ‘it’s very…’. The speaker, however, hesitated and struggles to formulate the appropriate sentences, which resulted in a premature termination. The termination was shaped by a lengthy pause followed by S9’s utterance ‘that’s one’, which referred to the previously established scenario and took away the focus from the unfinished scenario.

The excerpt of the conversation between S11 and S12, secondly, contains premature terminations in a stretch of speech in which a miscommunication has arisen. S12 constructed a scenario in which the story had been interpreted as a break-up situation. S11, however, either did not fully understand S12’s intentions or elaborated on the scenario by stating ‘‘A’ thinks that ‘B’ is some secret’. This statement was, then, contemplated in a brief pause, after which S11 tried to further explain the additional information provided. S12, however, interrupted the speaker by stating that the respective information may have been suitable for a second, unrelated, scenario. To this statement, S11 responded with an entirely unrelated utterance, i.e. ‘I guess that ‘A’ is a- is a ‘she’’, which prematurely terminated the attempt to collaboratively establish a common ground. This incoherent conversational sequence was either the result of linguistic difficulties or of interpersonal psycho-social differences and may, thus, not be classified a misinterpretation following a conflict between proficiency levels; the premature termination of the scenario by introducing an unrelated topic, however,
proved to be a useful strategy to prevent misinterpretations, since the topic at hand was disregarded and replaced by the next.

4.3.1.2 Summary. This section focussed on the types of strategies that were used in the proficient-unproficient dimension. A number of non-exclusive strategies have been explained in the previous sections and have not been elaborated on here. Premature terminations, however, were employed differently in this dimension, which precipitated their being discussed here. Premature terminations were fairly common in the dialogues between S9 and S10 and between S11 and S12 and often followed situations that proved to be linguistically challenging or instances in which interpersonal differences precipitated difficulties in establishing a common ground. In these situations, the less proficient interlocutors chose to prevent misunderstandings by introducing a new topic. The full analyses of the dialogues between S7 and S8, between S9 and S10, and between S11 and S12 have been provided in appendices 1.4.4, 1.4.5, and 1.4.6 respectively.

4.3.2 Quantity of signalling and preventive strategies. The interlocutors in this conversational dimension used a large inventory of signalling and preventive methods for miscommunications. The strategies used by proficient and unproficient speakers in this ELF dimension, however, qualitatively differs from those employed in the other dimensions. Table 5 shows the types of signalling and preventive methods that both the unproficient and the proficient interlocutors used and displays both the number of times that each strategy was used by each speaker and how often the respective strategy was used in total. Less proficient interlocutors used self-repairs, pragmatically based confirmation checks, semantically and pragmatically based explicit questions, self-induced further explanation of a scenario, and premature terminations of a scenario. The proficient interlocutors, furthermore, used semantically and pragmatically based confirmation checks, pragmatically based explicit questions, self-induced further explanation, and premature terminations of an idea. Self-
Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Unproficient</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S7</td>
<td>S9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-repair</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactive repair</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirmation checks (semantics)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirmation checks (pragmatics)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explicit question (semantics)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explicit question (pragmatics)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functional code-switch</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-induced further explanation</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Premature termination</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. The signalling and preventive strategies are diverse. Both proficient and unproficient interlocutors use a multitude of strategies to prevent miscommunications. Proficient interlocutors’ confirmation checks are generally a response to unproficient interlocutors’ pragmatically based explicit questions; proficient interlocutors’ premature terminations are generally the result of linguistic difficulties displayed by the unproficient conversation partner.

repairs and interactive repairs were recorded in this group as well. The recorded strategies to avoid miscommunications were extensive and diverse; proficient and unproficient conversation partners employ fairly similar strategies, but differed in some aspects as well.

Similar to what was done in the previous group, a division between pragmatically based strategies and semantically based strategies has been made; to display the quantity of strategies that were used in the proficient-unproficient groups, the number of strategies per turn should be determined. Table 6 shows the number of strategies per turn, where a
**Table 6**

*Proficient-Unproficient Quantitative Signalling and Preventive Strategies*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Number of utterances ($N_u$)</th>
<th>Pragmatic strategies ($N_{sc}$)</th>
<th>Semantic strategies ($N_{sl}$)</th>
<th>Pragmatic strategies per turn ($N_{sc}/N_u$)</th>
<th>Semantic strategies per turn ($N_{sl}/N_u$)</th>
<th>Total strategies per turn ($N_{st}/N_u$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S7</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S9</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S11</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mean</strong></td>
<td><strong>83</strong></td>
<td><strong>7.7</strong></td>
<td><strong>4.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.09</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.06</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.15</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S8</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S10</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S12</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mean</strong></td>
<td><strong>84</strong></td>
<td><strong>14.7</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.19</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.04</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.23</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* The top half, i.e. S7, S9, and S11, represents the unproficient interlocutors, where the bottom half, i.e. S8, S10, and S12, represents the proficient interlocutors. The strategies have been calculated by dividing $N_s$ by $N_u$ ($N_s / N_u = N_s / N_u$).

The distinction has been made between proficient and unproficient interlocutors, which take up the top half and the bottom half of the table respectively, and pragmatic and semantic strategies. The mean number of pragmatic signalling and preventive strategies for the unproficient interlocutors of this group was 0.09 $N_{sc}/N_u$, where the number of semantic strategies was 0.06 $N_{sl}/N_u$. The mean total number of strategies per turn in this group was 0.15 $N_{st}/N_u$. The mean number of pragmatic signalling and preventive strategies for the proficient interlocutors of this dimension, however, was substantially higher: 0.19 $N_{sc}/N_u$. This was mostly the result of pragmatically based confirmation checks. The number of semantic strategies, furthermore,
was 0.04 $N_{s,v}/N_u$, which was similar to the number of strategies used by unproficient speakers. The mean total number of strategies per turn in this group was 0.23 $N_{s,v}/N_u$.

The unproficient interlocutors, firstly, prioritised the function of the language over its form in applying simplification strategies to both lexical and grammatical aspects of the language and in code-switching to their native language; interestingly, however, these interlocutors employed a number of strategies to ensure the comprehensibility of their utterances, through which they, conversely, enhanced both the function and the form of the language.

The unproficient speakers employed both self-repairs and semantically based explicit questions in order to be more comprehensible for the more proficient speakers. The self-repairs conveyed instances in which the unproficient interlocutors may have believed that their previous utterances had been incomprehensible. Rephrasing, consequently, improved both the form and the function of an utterance. Explicit questions with respect to lexical items, furthermore, clarified the intended meaning for both interlocutors and improved the form of the language by abandoning the simplified lexical forms. The unproficient speakers requested specific lexical items and self-repair in order to both clarify their intentions, i.e. improve the function of the language, and adhere to NES norms, i.e. improve the form of the language. The less proficient speakers appear to adjust their strategies to account for the proficiency levels of their conversation partners to signal and prevent miscommunications.

When these strategies could not be applied, or when the unproficient speakers did not see how to resolve an impending misinterpretation, however, the speakers often chose to prematurely terminate the attempt to establish a common ground. The less proficient speakers’ terminations resulted either from difficulties in communicating ideas, or from unresolved interpersonal differences. The inability of continuing a scenario could have resulted in miscommunications; these may, however, have been circumvented by employing
either semantically or pragmatically based strategies. The speakers, however, chose to
discontinue the scenario, which proved to be the ultimate manner in which a possible
misinterpretation may be avoided. When premature terminations were employed, the
scenarios at hand were discontinued and most of the time neglected by the respective
conversation partners to prevent any misinterpretations.

The proficient speakers, secondly, prioritised the form of the language over its
function in uttering sentences that conform to NES rules; these speakers, however, proved to rely on certain strategies that improved the comprehensibility for the less proficient speakers. The proficient speakers in this dimension used strategies similar to the ones employed by those in the proficient-proficient dimension, but used additional strategies to ensure comprehensibility as well. The proficient speakers, thus, accommodated to the proficiency levels of their interlocutors, not in terms of change in relying on the form of the language, but in terms of employing a wider range of strategies to ensure comprehensibility and interpretability.

The proficient interlocutors employed the same strategies in this dimension as they did in the dialogues between proficient speakers only, but differed in using semantic confirmation checks and in prematurely terminating scenarios substantially more often. Semantic confirmation checks mostly follow semantically based explicit questions. The proficient speakers’ responses, and their providing the required lexical items, consequently, re-established a common ground after a moment of unclarity. The proficient speakers also employed premature terminations to avoid misinterpretations more often in this conversational dimension than in the dialogues between two proficient speakers. Employing these strategies increased the diversity of preventive methods as well as the quantity.

4.3.3 Misinterpretations. The proficient-unproficient conversations reveal a number of instances in which the signalling and preventive strategies should have been applied to
retain mutual understanding, but where they were not employed or deemed to be insufficient; differences in proficiency levels in the target language appear to have precipitated misunderstandings and talk at cross purposes.

The dialogues in this conversational dimension contain instances in which interlocutors failed to both establish a common ground and to resolve misinterpreted intentions, which resulted in the interlocutors talking at cross purposes. Figure 12, below,

![Figure 12. Proficient-unproficient talk at cross purposes.](image-url)
shows the respective instances in which the interlocutors of both dialogues adhered to
different interpretations of the constructed scenarios as a result of interpersonal psycho-social
differences on the one hand and a difficulty of bringing across the pragmatic intention through
semantic difficulties on the other.

S7 and S8 were unable to establish a common ground in the excerpt provided in figure
12. The proficient and less proficient speakers, i.e. S8 and S7 respectively, displayed different
trains of thought in discussing two different scenarios at the same time. The proficient
interlocutor introduced a scenario that concerned a couple terminating their relationship as a
result of never talking to each other, whereas the less proficient interlocutor tried to discuss
‘new, exciting, and difficult things’: the complete opposite. S8 attempted to communicate the
initial intention by stating that the protagonists of the story ‘never talk to each other abou-
about, [like-]’, but S7, again, interpreted this as ‘something new’. S7, furthermore, uttered
false displays of understanding; the interlocutor believed to have understood the more
proficient interlocutor’s ideas and revealed to have done so by explicitly uttering displays of
understanding. S7, however, continued the (different) story-line in the following clauses. The
interlocutors adhered to different scenarios for a substantial period of time, the idea of which
is reinforced by S7’s utterance ‘I’m not sure if it’s positive or negative’, where S8’s scenario
considering a break-up is clearly negative. S8 eventually applied the ultimate attempt to reach
a consensus by requesting to read the story in different roles. The interlocutors adhered to
differing scenarios and were unable to reach a common ground; the proficient speaker, i.e. S8,
however, was aware of this situation and attempted to resolve the situation by proposing a
role-play.

S9 and S10 encountered similar difficulties in establishing a communicative common
ground. Figure 12 shows S9’s and S10’s talking at cross purposes, possibly as a result of S9’s
incapability of discerning all previously uttered scenarios. S10 uttered multiple scenarios prior
to the utterance ‘that it’s just this ‘him’ said he would call, but did not so far’. S9, however, stated that ‘that’s one’ scenario, after a moment in which the speaker had appeared to have been unable to respond, and requested a second possible story. This left S10 confused, which precipitated a lengthy pause and the beginning interrogative ‘hmm, [seco-]’. S10, then, resolved the misinterpretation by conforming to S9’s train of thought and, thus, prematurely terminating an argument: S10 constructed another scenario to avoid the breakdown of communication and, thus, resolved this misinterpretation.

S11 and S12, as well, were unable to reach a common ground in the excerpt provided in figure 12. S11 and S12 may have had different interpretations of the lexical item ‘crime’, which precipitated the difficulty in establishing a common ground. S11 proposed a scenario, but was unable to provide it in full as a result of the speaker’s inability to phrase a full idea. S11 had explicitly requested a lexical item, which was provided by S12, i.e. crime, after which a common ground appeared to have been established. The interlocutors, however, appeared to have different definitions of the word ‘crime’: S12 stated that ‘one of them is a police officer’, where S11 argued for an ‘accident’. The initial affirmative response to the lexical item ‘crime’ may, thus, have been false and resulted in the talk at cross purposes. The misinterpreted scenario, however, was quickly recovered from by means of a premature termination and by the initiation of a following scenario.

The difficulties in these dialogues may have been precipitated by a conflict of relying mostly on the form of the target language or relying on its function. S8, S10, and S12, i.e. the proficient speakers, focussed on the form of the language, produced sentences according to NES norms, and relied on those norms for messages to be brought across (MacKenzie, 2014, p.6); S7, S9, and S11, i.e. the unproficient interlocutors, however, encountered difficulties with respect to lexical items before and focussed on the function of the target language in applying lexical and grammatical simplification strategies (Blum & Levrninston, 1980, p. 48;
MacKenzie, 2014, p. 5; Mauranen, 2012, p. 30). The recorded misinterpretations may have been caused by interpersonal psycho-social differences and may have been maintained by a combination of inadequate simplification strategies at the part of the speaker and insufficient signalling and preventive methods for misinterpretation; the resulting uninterpretability of the utterances and construction of a different interpretation at the part of the less proficient interlocutors may have caused the incomplete transmission of both semantics and pragmatics and, consequently, the inevitable misinterpretation of the scenarios.

Despite the quantity and the diversity of strategies to signal and prevent misunderstanding the participants in these dialogues displayed a number of instances in which the interlocutors talk at cross purposes. The recorded misinterpretations may have resulted from interpersonal psycho-social differences, but were maintained and reinforced by linguistic difficulties and insufficient strategies to signal and prevent misunderstandings. The proficient interlocutors were aware of the misinterpreted scenarios and eventually resolved the instances by either prematurely terminating the scenario or by applying entirely new strategies to resolve the respective misunderstanding, e.g. reading the scenario out loud. Other similar instances in which misinterpretations could have arisen benefited from signalling and preventive methods. The recorded misinterpretations may, thus, were prevented by the recognition of differences in relying on either form or function of the target language and, consequently, by using an even larger quantity of strategies.

4.4 Unproficient Versus Unproficient

4.4.1 Quality of signalling and preventive strategies. This section considers the type of strategies in the third dimension, i.e. unproficient versus unproficient interlocutors. This section has been structured in the same way as the previous and argues that unproficient interlocutors employed both semantic and pragmatic strategies to signal and prevent impending miscommunications.
The unproficient interlocutors used self-repairs, confirmation checks and explicit questions with respect to semantics and pragmatics, self-induced further explanation, and premature terminations of scenarios. They occasionally employed functional code-switching to prevent misinterpretations from arising. Most of these strategies were used by unproficient speakers in the proficient-unproficient conversational dimension as well, but some of these strategies were, in this data collection, either unique for the unproficient-unproficient dimension or employed substantially more often. This section only considers the strategies that were not recorded in the proficient-proficient dialogues or those that were characteristic for this conversational dimension, i.e. semantic confirmation checks and explicit questions, and functional code-switching. In the following subsections, verbal and nonverbal strategies are discussed.

4.4.1.1 Verbal strategies. These dialogues contain multiple instances in which verbal strategies were used to signal or prevent possible misunderstandings. The unproficient speakers used verbal strategies to avoid both semantically based and pragmatically based misunderstandings.

4.4.1.1.1 Semantic confirmation checks. This conversational dimension, firstly, shows semantic confirmation checks, which were employed differently from those used in the proficient-unproficient dimension. Figure 13 shows confirmation checks in the conversations between S13 and S14 and between S15 and S16. The respective confirmation checks surfaced after S13 and S16 had indicated that they were either unfamiliar with an uttered word (not shown in the figure) or that they did not know a specific lexical item. S14 and S15, consequently, attempted to retain a common understanding of the constructed scenario by providing a lexical item; in these instances, the lexical item that were provided did not contribute to the interpretability of the utterance, since either a description of the respective word or a translation had already been provided. The confirmation checks merely served a
Figure 13. Unproficient-unproficient semantic confirmation checks.

4.4.1.1.2 Semantic and pragmatic explicit questions. The unproficient speakers, secondly, relied more heavily on explicit questions; these questions and the resulting explanations may have served a dual purpose in, on the one hand, clarifying a scenario and the intended meaning and, on the other hand, requesting a linguistically more comprehensible repetition of the utterance. Figure 14 shows a number of explicit questions. The explicit questions posited by S13 and S15 were related to the request of lexical items and is, thus, connected to the aforementioned confirmation checks of their interlocutors.

The conversation between S18 and S19, however, shows a different use of the explicit question that was recorded in previous dialogue-types as well: the explicit question served as a means to clarify a scenario and the intended meaning. S17, here, possibly did not fully understand S18’s scenario following the speaker’s difficulties in phrasing thoughts correctly and the resulting incoherent speech. S17, consequently, asked for a clarification of this scenario in order to completely understand the intended meaning.
4.4.1.1.3 Functional code-switching. The dialogues in this conversational dimension, thirdly, displayed interlocutors’ relying on functional code-switching. Unproficient NNES in both the proficient-unproficient and the unproficient-unproficient conversational dimensions displayed code-switching to either their L1 or to their interlocutors’ L1; only the interlocutors in the latter dimension, however, used this strategy to clarify their intentions to their conversation partners, where the former engaged in code-switching to clarify it for themselves. Figure 15 shows two instances in which a speaker used code-switching for a
functional purpose, indicated between asterisks and in bold. S16 relied on the function of a code-switch in turning to the L1 of the conversation partner; the speaker employed a method to clarify speech and to avoid the breakdown of communication and possible misinterpretations.

Figure 15 shows a functional code-switch employed by S16. The intentions of the speaker are clarified by a return to the L1 of the speaker’s conversation partner, i.e. Dutch. S16, the native speaker of German, indicated to have trouble finding a lexical item with the utterances ‘*Krankenhaus*’ and ‘*Ik weet het woord niet*’, which translate into ‘hospital’ from German and into ‘I don’t know the word’ from Dutch respectively. By turning to Dutch after an initial return to S16’s L1, the intentions of the native speaker of German were clarified, but responded to in English with ‘which word?’. S16, then, responded in Dutch and provided the problematic lexical item. The breakdown of communication and a possible resulting misinterpretation may have been avoided by S16’s turning to the L1 of the conversation partner; functional code-switching proved to be a useful preventive strategy in instances in which interlocutors are aware of the L1’s involved in an ELF dialogue and know features of these respective languages.

4.4.1.1.3 Summary. Self-repairs, semantically and pragmatically based confirmation checks relating and explicit questions, and functional code-switching were the verbal strategies recorded in the proficient-unproficient dialogues. Semantic confirmation checks and functional code-switching were strategies that unproficient interlocutors used in this context, but not, or to a lesser extent, in the proficient-unproficient dimension; the interlocutors, more importantly, appeared to rely on explicit questions relating to both semantics and pragmatics to a greater extent than in other dimensions.

4.4.1.2 Nonverbal strategies. Next to the verbal signalling and preventive strategies, nonverbal strategies were recorded in this dialogue-type. The unproficient interlocutors used
several nonverbal strategies in their constructing and retaining a common ground, i.e. further explanation following a pause and premature termination; both strategies have, however, been discussed in the previous section. This section serves to mention that these strategies were employed in the unproficient-unproficient dialogues in a similar fashion. The strategies, however, were used substantially more often than they were in the other dimensions, as is discussed in section 4.4.2. The full analyses of the dialogues between S13 and S14, between S15 and S16, and between S17 and S18 have been provided in appendices 1.4.7, 1.4.8, and 1.4.9 respectively.

4.4.2 Quantity of signalling and preventive strategies. This conversational dimension proved to contain similar strategies to the ones unproficient speakers of English employed in the proficient-unproficient dimension; there were, however, a number of differences in both qualitative and quantitative use of strategies. Table 7 shows the types of strategies that were discussed in section 4.4.1, and reveals how often the different strategies were used both by the respective interlocutors and in total.

The interlocutors used self-repairs, semantic and pragmatic confirmation checks and explicit questions, self-induced further explanation of a scenario, and the premature termination of a scenario. Functional code-switching was recorded in this group as well, but this was employed by one speaker only. The recorded strategies to signal and prevent misinterpretations were similar but not equal to the ones that were employed by unproficient speakers in proficient-unproficient conversations.

Similar to the quantitative analysis in the previous groups, pragmatically and semantically based strategies have been provided separately; to display the quantity of strategies used in the unproficient-unproficient groups, however, the number of strategies per turn should be determined. Table 8 shows the number of pragmatic and semantic strategies per turn for each interlocutor, reveals the total strategies per turn per person, and presents the
Table 7

Unproficient-Unproficient Qualitative Signalling and Preventive Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>S13</th>
<th>S14</th>
<th>S15</th>
<th>S16</th>
<th>S17</th>
<th>S18</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-repair</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactive repair</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirmation checks</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(semantics)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirmation checks</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(pragmatics)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Explicit question</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>(semantics)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explicit question</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>(pragmatics)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functional code-switch</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-induced further explanation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Premature termination</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* The unproficient interlocutors apply more diverse and quantitatively more strategies than in a situation in which they communicate with a proficient conversation partner.

mean number of both the semantically and pragmatically based strategies per turn as well as the mean total strategies per turn. The mean number of pragmatic strategies for these interlocutors was $0,13 N_{ps}/N_u$, where the mean number of semantic strategies was $0,07 N_{sl}/N_u$; the mean total strategies per turn was $0,20 N_{st}/N_u$.

The unproficient interlocutors focussed on the function of the language rather than on its form by applying simplification strategies to both lexical and grammatical aspects of the language and by code-switching to both the L1 and the L1 of their conversation partner. The strategies that these interlocutors used, however, were intended to both improve the function and the form of the language: clarified aspects of language and, e.g., lexical items that were provided after an interlocutor’s inability to continue an utterance after a loss for words,
improves both the comprehensibility and the native form of the language. Interlocutors in this dimension used a greater number of signalling and preventive strategies to ensure mutual comprehensibility of speech; these strategies were employed to improve the function and the form of the target language.

4.4.3 Misinterpretations. Interestingly, this conversational dimension did not display any instances of interlocutors talking at cross purposes; there were no instances in which interlocutors failed to employ strategies and encounter misinterpretations. The signalling and preventive methods appeared to have been sufficient in retaining a communicative common ground. Neither semantically based misinterpretations nor pragmatic misunderstandings were recorded in this dimension. The strategies that were recorded were means to retain a pragmatic common ground and to resolve interpersonal differences.
4.5 Comparing Different Conversational Dimensions

The quality and the quantity of the different conversational dimensions have been considered separately in the previous sections. Similarities and differences in qualitative and quantitative strategies between these dimensions are presented in this section, as well as an indication of interdimensional differences of surfacing misinterpretations. This section serves to reiterate the study’s findings and to compare the conversational dimensions: the necessity of semantic and pragmatic strategies is restated, the importance of nonverbal strategies is repeated, both the quality and the quantity of strategies in the three dimensions are compared and contrasted, and the likelihood of misinterpretations in the different dimensions is discussed.

4.5.1 Semantic and pragmatic strategies. ELF users employed both semantic and pragmatic strategies to signal and prevent impending misinterpretation. The speakers, thus, retained a communicative common ground and avoided misinterpretations resulting from misunderstanding both lexical items and ideas. This study introduces a number of strategies that have not been considered in previous studies concerning misinterpretations (e.g. Firth, 2009; Kaur, 2010; Mauranen, 2006). Table 9 shows the verbal and nonverbal strategies that are used in signalling and preventing misinterpretations. A distinction is made between semantics and pragmatics and between verbal and nonverbal strategies. Taking into account conversational context has proven to be an important factor in studying discourse (Have, 2007); This study, consequently, introduces a number of semantic and pragmatic strategies to avoid misinterpretations.

4.5.2 Qualitative differences. The data shows that interlocutors in the different conversational dimensions, on the one hand, use a number of signalling and preventive strategies in the same way; on the other hand, these interlocutors employ qualitatively different strategies from each other as well. Proficient and unproficient speakers used
Table 9

*Semantic and Pragmatic Signalling and Preventive Strategies for Miscommunications*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Semantic</th>
<th>Pragmatic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verbal</td>
<td>Confirmation checks (semantics)</td>
<td>Self-repair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Explicit questions (semantics)</td>
<td>Interactive repair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Functional code switching</td>
<td>Confirmation checks (pragmatics)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Explicit question (pragmatics)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonverbal</td>
<td>Premature termination</td>
<td>Self-induced further explanation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Both confirmation checks and explicit questions may be employed in several ways. They may be related to requesting specific lexical items, i.e. semantics, or to informing after a speaker’s pragmatic intention, i.e. pragmatics.

Qualitatively different strategies from each other, but equally proficient speakers in different dimensions proved to be mutually divergent as well. Table 10 shows the strategies employed in the different conversational dimensions. Dimension two, i.e. the proficient-unproficient dialogue setting, has been subdivided to account for proficient and unproficient speakers. Interlocutors used similar strategies to retain a communicative common ground, but unproficient speakers, in general, used a larger number of strategies than proficient speakers. The table, furthermore, shows that unproficient speakers in dimension two had a less diverse inventory of strategies than the unproficient interlocutors in dimension three. The proficient speakers, however, had a more diverse inventory of strategies in dimension two than in dimension one. Speakers used different strategies to retain a communicative common ground in settings in which the interlocutors proved to be equally proficient than in settings in which the conversation partners’ linguistic capacities were substantially different.

4.5.3 **Quantitative differences.** Resulting from the consideration of semantics and pragmatics and from the introduction of additional strategies, the number of strategies employed are substantially higher than suggested in previous research (e.g. Mauranen, 2006);
### Table 10

**Overview of Qualitative Strategies per Group**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Dimensions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 (Proficient)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-repair</td>
<td>~</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactive repair</td>
<td>~</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirmation checks</td>
<td>~</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(semantics)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirmation checks (semantics)</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(pragmatics)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explicit question (semantics)</td>
<td>~</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(pragmatics)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functional code-switch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further explanation</td>
<td>~</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Premature termination</td>
<td>~</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.** 1 = proficient-proficient, 2 = proficient-unproficient, 3 = unproficient-unproficient; Strategies that have been employed between 1 and 10 times have been indicated with ‘~’ (between 1 and 5 for both proficiency levels of dimension 2). Strategies that have been employed more than 10 times have been indicated with ‘✓’ (more than 5 for both proficiency levels of dimension 2).

*a* Confirmation checks were employed to a great extent and exceeded all other strategies combined in number.

The different dimensions, furthermore, displayed substantial differences in the number of strategies used. Table 11 shows the mean number of strategies that are employed by the interlocutors in the different conversational dimensions. Dimension two has, again, been subdivided to account for the quantitative differences between proficient and unproficient speakers. The results have been divided in the mean number of pragmatically based strategies.
Table 11

Overview of Quantitative Strategies per Turn per Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Proficiency level</th>
<th>Mean $N_{sc}/N_{ul}$</th>
<th>Mean $N_{sl}/N_{ul}$</th>
<th>Mean $N_{st}/N_{ul}$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unproficient</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Unproficient</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. 1 = proficient-proficient, 2 = proficient-unproficient, 3 = unproficient-unproficient; $N_{sc}/N_{ul} = \text{pragmatic strategies per turn}$, $N_{sl}/N_{ul} = \text{semantic strategies per turn}$, $N_{st}/N_{ul} = \text{total strategies per turn}$.

and in the mean number of semantically based strategies; the table, furthermore, shows the accumulated number of strategies to reveal intergroup differences more clearly.

The proficient speakers used fewer strategies to avoid misinterpretations than the unproficient speakers; equally proficient speakers classified in the different dimensions, however, displayed substantial quantitative differences. Proficient interlocutors in dimension one, naturally, used fewer strategies than interlocutors in the other dimensions (0.09 $N_{st}/N_{ul}$) and almost exclusively employed pragmatically based strategies to avoid misinterpretations (0.09 $N_{sc}/N_{ul}$). The proficient interlocutors in dimension two, however, used substantially more pragmatic (0.19 $N_{sl}/N_{ul}$) and slightly more semantic strategies (0.04 $N_{sl}/N_{ul}$) than interlocutors in any other dimension, which resulted in a substantially higher quantity of total strategies used to signal and prevent misinterpretations (0.23 $N_{sl}/N_{ul}$). Proficient speakers used quantitatively more strategies in communicating with an unproficient speaker than in speaking with an equally proficient conversation partner; unproficient interlocutors, however, used fewer strategies in proficient-unproficient communication. In this dimension, surprisingly, proficient speakers used substantially more strategies to avoid miscommunications than unproficient speakers.
Unproficient speakers in conversational dimension three, furthermore, used more strategies than the other interlocutors in the other dimensions in general (0.20 N_{s,v}/N_u) and used both pragmatically based (0.13 N_{s,v}/N_u) and semantically based strategies (0.07 N_{s,v}/N_u). The unproficient NNES in dimension two relied on both pragmatic and semantic strategies as well, but employed fewer strategies than the equally unproficient interlocutors in dimension three, (0.09 N_{s,v}/N_u) and (0.04 N_{s,v}/N_u) respectively. This resulted in a lower quantity of total strategies used to signal and prevent misinterpretations (0.15 N_{s,v}/N_u) for the unproficient speakers in dimension two.

ELF users used more strategies than initially thought; there was, however, a difference in the quantity of strategies employed by the different dimensions. The total number of strategies was higher than argued for in previous literature (e.g. Firth, 2009, Kaur, 2010; Mauranen, 2006); the reason for this was the consideration of both semantic and pragmatic methods. There was a substantial interdimensional difference in qualitatively use of strategies; speakers with different proficiency levels, furthermore, appeared to adapt the number of strategies employed to the proficiency level of their conversation partners: in the proficient-unproficient domain, proficient speakers used a larger number and are more diverse strategies than in conversations with equally proficient interlocutors, where less proficient speakers used fewer and are less diverse strategies; proficient interlocutors, surprisingly, employed substantially more strategies in the proficient-unproficient domain than the unproficient speakers.

4.5.4 Misinterpretations. The proficient-unproficient dimension, thirdly, was the only dimension in which misinterpretations were recorded. The recordings of both the proficient-proficient and the unproficient-unproficient dimension showed no apparent misinterpretations resulting from insufficient signalling and preventing. The proficient-unproficient conversational dimension, however, did reveal instances in which interlocutors talk at cross
purposes. The interlocutors in the proficient-unproficient dimension encountered misinterpretations that had not been avoided, where such instances were not recorded in the other dimensions.

4.5.5 Results. This study focussed on misinterpretations and signalling and preventive strategies in different proficiency dimensions within the domain of ELF. The results of this study, firstly, showed that interlocutors used semantic and pragmatic strategies to signal and prevent misunderstandings. It, secondly, revealed that interlocutors had a larger inventory of strategies than other studies had suggested (e.g. Firth, 2009; Mauranen, 2006), and that there were interdimensional qualitative differences. The results, thirdly, show that the interlocutors used substantially more strategies than anticipated (e.g. Firth, 2009; Mauranen, 2006), and that there were interdimensional quantitative differences; the interlocutors, furthermore, appeared to approximate their conversation partners in a qualitative and quantitative sense. The results, lastly, showed that misinterpretations surfaced in the proficient-unproficient domain alone. These results are further explicated in chapter 6.

6. Discussion

6.1 Introduction

Previous ELF research argued for contradicting statements: L2-L2 communication precipitates either more (e.g. Bae, 2002) or fewer (e.g. Firth, 2009; Mauranen, 2006) miscommunications than L1-L1 or L1-L2 communication; this study states that ELF research may benefit from a consideration of interlocutors’ proficiency levels in the target language. Previous research has not considered the possibility of proficiency levels affecting the manner in which communication is structured (Bae, 2002; Firth, 2009; Kaur, 2010; Mauranen, 2006). Few significant differences in terms of quality and quantity of misunderstandings between ELF and NES conversations have, consequently, been found. This study, however,
acknowledges interlocutors’ proficiency levels and researches qualitative and quantitative differences in terms of strategies and misinterpretations between different conversational dimensions.

These strategies and miscommunications in ELF should, furthermore, not be analysed in isolation, written texts, or corpora as in, e.g. Firth (2009), Kaur (2010), and Mauranen (2006); they should, rather, be considered in real-time conversational context by administering a CA approach. This study compares and contrasts qualitative and quantitative differences in signalling and preventive methods for miscommunications in recorded dialogues in which participants differ in terms of proficiency levels in the target language. The study, furthermore, researches instances in which strategies prove to be insufficient, which precipitates misinterpretations. The paper’s findings are interpreted in section 6.2.

6.2 Findings and interpretations

This paper argues for the importance of four findings. The paper, firstly, argues that interlocutors use both semantically and pragmatically based signalling and preventive strategies. Interlocutors may encounter difficulties in mutually understanding both the semantics and the pragmatics of an utterance. When such difficulties arise, qualitatively different strategies may be applied in order to resolve them. Semantically based strategies encompass premature termination of a discussion, functional code-switching, and confirmation checks and explicit questions concerning lexical items, where pragmatically based strategies are self-repairs, interactive repairs, self-induced further explanation, and confirmation checks and explicit questions concerning ideas.

Previous ELF research focussed on semantic signalling and preventive strategies alone, thus disregarding the possibility of pragmatic misunderstandings (Mauranen, 2006). However, ELF communication, especially, proves to be diverse in terms of interlocutors’ psycho-social characteristics, e.g. history, L1, culture, and proficiency level, which may
precipitate interpersonal misunderstandings of ideas and intentions. The consideration of both semantic and pragmatic strategies results in a more encompassing view on the manner in which interlocutors retain a communicative common ground relating to lexemes and ideas.

The paper, secondly, argues for an inventory of strategies that is larger than argued for in previous research (Mauranen, 2006); the results of this paper, furthermore, showed that interlocutors with different proficiency levels employed qualitatively different strategies and that equally proficient speakers used different strategies in conversations with interlocutors who are not equally proficient in the target language. Having considered conversational context and pragmatics, a number of strategies that have not been considered in previous research appeared to have been used. These, and the strategies Mauranen (2006) presented, were used differently by speakers with different proficiency levels in various conversational dimensions.

Proficient and unproficient interlocutors showed qualitative differences, but seemed to move towards each other on the form-function continuum in mismatched communication. The proficient interlocutors in proficient-unproficient dialogues showed a greater diversity of strategies than in dialogues with equally proficient conversation partners, where the unproficient speakers were less diverse. The move on the form-function continuum may have been an adaptation strategy to minimise linguistic differences between interlocutors with different proficiency levels. The proficient interlocutors improved the comprehensibility of certain statements in the proficient-unproficient dialogue by, e.g., uttering semantic confirmation checks. They, consequently, mostly relied on the function of the language, where they mostly relied on its form in other conversational dimensions, e.g. by focussing on grammatical correctness. The less proficient interlocutors may, however, have been inclined to be less diverse as a result of relying on the linguistic capabilities of their proficient conversation partner in a challenging setting (Vygotsky, 1978). These results imply that
proficient and unproficient ELF users shift on the form-function continuum in different situations and, consequently, adjust their manners of speech to the proficiency level of their conversation partner.

The paper, thirdly, showed substantial differences in the quantity of strategies used by interlocutors with different proficiency levels in the target language, but, interestingly, revealed quantitative differences in strategies used by equally proficient speakers in different conversational dimensions as well. As a result of a consideration of context and pragmatics, the quantity of strategies employed in all three dimensions is substantially higher than suggested in previous research (e.g. Firth, 2009; Mauranen, 2006). There are, however, interdimensional differences. Proficient speakers always used fewer strategies than unproficient speakers, but the interlocutors, again, seemed to adjust quantitatively to the proficiency level of their interlocutor: proficient speakers used more strategies in a proficient-unproficient dialogue than in a dialogue between proficient speakers of English, where unproficient speakers did the opposite by using fewer.

These findings imply that learners perform best in a situation in which they are challenged. Studies have shown that learners who are challenged in a learning environment, i.e. surrounded by other learners who may be more skilful, perform better than others who perform at, or below, their abilities (e.g. Bandura, 1971; Vygotsky, 1978). Bandura (1971) stated that learning is a social process in which less capable learners acquire information through direct instruction and through observation (p. 3). Vygotsky (1978), furthermore, argued that cognitive development, and thus linguistic development, depends on the zone of proximal development (ZPD), which is the level of development that learners achieve through social interaction. The ZPD may be interpreted as a learning zone in which learners acquire and establish abilities with assistance, after which the learner may be able to perform similar actions individually (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86); learners may, thus, be able to learn more and
perform better in a setting in which they are challenged and supported by more capable social actors.

Unproficient ELF users are challenged in the proficient-unproficient dimension, which may precipitate a shift on the form-function continuum; speakers may adhere to NES norms to a larger extent than in a unproficient-unproficient communication. The shift on the continuum, thus, precipitates these speakers’ employing fewer and different strategies to avoid misinterpretation. The less proficient speakers may, however, be challenged beyond their capabilities. This results in an increased adherence to NES norms in combination with an incapability of interpreting and applying linguistics that prove to be too challenging, i.e. those beyond the ZPD (Vygotsky, 1978); this may be the primary reason for the increased number of misunderstandings in proficient-unproficient communication.

The study, fourthly, shows that misinterpretations surfaced in the proficient-unproficient dimension but not in the others; this relates to the interlocutors’ being challenged beyond their capabilities (Vygotsky, 1978). These miscommunications may result from interpersonal psycho-social differences, e.g. history, culture, and background, but may have been reinforced by linguistic difficulties and an insufficient use of signalling and preventive strategies.

The misinterpretations in proficient-unproficient speech may have surfaced through a combination of factors absent in other conversational dimensions. The first factor influencing the semantic or pragmatic interpretation of speech are the aforementioned psycho-social differences. These difficulties may, however, be resolved through sufficient use of strategies. The second factor is differences between proficient and unproficient speakers: MacKenzie (2014) argued that proficient speakers approximate NES norms; unproficient interlocutors, however, require simplification strategies to interpret these utterances (Blum & Levinston, 1980; MacKenzie, 2014; Mauranen, 2012). The third factor may be unproficient speakers’
overestimating their capabilities and, consequently, insufficiently using of both type and number of strategies. Misinterpretations in proficient-unproficient ELF communication may arise through a combination of factors; this conflict of relying on either form or function of a language is absent in other conversational dimensions.

The findings relating to conversational difficulties between proficient and unproficient NNES may prove to be useful in both research and engaging in conversations. Awareness of differing linguistic strategies and of differences in what speakers deem important may precipitate an adaption of speech in ELF communication: proficient speakers may employ a larger number and more diverse strategies, where unproficient speakers should continue to invoke the linguistic strategies they require to interpret lexemes and ideas (Smith, 1992; Blum & Levinston, 1980; MacKenzie, 2014). An adaption of the type of signalling and preventive strategies may, consequently, be useful in considering misinterpretations: misinterpretations in proficient-unproficient dialogues that have not been avoided may still be resolved by using the aforementioned strategies. In order to both retain and reconstruct a communicative common ground, interlocutors may employ signalling and preventive strategies.

There are, naturally, alternative explanations to the findings. Unproficient speakers’ using fewer signalling and preventive strategies in proficient-unproficient dialogues than in the unproficient-unproficient dialogues may, alternatively, be explained by psycho-social differences alone. These interpersonal differences, e.g. history, personality, and preferential differences for specific conversational strategies, cannot be fully accounted for. The remaining psycho-social interpersonal differences may precipitate preferential differences for signalling and preventive methods and for the number of strategies used.

6.3 Limitations

The remaining interpersonal differences may be seen as the first limitation of this study. Interpersonal differences may have influenced the results, which argues for the
necessity of interpersonal similarities; the more the interlocutors are alike, the more reliable
the results will be. The participants in this study, however, were from different regions, were
enrolled in different studies, and had other psycho-social differences. These were allowed as a
result of difficulties in finding sufficiently suitable participants who were to participate
without receiving payment. Resulting interpersonal differences may have influenced the data
to a certain extent.

The second limitation of this study is its small scale; the small number of participants
precipitates indicatory rather than significant results. This study is qualitative rather than
quantitative as a result of limited time and space. The conversations and their analyses proved
to be time-consuming and a larger number of participants would have resulted in an
overabundance of data. The choice of six participants per group is a limitation in terms of the
consequent lack of significant results, but is a concession that, considering limited time and
space, nevertheless provides sufficient data for an indication of interdimensional differences.

A third limitation of this study is the lack of a full proficiency test. The interlocutors’
approximate proficiency levels were established by a combination of a consideration of their
linguistic backgrounds, self-reported proficiency levels, and results in a translated PPVT. The
respective proficiency levels would have been more firmly established following a full
proficiency test, e.g. Cambridge English or IELTS, but these were, unfortunately, unavailable
for the researcher or would have taken an excessive amount of time. The English version of
the PPVT was, furthermore, unavailable for the researcher, which resulted in the utilisation of
a translated version. This version was deemed to be sufficient to provide an approximation of
the participants’ proficiency levels in English in combination with a consideration of both the
participants’ backgrounds and their self-reported proficiency levels. Two of the less proficient
participants, i.e. S14 and S18, however, proved to be more proficient than either of the tests
had predicted, which influenced the results. Had the PPVT been a full proficiency test, the
misrepresentations could have been avoided, which would have resulted in more consistent results.

6.4 Similar studies and further research

The results of this study may be considered in combination with Mauranen’s (2006) study of verbal signalling and preventive strategies; however, it considers a wider spectrum of strategies by adhering to CA. Mauranen (2006) argued for the importance of signalling and preventive methods for misinterpretations in speech and mentioned specific questions, repetition of a problematic item, indirect signalling, confirmation checks, interactive repair, and self-repair as the most prominent methods to do so. This study, however, argues for a more elaborate analysis in which nonverbal methods are considered through the analysis of context and real-time speech (Have, 2007). The results may, consequently, clarify the ways in which miscommunications arise and on how they may be resolved.

This study, moreover, further explicates the manner in which interlocutors with different proficiency levels approach impending misunderstandings. Kim & Billington (2016) argued for the possibility that unproficient NNES’s unfamiliarity with in L1-influenced speech in combination with proficient interlocutors’ unfamiliarity with non-native structures influences interpretability and causes miscommunications. A better understanding of misinterpretations and of how to resolve them could prevent the breakdown of communication, which may prove to be beneficial for real-time ELF instances in which interlocutors with different proficiency levels in a target language communicate. Anderson (2009), for example, described fatal incidents in aviation resulting from misinterpretations between pilots and air traffic controllers. Similar instances may be prevented through increased awareness of communicational differences in proficiency levels, by acknowledging differences in employing strategies, and by using a sufficient inventory and number of strategies for speech to be comprehensible.
Further research may attempt to resolve the aforementioned limitations by focusing on misinterpretations in L1-L2 speech in which the non-native speaker of English is intermediately proficient in the target language. This study has only considered misinterpretations and signalling and preventive strategies in ELF, but it may be interesting to research L1-L2 communication in a similar manner. NES may expect their conversation partners to be more proficient than they are. Intermediately proficient speakers may, furthermore, shift towards the NES on the form-function continuum in a learning environment (Vygotsky, 1978); they may, however, not be sufficiently proficient to adhere to these norms, which may result in misinterpretations in L1-L2 speech. L1-L2 conversations in which the NNES is intermediately proficient may be an interesting topic for further research.

7. Conclusion

This thesis reports on an empirical investigation of miscommunications in ELF through designing a communicative task for speakers with different proficiency levels in the target language and by conducting detailed pragmatic analyses of signalling and preventive strategies and misinterpretations. I have shown that a) interlocutors use semantic and pragmatic strategies to signal and prevent miscommunications, b) strategies are employed substantially more often than suggested in previous research, e.g. Firth (2009), and there are quantitative differences between proficiency levels and interdimensionally, c) the inventory of strategies is substantially larger than suggested in previous research, e.g. Mauranen (2006) and qualitatively differs between proficiency levels and interdimensionally, d) misinterpretations mostly surface in dialogues between proficient and unproficient speakers, i.e. in situations in which there is a conflict of relying to a greater extent on either form or function.

While obvious differences exist in terms of proficiency levels, analysis has revealed that proficient and unproficient NNES have different manners in which they avoid
misinterpretations; these speakers, however, shift on the form-function continuum in mismatched, i.e. proficient-unproficient, dialogues, which may result in situations that are overly challenging for the unproficient speaker and, consequently, in misinterpretations. The findings show that misinterpretations mostly arise in situations that may be overly challenging for a speaker in a learning environment (Vygotsky, 1978). These unproficient speakers have adapted their strategies in an attempt to approximate the more proficient interlocutors, and have shifted on the form-function continuum, resulting in problematic situations in which they have differing semantic and pragmatic interpretations. These attempts may, one the one hand, be beneficial in learning and copying linguistic aspects (Vygotsky, 1978); they may, on the other hand, be problematic in situations in which the interlocutors’ ZPDs are crossed, which may result in insufficient signalling and preventing in combination with shifting on the continuum in an attempt to approximate proficient speakers and, eventually, in misinterpretations.

These findings complement previous ELF research in providing an image of ELF communication through the consideration of communicative context and semantic and pragmatic interpretability. The analysis of miscommunications through various dimensions clarifies contradicting results from previous studies. Misinterpretations have been stated to be either more or less common in ELF than in L1-L2 conversations (e.g. Bae, 2002; Mauranen, 2006); accounting for proficiency levels has reduced interpersonal linguistic differences and has, consequently, provided a more consistent manner in which ELF may be researched. The articulated communicative strategies may, furthermore, contribute to instances in which communication breaks down, similar to the instances in Anderson (2009) and Kim and Billington (2016). The fatal air traffic accidents resulting from misinterpretations between proficient air traffic controllers and less proficient pilots, and vice versa, articulated by Anderson (2009), for example, may be prevented by acknowledging positions on the form-
function continuum, conversational problems, and interpretational difficulties and by the integration of methodologies and strategies to resolve misinterpretations in protocols. Mismatched ELF dialogues, in air traffic control and in other situations, may benefit from acknowledging interlocutors’ respective positions on the form-function position and from sufficient quantitative and qualitative signalling and preventing misinterpretations; thus, misinterpretations may be avoided, and potentially dangerous situations may be approached differently, through re-establishing a communicative common ground.
References


1. Appendices

1.1 Appendix 1: Ethics documentation

Consent Form

Recording and purposes of data

I give Michiel Scholten my consent to video record my speech and to use the recorded data for academic purposes. The recorded data may be used for the respective thesis, but for studies other than the present research as well. The recorded data will only be used for academic purposes and will remain to be anonymous at all times (personal details will never be mentioned).

I have been informed sufficiently by means of this form prior to signing this consent.

I understand that I may refuse to sign this consent form. This will result in an alternative arrangement in which the recorded material will only be used for the present study. This arrangement is a repetition of the oral (or, in the case of email, written) agreement established prior to this meeting.

Please state whether or not you give your consent for the arrangement mentioned above.

☐ Yes

☐ No

Name: _____________________________________________________________________

Signature: ___________________________ Date: ____________________________
1.2 Appendix 2: Participant requirements

1.2.1 Semi-structured interview questions. Statements for a semi-structured interview. At least four statements should be responded to in the affirmative in order for the participant to be eligible for the ‘low proficiency groups’.

1. I almost never speak English
2. I need Dutch subtitles to understand an English program. When the program lacks these subtitles, I cannot follow it.
3. I can introduce myself in English and I can tell what I do, but it’s difficult for me to get a conversation going in English.
4. It’s difficult for me to grasp the essence of a lecture or seminar that is provided in English.
5. It’s difficult for me to understand books, articles, and texts written in English.
1.2.2 PPVT Results.

### 1.2.2.1 PPVT Results S1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name: S1</th>
<th>Age: 23</th>
<th>Nationality: Sanskrit</th>
<th>Self-reported proficiency: 9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Set 10

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
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<td>109</td>
<td>Candieholder</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>111</td>
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<td>112</td>
<td>Parallel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>113</td>
<td>Public transportation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>114</td>
<td>Liquid</td>
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</tr>
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<td>115</td>
<td>Competitive</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>116</td>
<td>Signal</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>117</td>
<td>To drain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>118</td>
<td>Whisk</td>
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**Set 13 (Instapset)**

|          |         |                     |                          |
| 145      | Stamen / stem mon / | (3) |                     |
| 146      | Incision  | (3) |                     |
| 147      | Consumers | (4) |                     |
| 148      | Primate   | (2) |                     |
| 149      | Link       | (4) |                     |
| 150      | To wade    | (3) |                     |
| 151      | Papada / pa gao da / | (1) |                     |
| 152      | Oral       | (1) |                     |
| 153      | Pillar     | (2) |                     |
| 154      | Real estate | (4) |                     |
| 155      | Vine       | (1) |                     |
| 156      | Riding habit | (3) |                     |
|          | Total mistakes | [ ] |                     |

**Set 14**

|          |         |                     |                          |
| 157      | Emancipation | (3) |                     |
| 158      | Trapeziun | (1) |                     |
| 159      | Tyranny    | (4) |                     |
| 160      | Oak        | (2) |                     |
| 161      | Siphon / sa.fan. | (3) |                     |
| 162      | Tympanum  | (3) |                     |
| 163      | To saunter | (2) |                     |
| 164      | Revers / r / var / | (2) |                     |
| 165      | Assembly   | (2) |                     |
| 166      | Cornea     | (4) |                     |
| 167      | Peninsula  | (4) |                     |
| 168      | Corpulent  | (1) |                     |
|          | Total mistakes | [ ] |                     |

**Set 15**

|          |         |                     |                          |
| 169      | Pontoon bridge | (4) |                     |
| 170      | Chalice     | (4) |                     |
| 171      | Epaulet / ep a let / | (2) |                     |
| 172      | Melancholy | (3) |                     |
| 173      | Sonnet     | (3) |                     |
| 174      | Conical    | (1) |                     |
| 175      | To lecture | (1) |                     |
| 176      | Inydrant   | (2) |                     |
| 177      | Stradivarius | (3) |                     |
| 178      | Cascade / k a s k e d / | (2) |                     |
| 179      | Aviation   | (4) |                     |
| 180      | To flare   | (3) |                     |
|          | Total mistakes | [ ] |                     |

**Set 16**

|          |         |                     |                          |
| 181      | Alto      | (2) |                     |
| 182      | Calligraphy | (1) |                     |
| 183      | Wedge-shaped | (3) |                     |
| 184      | Timbering | (4) |                     |
| 185      | Diverge   | (2) |                     |
| 186      | Heterogeneous | (1) |                     |
| 187      | Nautical  | (4) |                     |
| 188      | En enprofil | (2) |                     |
| 189      | Entomologist | (1) |                     |
| 190      | Numismatics | (4) |                     |
| 191      | Glutton   | (3) |                     |
| 192      | Velour    | (4) |                     |
|          | Total mistakes | [ ] |                     |

**Set 17**

|          |         |                     |                          |
| 193      | Dorsal    | (1) |                     |
| 194      | Moorling post | (2) |                     |
| 195      | Make haste | (3) |                     |
| 196      | Saddle roof | (4) |                     |
| 197      | Succulent | (2) |                     |
| 198      | To pad    | (1) |                     |
| 199      | Hermaphrodite | (3) |                     |
| 200      | Smock mill | (3) |                     |
| 201      | To lament | (1) |                     |
| 202      | Convex    | (3) |                     |
| 203      | Num        | (4) |                     |
| 204      | To what   | (1) |                     |
|          | Total mistakes | [ ] |                     |
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| Set 10  | 109 | Candleholder | (1) | [ ] |
| Set 11  | 121 | Legume | (3) | [ ] |
| Set 12  | 133 | Consume | (2) | [ ] |
| Set 13  | 145 | Stamen / stielmann | (3) | [ ] |
| Set 14  | 157 | Emasculation | (3) | [ ] |
| Set 15  | 169 | Pontoon bridge | (4) | [ ] |
| Set 16  | 181 | Alto | (2) | [ ] |
| Set 17  | 193 | Dorsal | (1) | [ ] |
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| 122 Bovine (2) |             |              |                             |
| 123 Currency (3) |             |              |                             |
| 124 Agricultural (4) |             |              |                             |
| 125 Identical (2) |             |              |                             |
| 126 Oasis (1) |             |              |                             |
| 127 Porcelain (1) |             |              |                             |
| 128 Instruct (4) |             |              |                             |
| 129 Decanter (4) |             |              |                             |
| 130 Silhouette (1) |             |              |                             |
| 131 Duet (3) |             |              |                             |
| 132 Transparent (3) |             |              |                             |
| **Total mistakes** |          |              |                             |

| **Set 12** |         |              |                             |
| 133 Consume (2) |             |              |                             |
| 134 Twigt (2) |             |              |                             |
| 135 Bronchi (4) |             |              |                             |
| 136 Cooperative (3) |             |              |                             |
| 137 Symbol (3) |             |              |                             |
| 138 Conflict (3) |             |              |                             |
| 139 Globe (1) |             |              |                             |
| 140 Reprimand (4) |             |              |                             |
| 141 Silo (2) |             |              |                             |
| 142 Cut (3) |             |              |                             |
| 143 Projectile (4) |             |              |                             |
| 144 Culinary (3) |             |              |                             |
| **Total mistakes** |          |              |                             |

| **Set 13 (Instapset)** |         |              |                             |
| 145 Stamen / sten.man/ (3) |             |              |                             |
| 146 Incision (1) |             |              |                             |
| 147 Consumers (4) |             |              |                             |
| 148 Primate (2) |             |              |                             |
| 149 Link (4) |             |              |                             |
| 150 To Wade (3) |             |              |                             |
| 151 Pagoda / pa’gao.da/ (1) |             |              |                             |
| 152 Oral (1) |             |              |                             |
| 153 Pillar (2) |             |              |                             |
| 154 Real estate (4) |             |              |                             |
| 155 Vine (1) |             |              |                             |
| 156 Riding habot (3) |             |              |                             |
| **Total mistakes** |          |              |                             |

| **Set 14** |         |              |                             |
| 157 Emancipation (3) |             |              |                             |
| 158 Trapezium (1) |             |              |                             |
| 159 Tyranny (4) |             |              |                             |
| 160 Oak (2) |             |              |                             |
| 161 Sploon / su.splo/ (3) |             |              |                             |
| 162 Tympanum (3) |             |              |                             |
| 163 To saunter (2) |             |              |                             |
| 164 Revers / n var/ (2) |             |              |                             |
| 165 Assembly (2) |             |              |                             |
| 166 Cornea (4) |             |              |                             |
| 167 Peninsula (4) |             |              |                             |
| 168 Corpulent (1) |             |              |                             |
| **Total mistakes** |          |              |                             |

| **Set 15** |         |              |                             |
| 169 Pontoon bridge (4) |             |              |                             |
| 170 Chalice (4) |             |              |                             |
| 171 Epaulet / e.p.a.let/ (2) |             |              |                             |
| 172 Melancholy (3) |             |              |                             |
| 173 Sonnet (3) |             |              |                             |
| 174 Conical (1) |             |              |                             |
| 175 To lecture (1) |             |              |                             |
| 176 Hydrant (2) |             |              |                             |
| 177 Stradivarius (3) |             |              |                             |
| 178 Cascade / kas.ken/ (3) |             |              |                             |
| 179 Aviation (4) |             |              |                             |
| 180 To flare (3) |             |              |                             |
| **Total mistakes** |          |              |                             |

| **Set 16** |         |              |                             |
| 181 Alto (2) |             |              |                             |
| 182 Calligraphy (2) |             |              |                             |
| 183 Wedge-shaped (3) |             |              |                             |
| 184 Timberring (4) |             |              |                             |
| 185 Diverge (2) |             |              |                             |
| 186 Heterogeneous (1) |             |              |                             |
| 187 Nautical (4) |             |              |                             |
| 188 En profle (2) |             |              |                             |
| 189 Entomologist (1) |             |              |                             |
| 190 Numismatics (4) |             |              |                             |
| 191 Glutton (3) |             |              |                             |
| 192 Velour (4) |             |              |                             |
| **Total mistakes** |          |              |                             |

| **Set 17** |         |              |                             |
| 193 Dorsal (1) |             |              |                             |
| 194 Mooring post (2) |             |              |                             |
| 195 Make haste (3) |             |              |                             |
| 196 Saddle roof (4) |             |              |                             |
| 197 Succulent (2) |             |              |                             |
| 198 To ped (1) |             |              |                             |
| 199 Hermaphrodite (3) |             |              |                             |
| 200 Smock mill (3) |             |              |                             |
| 201 To lament (1) |             |              |                             |
| 202 Convex (3) |             |              |                             |
| 203 Nun (4) |             |              |                             |
| 204 To whet (1) |             |              |                             |
| **Total mistakes** |          |              |                             |
1.2.2.8 PPVT Results S8.

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**Set 10**
- 109 Candleholder (1)
- 110 East (3)
- 111 To bray (2)
- 112 Parallel (3)
- 113 Public transportation (2)
- 114 Liquid (3)
- 115 Competitive (4)
- 116 Signal (1)
- 117 To drain (3)
- 118 Whisk (3)
- 119 Sanitary facilities (4)
- 120 Stamping (4)

**Set 12**
- 133 Consume (2)
- 134 Twig (2)
- 135 Bronchi (4)
- 136 Cooperative (1)
- 137 Symbol (3)
- 138 Conflict (1)
- 139 Globe (2)
- 140 Repromand (4)
- 141 Silo (2)
- 142 Cuts (3)
- 143 Projectile (4)
- 144 Culinary (3)

**Set 13 (Instapset)**
- 145 Stamen /ˈsteɪ.mən/ (3)
- 146 Incision (1)
- 147 Consumers (4)
- 148 Primates (2)
- 149 Link (4)
- 150 To Wade (3)
- 151 Pagoda /ˈpæɡə.də/ (1)
- 152 Oral (1)
- 153 Pillar (2)
- 154 Real estate (4)
- 155 Vine (1)
- 156 Riding habit (3)

**Set 14**
- 157 Emancipation (3)
- 158 Trapezium (1)
- 159 Tyranny (4)
- 160 Oak /ɔːk/ (2)
- 161 Siphon /ˈsaɪf.ən/ (3)
- 162 Typanum (3)
- 163 To saunter (2)
- 164 Revers /rɪˈvɜːs/ (2)
- 165 Assembly (2)
- 166 Conge (4)
- 167 Peninsular (4)
- 168 Corrupt (1)

**Set 15**
- 169 Pontoon bridge (4)
- 170 Chalice (4)
- 171 Epaxial /ˌe.pəˈziːəl/ (2)
- 172 Melancholy (3)
- 173 Sonnet (3)
- 174 Conical (1)
- 175 To lecture (1)
- 176 Hydrant (3)
- 177 Stradivarius (3)
- 178 Cascade /ˈkæs.kəd/ (2)
- 179 Aviation (4)
- 180 To flare (3)

**Set 16**
- 181 Alto (2)
- 182 Calligraphy (1)
- 183 Wedge-shaped (3)
- 184 Timbering (4)
- 185 Gorge (1)
- 186 Heterogeneous (1)
- 187 Nautical (4)
- 188 En profil (2)
- 189 Entomologist (1)
- 190 Numismatics (4)
- 191 Glutton (3)
- 192 Vehem (4)

**Set 17**
- 193 Dorsal (3)
- 194 Mooring post (2)
- 195 Make haste (3)
- 196 Saddle roof (4)
- 197 Succulent (2)
- 198 To pad (2)
- 199 Hermaphrodite (3)
- 200 Smock mill (3)
- 201 To lament (3)
- 202 Convex (3)
- 203 Nun (4)
- 204 To what (3)

Total mistakes: 12

Total mistakes: 4

Total mistakes: 13

Total mistakes: 11

Total mistakes: 12

Total mistakes: 9

Total mistakes: 11

Total mistakes: 7

Total mistakes: 6

Total mistakes: 8

Total mistakes: 7
1.2.2.9 PPVT Results S9.

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#### Set 10

- **109** Candleholder (1)
- **110** East (3)
- **111** To Bray (2)
- **112** Parallel (3)
- **113** Public transportation (2)
- **114** Liquid (1)
- **115** Competitive (4)
- **116** Signal (1)
- **117** To Drain (3)
- **118** Whisk (1)
- **119** Sanitary facilities (4)
- **120** Stamping (4)

**Total mistakes: 1**

#### Set 11

- **121** Legume (3)
- **122** Bovine (2)
- **123** Currency (3)
- **124** Agricultural (4)
- **125** Identical (2)
- **126** Oasis (1)
- **127** Porcelain (3)
- **128** Instruct (4)
- **129** Decanter (4)
- **130** Silhouette (1)
- **131** Duet (3)
- **132** Transparent (3)

**Total mistakes: 1**

#### Set 12

- **133** Consume (2)
- **134** Twig (2)
- **135** Bronchial (4)
- **136** Cooperative (1)
- **137** Symbol (3)
- **138** Conflict (4)
- **139** Globe (2)
- **140** Bemirand (4)
- **141** Silo (2)
- **142** Cut (1)
- **143** Projectile (4)
- **144** Culinary (3)

**Total mistakes: 1**

#### Set 13 (Instapset)

- **145** Stamens / ste.man/ (3)
- **146** Induction (1)
- **147** Consumers (4)
- **148** Primate (2)
- **149** Link (4)
- **150** To Wade /po.goo.dal/ (1)
- **151** Pagoda (1)
- **152** Oral (1)
- **153** Pillar (2)
- **154** Real estate (4)
- **155** Vine (1)
- **156** Riding habot (3)

**Total mistakes: 1**

#### Set 14

- **157** Emancipation (3)
- **158** Trapezium (1)
- **159** Tyranny (4)
- **160** Oak (2)
- **161** Siphon / sai_fon/ (3)
- **162** Tymanum (3)
- **163** To Saunder (2)
- **164** Rovers /ni_war/ (2)
- **165** Assembly (2)
- **166** Cornica (4)
- **167** Penensula (4)
- **168** Correspond (1)

**Total mistakes: 1**

#### Set 15

- **169** Pontoon bridge (4)
- **170** Chalice (4)
- **171** Epaulet / ep_a let/ (2)
- **172** Melancholy (3)
- **173** Sonnet (3)
- **174** Conical (1)
- **175** To Lecture (1)
- **176** Hydrant (2)
- **177** Straiverlus (3)
- **178** Cascade / kaes keed/ (2)
- **179** Aviation (4)
- **180** To flore (3)

**Total mistakes: 1**

#### Set 16

- **181** Alto (2)
- **182** Calligraphy (1)
- **183** Wedge-shaped (3)
- **184** Timbering (4)
- **185** Divide (2)
- **186** Heterogeneous (1)
- **187** Nautical (4)
- **188** En profi (2)
- **189** Entomologist (1)
- **190** Numismatics (4)
- **191** Glutton (3)
- **192** Velour (4)

**Total mistakes: 1**

#### Set 17

- **193** Dorsal (1)
- **194** Mooring post (2)
- **195** Make haste (3)
- **196** Saddle roof (4)
- **197** Succulent (2)
- **198** To pad (1)
- **199** Hermaphrodite (3)
- **200** Smock mill (3)
- **201** To lament (1)
- **202** Convex (3)
- **203** Run (4)
- **204** To whet (1)

**Total mistakes: 6**
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| **Set 11** |        |              |                               |
| 121 Legume | (3) |              |                               |
| 122 Bovine | (2) |              |                               |
| 123 Currency | (3) |              |                               |
| 124 Agricultural | (4) |              |                               |
| 125 Identical | (2) |              |                               |
| 126 Oats | (1) |              |                               |
| 127 Porcelain | (1) |              |                               |
| 128 Instruct | (4) |              |                               |
| 129 Degrade | (4) |              |                               |
| 130 Silhouette | (1) |              |                               |
| 131 Duet | (3) |              |                               |
| 132 Transparent | (3) |              |                               |
| **Total mistakes** | 6 |              |                               |

| **Set 12** |        |              |                               |
| 133 Consumer | (2) |              |                               |
| 134 Twinge | (2) |              |                               |
| 135 Bronchi | (4) |              |                               |
| 136 Cooperative | (1) |              |                               |
| 137 Symbol | (3) |              |                               |
| 138 Conflict | (1) |              |                               |
| 139 Globe | (3) |              |                               |
| 140 Reprimand | (4) |              |                               |
| 141 Sio | (2) |              |                               |
| 142 Cut | (1) |              |                               |
| 143 Projectile | (1) |              |                               |
| 144 Culinary | (5) |              |                               |
| **Total mistakes** | 6 |              |                               |

| **Set 13 (Instapset)** |        |              |                               |
| 145 Stamen / sten.man | (3) |              |                               |
| 146 Inkless | (1) |              |                               |
| 147 Consumers | (4) |              |                               |
| 148 Primate | (2) |              |                               |
| 149 Link | (4) |              |                               |
| 150 To wade | (3) |              |                               |
| 151 Paggio / pa’go.doi | (1) |              |                               |
| 152 Oral | (1) |              |                               |
| 153 Pillar | (2) |              |                               |
| 154 Real estate | (4) |              |                               |
| 155 Vine | (1) |              |                               |
| 156 Riding habit | (3) |              |                               |
| **Total mistakes** | 6 |              |                               |

| **Set 14** |        |              |                               |
| 157 Emancipation | (3) |              |                               |
| 158 Trapezium | (1) |              |                               |
| 159 Tyranny | (4) |              |                               |
| 160 Oak | (2) |              |                               |
| 161 Stroph / sar /sar/fan | (3) |              |                               |
| 162 Tymanum | (3) |              |                               |
| 163 To saunter | (2) |              |                               |
| 164 Revers / r/vor | (2) |              |                               |
| 165 Assembly | (2) |              |                               |
| 166 Corese | (4) |              |                               |
| 167 Peninsular | (4) |              |                               |
| 168 Corpulent | (1) |              |                               |
| **Total mistakes** | 6 |              |                               |

| **Set 15** |        |              |                               |
| 169 Pontoon bridge | (4) |              |                               |
| 170 Chalice | (4) |              |                               |
| 171 Epaulet / ep.a’let | (2) |              |                               |
| 172 Melancholy | (3) |              |                               |
| 173 Sonnet | (3) |              |                               |
| 174 Comic | (1) |              |                               |
| 175 To lecture | (1) |              |                               |
| 176 Hydrant | (2) |              |                               |
| 177 Stradiarius | (3) |              |                               |
| 178 Cascade / kase kenc | (2) |              |                               |
| 179 Aviation | (4) |              |                               |
| 180 To flaire | (3) |              |                               |
| **Total mistakes** | 6 |              |                               |

| **Set 16** |        |              |                               |
| 181 Alto | (2) |              |                               |
| 182 Calligraphy | (1) |              |                               |
| 183 Wedge-shaped | (3) |              |                               |
| 184 Timbering | (4) |              |                               |
| 185 Divide | (2) |              |                               |
| 186 Heterogeneous | (1) |              |                               |
| 187 Nautical | (4) |              |                               |
| 188 En profil | (2) |              |                               |
| 189 Entomologist | (1) |              |                               |
| 190 Numismatics | (4) |              |                               |
| 191 Glutton | (3) |              |                               |
| 192 Velour | (4) |              |                               |
| **Total mistakes** | 6 |              |                               |
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1.2.2.15 PPVT Results S15.

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## 1.2.2.16 PPVT Results S16

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### Set 10
- 109 Candleholder (1) [ ]
- 110 East (3) [ ]
- 111 To bray (2) [ ]
- 112 Parallel (3) [ ]
- 113 Public transportation (2) [ ]
- 114 Liquid (1) [ ]
- 115 Competitive (4) [ ]
- 116 Signal (1) [ ]
- 117 To drain (3) [ ]
- 118 Whisk (3) [ ]
- 119 Sanitary facilities (4) [ ]
- 120 Stamping (4) [ ]
- **Total mistakes** [ ]

### Set 11
- 121 Legume (3) [ ]
- 122 Bovine (2) [ ]
- 123 Currency (3) [ ]
- 124 Agricultural (4) [ ]
- 125 Identical (2) [ ]
- 126 Oasis (1) [ ]
- 127 Porcelain (1) [ ]
- 128 Instruct (4) [ ]
- 129 Decanter (4) [ ]
- 130 Silhouette (1) [ ]
- 131 Duet (3) [ ]
- 132 Transparent (3) [ ]
- **Total mistakes** [ ]

### Set 12
- 133 Consume (2) 2 [ ]
- 134 Twig (2) [ ]
- 135 Bronchi (4) 2 [ ]
- 136 Cooperative (1) [ ]
- 137 Symbol (3) 2 [ ]
- 138 Conflict (1) 1 [ ]
- 139 Globe (2) 2 [ ]
- 140 Reprimand (4) 1 [ ]
- 141 Silo (2) 1 [ ]
- 142 Cut (1) 2 [ ]
- 143 Projectile (4) 1 [ ]
- 144 Culinary (3) 1 [ ]
- **Total mistakes** [ ]

### Set 13 (Insetapset)
- 145 Stamen / stem, man / (3) 3 [ ]
- 146 Incision (1) 2 [ ]
- 147 Consumers (4) 4 [ ]
- 148 Primate (2) 2 [ ]
- 149 Link (4) 2 [ ]
- 150 To wade (3) 1 [ ]
- 151 Pajoda / pao gao da / (1) 4 [ ]
- 152 Orat (1) 1 [ ]
- 153 Pillar (2) 2 [ ]
- 154 Real estate (4) 1 [ ]
- 155 Vine (1) 2 [ ]
- 156 Riding habit (3) 2 [ ]
- **Total mistakes** [ ]

### Set 14
- 157 Emancipation (3) 2 [ ]
- 158 Trapezium (1) [ ]
- 159 Tyranny (4) 4 [ ]
- 160 Oak (2) [ ]
- 161 Siphon / sa瘢 fan / (3) 1 [ ]
- 162 Tymanum (3) 1 [ ]
- 163 To saunter (2) 2 [ ]
- 164 Revers / fri war / (2) 1 [ ]
- 165 Assembly (2) 1 [ ]
- 166 Cornea (4) 1 [ ]
- 167 Peninsela (4) 2 [ ]
- 168 Corpulent (1) 1 [ ]
- **Total mistakes** [ ]

### Set 15
- 169 Pontoon bridge (4) 2 [ ]
- 170 Chalise (4) 1 [ ]
- 171 Epulset / ep-ulset / (2) 1 [ ]
- 172 Melancholy (3) 2 [ ]
- 173 Sonnet (3) 1 [ ]
- 174 Conical (1) 2 [ ]
- 175 To lecture (1) 1 [ ]
- 176 Hydrant (2) 1 [ ]
- 177 Stradivarius (3) 2 [ ]
- 178 Cascade / kas keed / (2) 1 [ ]
- 179 Aviation (4) 2 [ ]
- 180 To Faire (3) 1 [ ]
- **Total mistakes** [ ]

### Set 16
- 181 Alto (2) [ ]
- 182 Calligraphy (1) [ ]
- 183 wedge-shaped (5) [ ]
- 184 Timbering (4) [ ]
- 185 Diverge (2) [ ]
- 186 Heterogeneous (1) [ ]
- 187 Nautical (4) [ ]
- 188 En profil (2) [ ]
- 189 Entomologist (1) [ ]
- 190 Numismatics (4) [ ]
- 191 Glutton (3) [ ]
- 192 Velour (4) [ ]
- **Total mistakes** [ ]

### Set 17
- 193 Dorsal (1) [ ]
- 194 Mooring post (2) [ ]
- 195 Make haste (3) [ ]
- 196 saddle roof (4) [ ]
- 197 succulent (2) [ ]
- 198 To pad (1) [ ]
- 199 Hermaphrodite (3) [ ]
- 200 Snook mill (3) [ ]
- 201 To lament (1) [ ]
- 202 Convex (3) [ ]
- 203 Nun (4) [ ]
- 204 To whet (1) [ ]
- **Total mistakes** [ ]
1.2.2.17 PPVT Results S17.

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| 110 East (8) | | |
| 111 To bray (2) | | |
| 112 Parallel (3) | | |
| 113 Public transportation (2) | | |
| 114 Liquid (3) | | |
| 115 Competitive (4) | | |
| 116 Signal (1) | | |
| 117 To drain (3) | | |
| 118 Whisk (1) | | |
| 119 Sanitary facilities (4) | | |
| 120 Stamping (4) | | |

Total mistakes: |

### Set 11
| 121 Legume (3) | | |
| 122 Bovine (2) | | |
| 123 Currency (3) | | |
| 124 Agricultural (4) | | |
| 125 Identical (2) | | |
| 126 Oasis (1) | | |
| 127 Porcelain (1) | | |
| 128 Instruct (4) | | |
| 129 Decanter (4) | | |
| 130 Silhouette (1) | | |
| 131 Duet (3) | | |
| 132 Transparent (3) | | |

Total mistakes: |

### Set 12
| 133 Consume (2) | 7 | |
| 134 Twig (2) | 7 | |
| 135 Bronchi (4) | 2 | |
| 136 Cooperative (1) | 4 | |
| 137 Symbol (3) | 2 | |
| 138 Conflict (1) | 7 | |
| 139 Globe (2) | 2 | |
| 140 Reprimand (8) | 4 | |
| 141 Silo (3) | 2 | |
| 142 Cut (3) | 1 | |
| 143 Projectile (4) | 4 | |
| 144 Culinary (3) | 1 | |

Total mistakes: 2 |

### Set 13 (Instapset)
| 145 Stamen /ˈster.man/ (3) | | |
| 146 Incision (1) | | |
| 147 Consumers (4) | 4 | |
| 148 Primatize (2) | 7 | |
| 149 Link (4) | 2 | |
| 150 To wade (3) | | |
| 151 Pagoda /paˈɡɑː.də/ (1) | 2 | |
| 152 Oral (1) | | |
| 153 Pillar (3) | 2 | |
| 154 Real estate (4) | 4 | |
| 155 Vine (1) | | |
| 156 Riding habit (3) | 2 | |

Total mistakes: 5 |

### Set 14
| 157 Emancipation (3) | 2 | |
| 158 Trapezium (1) | 4 | |
| 159 Tyranny (4) | 2 | |
| 160 Oak (2) | 2 | |
| 161 Siphon /ˈsaɪfən/ (3) | 3 | |
| 162 Tympanum (3) | 2 | |
| 163 To saunter (2) | 4 | |
| 164 Revers /rɪˈvɜːs/ (2) | 4 | |
| 165 Assembly (2) | 7 | |
| 166 Conga (4) | 4 | |
| 167 Peninsula (4) | 2 | |
| 168 Corruptent (1) | 5 | |

Total mistakes: 7 |

### Set 15
| 169 Pontoon bridge (4) | | |
| 170 Chalice (4) | | |
| 171 Fauvet /fɔˈvɛt/ (2) | | |
| 172 Melancholy (3) | | |
| 173 Sonnet (3) | | |
| 174 Conical (1) | | |
| 175 To lecture (1) | | |
| 176 Hydrant (2) | | |
| 177 Stradivarius (3) | | |
| 178 Cascade /ˈkæs.kəd/ (2) | | |
| 179 Aviation (4) | | |
| 180 To flare (3) | | |

Total mistakes: |

### Set 16
| 181 Alto (2) | | |
| 182 Calligraphy (1) | | |
| 183 Wedge-shaped (3) | | |
| 184 Timbering (4) | | |
| 185 Diverge (2) | | |
| 186 Heterogeneous (1) | | |
| 187 Nautical (4) | | |
| 188 Ex profili (2) | | |
| 189 Entomologist (1) | | |
| 190 Numismatics (4) | | |
| 191 Glutton (3) | | |
| 192 Velour (4) | | |

Total mistakes: |

### Set 17
| 193 Dorsal (1) | | |
| 194 Moorland post (2) | | |
| 195 Make haste (3) | | |
| 196 Saddle roof (4) | | |
| 197 Succulent (2) | | |
| 198 To pad (1) | | |
| 199 Hermesphrodite (3) | | |
| 200 Smock mill (5) | | |
| 201 To lament (1) | | |
| 202 Convex (3) | | |
| 203 Nun (4) | | |
| 204 To whet (1) | | |

Total mistakes: |
1.2.2.18 PPVT Results S18.

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1.3 Appendix 3: Handouts

1.3.1 Ambiguous story 1. Introduction to an ambiguous short story.

This is the introduction to a short story written by Dorothy Parker.

Please provide **two** possible scenarios for this situation together. Focus on characters, their relation to each other, setting, and context in stating the scenarios (**who** are these people, **how** are they related to each other, **what** is happening, and **why** is this happening).

“PLEASE, God, let him telephone me now. Dear God, let him call me now. I won't ask anything else of You, truly I won't. It isn't very much to ask. It would be so little to You, God, such a little, little thing. Only let him telephone now. Please, God. Please, please, please.”

(Parker, 1947, p. 665)
1.3.2 Ambiguous story 2. Fragment of a short story.

This is a fragment of a dramatic dialogue written by Lindsay Clandfield.

Please provide two possible scenarios for this situation together. Focus on characters, their relation to each other, setting, and context in stating the scenarios (who are these people, how are they related to each other, what is happening, and why is this happening).

A “Well, are you going to say something?”
B “What do you want me to say?”
A “I don’t know, anything.”
B “I have nothing to say.”
A “Nothing?”
B “That’s right.”

(Clandfield, 2003)
1.3.3 Ambiguous story 3. Fragment of a short story.

This is a fragment of a short story written by Anton Chekhov.

Please provide one or two possible scenarios for this situation together. Focus on characters, their relation to each other, setting, and context in stating the scenarios (who are these people, how are they related to each other, what is happening, and why is this happening).

“What are you standing there for?”

"I would catch hold of him if it were possible. But […] it's deep there."

"It doesn't matter if it is deep. . . . You must swim."

(Chekhov, 1885)
1.4 Appendix 4: Transcriptions

1.4.1 Transcription 1. (S1 – S2): Proficient – proficient.

(01:02)

S1: Well, erm, there it is.
S2: Yeah, erm, do you, like… Erm… I don’t know.
I have, kind of, like, this mother instinct in me when I see “please God let me tell- let him call me now”.
Because I had the same situation with my sister when she didn’t show up, like, in the [the at the- the]

S1: [Ah! <Laugh>]
S2: At home. So… and the next morning she wasn’t in her bed.
I was like: “Oh my god”. Like, going through text messages, like, ‘where the hell are you now?!’
She didn’t call me, so I- I exactly had to-

**I immediately had to think** * (Self repair) about that situation… I… at first [erm]

S1: [Okay!]
S2: And, so [it’s]
S1: [So] it may be her mother.
S2: I think [her mother]
S1: [Yes]
S2: And…
It’s just [(incomprehensible)]
S1: [So that could be her]
Yeah!
Okay.
I get your point <Laugh>.
That’s freaky, okay, erm…

So we have a parent
and son,
    I think,
    and God.
    But… Depending

who the parent is.
    Erm, oh, and relations
    I think,
    yes?

S2: Yeah.
S1: They’re just family.
    Erm, setting.
    Well, like you said.
    Maybe somebody just didn’t come home
    after an evening out.

S2: Hmm hmm.
S1: That’s possible.
    Let’s not go to the straight worse scenario!
    So know <Giggle>
    Erm… And the conducting state is next.
    [So]

S2: [Yeah]
S1: I think
    that’s a good third one!
    It’s very short
    and simple.

S2: Yeah.
S1: Erm… I was thinking,
    maybe it’s, like, somebody
    in love.

(1 sec)  
(Pragmatic confirmation check)

S1: And she desperately wants him
to call.  
(Further explanation of new
scenario)
(Mutual understanding)

S2: Oh, yeah!
    [<Laugh>]
S1: [<Laugh>]
    Please let him call!
    They went
    on a date
    and he hasn’t called yet,
    [so]

S2: [Typical] wish.
S1: Yes.
    Please let him call immediately!
    I mean,
    that’s another one.

S2: Yeah.
S1: And then it would be…
   Euh- well…
   The relation would be a woman
   and a man.
   It could be a man
   and a man,

   I don’t [know].
S2: [Yeah].
S1: Let’s not be homophobic,
   or something.
   Erm! So…

   **Yeah?**

   (Pragmatic confirmation check)

S2: Yeah.
S1: Okay.
S2: It would be, like, typical
   for that time,
   ‘cause that time,
   I don’t know,
   the nineteen-fifties --

S1: Yeah <Giggle>
S2: Women seemed desperate;

   **you know?**

   (Pragmatic confirmation check)

   [<Giggle>]
S1: [Needing] a husband
   before their [twenties <Laugh>]
S2: [<Laugh> Exactly!]
   “Please God,
   just let me- let me have a husband”.
S1: “Please let him call”.
S2: [Yeah]
S1: [Yes] [Scenario] two.
S2: [Yeah]
S1: S- yeah.
   So they just went
   on a date
   or something
   and he hasn’t called back yet.

S2: Yeah.
S1: [Great!]
S2: [Okay]
S1: Yeah!
   Let’s go
   for that.

   Anything else;
   any other scenarios?

S2: Hmm… Not anything
   that pops
   in my mind, no.
S1: And you had the first one, like,
   we need a new answer.
Let’s go
to the next one?
S2: Okay.

(Reading. 20 sec)

S2: Do you want
to start?
S1: Okay. <Laugh>

Well, in my head this needs to be a conversation
between a man
and a woman.
My mind going…
The woman is ‘A’.

I don’t know why <Laugh>.
She’s just,
you know,
being bossy.
Or being right;

or being both. [Erm…]
S2: [There’s] also a man trying to…
(1 sec)
like, express themselves, like,
in short sentences.
And, like, women are more like.
[“Are you gonna say something?!”]

S1: [<Laugh>]
S2: Like:
“I have nothing to say”
S1: Yeah, yeah! [<Laugh>]
S2: [So, yeah],
I agree! <Giggle>
S1: To ‘A’ being a woman.
[Yes]
S2: [Yes]
S1: And, erm,
why they’re having the conversation?
Erm, erm…

(1 sec)

S1: Maybe it’s one of those times
when a woman asks
“does my butt look big
in this pants?”

S2: <Giggle> Hmm hmm, [hmm hmm!]
S1: [And she is like]
“are you gonna say something?”
“What do you [want me to say?]”
S2: [Yeah]
S1: It’s gonna be [worse whatever]
S2: [Yeah]
S1: **Bad** whatever I say.  
   *(Self-repair)*
S2: Yeah.
S1: Something like that.
S2: Okay.
S1: <Laugh>
S2: Yeah, erm…
   To me, like,
   this situation, like,
   I agree
   that it’s a man
   and a woman,
   or maybe a man
   and a woman.
   Erm… To me,
   this situation seems
   a bit more dramatic.

**A bit more serious?**  
*(Pragmatic confirmation check)*
S1: Hmm hmm!
S2: Erm, I don’t know,
   maybe she saw him
   with another woman
   and she’s [like]
S1: [Oh…]
S2: “What do you wanna, like,
   are you gonna say something to that?
   Do you [wanna actually, like,]
S1: [<cringe>] [<Laugh>]
S2: [Explain] why you were
   with her
   and not
   with me?”
   I mean,
   I don’t know,
   it’s like,
   “yeah, okay,
   I cannot do the explaining”
   so it’s,
   basically it’s like
   yeah… I…
S1: “I have [nothing
to say”]
S2: [Don’t have…
yeah!]
S1: That’s a good one!
S2: Yeah.
S1: So,
   and then they broke up.
S2: Yeah
S1: <Laugh>
S2: Think so…
S1: Yeah,
    that’s a…
    Yeah,
    I get that.
    I think
    that’s a goody
S2: Yeah.
S1: Okay!
S2: Next one?
S1: I think so,
    yes.
    We’re going fast!
(Reading. 25 seconds)
S1: Okay.
    Any ideas?
(2 sec)
S2: Hmmm…
    It’s very vague.
S1: It’s very vague,
    yes.
S2: Erm, like,
    at first, like,
    when I see, like
    “It’s deep there.
    It doesn’t matter
    if it’s deep.
    You must swim
    and I will catch hold
    of him”.
    It’s, like, okay,
    **someone is drowning?**
    (Pragmatic confirmation check)
    And you are just standing
    there, like
    [without]
S1: [Hmm hmm]
S2: Like,
    [sufficient swimming skills?]
S1: [<Laugh>]
S2: But you a- a-, like,
    just out of human instinct.
    You wanna help him,
    or her…
    Erm, yeah, him!
S1: Yes.
S2: Erm, to, yeah, get
out of the water.
Erm [but, erm…]
S1: [Seems like this]
S2: The…
Just the words
that are used are-
Don’t seem, like, dramatic enough.

\textbf{Know what I mean?}  
\textit{(Pragmatic confirmation check)}

S1: \textbf{No,}

\textbf{I was thinking more like: erм.}

\textit{Maybe somebody- somebody,}
\textit{like a burglar,}
\textit{sombody swam}
\textit{somewhere,}
\textit{and now they’re just standing…}
\textit{You know…}
\textit{near the lake}
\textit{and they’re like}
\textit{“well, yeah, go after him”}
\textit{but it’s really deep,}
\textit{it’s not worth it.}
\textit{And the other one’s like}
\textit{“well, you have to go}
\textit{after him”}.

S2: Okay.
S1: Maybe something like that.
S2: You could also turn this scenario around
and it’s like, erм,

\textbf{and see it, like,}
\textbf{from the bur- burglar’s perspective?}
\textit{(Self-repair)}
\textit{(Pragmatic confirmation check)}

S1: [\textit{<Laugh>}]
S2: [He’s, like,] running away,
\textit{but he cannot swim,}
\textit{but he’s like:}
\textit{“yeah, I have to get out- get out}
\textit{of here}
\textit{[otherwise they catch me]}

S1: [\textit{<Laugh>}]
S2: So this could be, like, another perspective,
\textit{I [thought so]}
S1: [\textit{Yes}]
So,
\textit{‘cause I agree that’s…}
\textit{I don’t really know}
\textit{what the [tone is]}

S2: [\textit{Yeah}]
S1: whether it’s serious,
\textit{or whether it’s not serious,}
\textit{or…}
S2: Yeah.
S1: Hmm…
   It could be many things.
S2: Hmm… Exactly.
S1: It could be new people;
   it could be burglars,
   or it could be,
   you know,
   refugees somewhere,
   I don’t know,
   making it very badly.
S2: Yeah.
S1: Maybe getting [away
   from something]
S2: [Hmm hmm…]
S1: Okay!
   Was that,
   was that all the papers?
S2: [Yeah]
S1: [<Laugh>]

(08:30)
1.4.2 Transcription 2. (S3 – S4): Proficient – proficient.

(00:17)

S3: Okay.
S4: <Cough> I really have no idea
    what kind
    of situation
    this might be.
S3: **No!**
    *It sounds like a very pathetic girl*
    who was
    on a date.
S4: Oh, [yeah!]
S3: [And really] wants him
    [to call]
S4: [That’s a good one]
S3: <Laugh> I don’t think it is,
    ‘cause it’s
    nineteen-seventy-four
S4: Yeah, it is
    overly dramatical
    for the likes
    to be actually the point,
    but [yeah]
S3: [Could be!]
S4: It’s a…
    It’s a fun situation.
S3: <Laugh> yeah!

(1 sec)

S4: Yeah.
    So, yeah, a very very pathetic girl…
S3: Really really.
    A [girl <Giggle>]
S4: [Around] twenty,
    or something.
    And it’s nineteen-forty-seven,
    so let’s be realistic,
    they’re not thirty
S3: Yeah <Laugh>
S4: <Laugh> And some sort of guy
    who…
    They’ve been seen together
S3: Yeah, which…
    He really
    needs to be calling! [<Laugh> Yeah!]
S4: [<Laugh> Okay] But why would
    that be happening?

("No", in this instance, is an affirmative response to having no clue which scenarios may be represented by the story. S3 does, however, provide a scenario)
Hmm…

(1 sec)

S3: **Because she really needs someone?**

    [Laugh]

S4: [Laugh]

S3: **She’s very lonely?**

S4: Yeah, yeah, that may be true.

    Maybe she’s a woman
    and needs someone
to protect her?

S3: Why do she…

    we think
she’s a woman?

(1 sec)

S4: I don’t know.
S3: Me neither.
S4: That’s a good point.
S3: [Laugh]
S4: [I just feel] like
it’s a woman.
S3: **Maybe ‘cause**

    they say

    it’s Doro- Dorothy Parker?

    <Giggle>

S4: Yeah, true,

    but… I- It may not be
    autobiographical.

S3: No.

    Hmm, it could also be
    a guy.

S4: Yeah.
S3: <giggles>
S4: A very needy guy!
S3: Yeah.
S4: Very silly.

    No, euhm…

S3: Well,

    he’s waiting

    for a very important phone call.

S4: **but I have the feeling**

    that this person is

    quite religious?

    Otherwise you wouldn’t-

S3: Yeah!
S4: Talk to God
so much?
(2 sec)

S4: Hmm... <Snif>
   Well what would be happening?
S3: I think
   the God makes it
   very desperate.
S4: Yeah, exactly!
   And the, euhm,
   overabundance of “please”!
S3: <Laughs> Please please, please please. [Please!]
S4: [Please!]
S3: <Laugh>
S4: Euhm, hmm...
   It seems like...
   I- It might me
   that the chap is in danger,
   or something?

   See how it feels
   that way?  (Pragmatic confirmation check)
S3: Could [also be, yes]
S4: [There- there’s]
   That they’re
   in [distress?]
S3: [Hm hhm]
S4: Or, or,
   I don’t know...
S3: But how could a phone call
   change there? [<Giggle>]
S4: [Yeah, I] have no idea...

(2 sec)

S4: I mean,
   it’s nineteen-forty-seven,
   so she probably didn’t went out
   to find others.
S3: No! [<Laugh>]
S4: [<Laugh>] [Hm hhm...]
S3: [Huh!]

(1 sec)

S3: Maybe call back
   the doctor.
S4: [Huh!]

S3: [Because] that could save a life?

S4: Right!

Wow,

that makes sense!

And then it doesn’t matter

whether it’s a man or a woman.

S3: No.
S4: And they could still be desperate.
S3: Yes! <Giggle>
S4: So.

(2 sec)

S4: I’m thinking

it might be a good option.

S3: Yeah.
S4: Hmm <Cough>
S3: Yeah, yeah…
S4: <Giggle>
S3: They don’t say very much

about the relationship

of the two people.

S4: [No…]
S3: [Or that] the relation is really the phone call.
S4: Yeah.

And it…

They don’t really…

We don’t really know

which, what, which person is supposed to call her

apart from the fact

that it’s a ‘him’.

S3: No. Hmm…

(2 sec)

S3: They can be cm… closely related as well.

S4: Sorry?
S3: They can be closely related?
S4: Yeah, but, you see, yeah.
S3: Okay! <laugh>
S4: Yeah!

Do you [wanna]

S3: [Next one?]
S4: Yeah. <Cough> <Snif>

(Reading, 10 sec)

S3: <Laugh>
S4: <Giggle>
S3: Sounds like a [fight
in a relationship!]
S4: [Hmm] Yeah, it does!
S3: [<Laugh>]
S4: [That’s the] first thing
I thought of!

I have a feeling
that ‘B’ is the, euhm, sterner person?

Like, a person
who doesn’t really care
so much?

S3: Hmm hmm!
S4: Or isn’t really interested
in…
S3: What ‘A’ said.
S4: Yeah.
S3: I think ‘A’ is the girl.
I don’t know why
I [think
this is the girl <Giggle>]

S4: [Yeah…
I had the same feeling]

More like,
wow, ‘B’ is mad…

S3: Yeah!
S4: That would be the guy…
S3: No feelings

[<Laugh> Sorry Michiel! <Giggle>]
S4: [No he’s the stoic man!] <Cough>

Euhm…

But, yeah,
I have the feeling
that there’s something
between the two
and that, euh,

‘A’ feels as if ‘B’ has done something wrong.

S3: Hmm hmm!
S4: And ‘B’ doesn’t feel that way
and doesn’t really wanna talk about it.

S3: Yeah, or doesn’t see anything to talk about.

S4: Yeah, exactly.

(1 sec)

S3: Which is so frustrating, I’m always ‘A’…

S4: Yah! [<Giggle>]

S3: [<Giggle>] [I know]

S4: [<Laugh>]

S3: Well, then ‘A’ is in trouble and he or she wants ‘B’ to help.

(1 sec)

S4: [Hmm!] S3: [Maybe?] S4: How do you mean? <Sniff> (Explicit question)

S3: Well, euhm, hmm… Yeah, that ‘A’ has some trouble, some problems (Self-repair) and that she, <Giggle>
or he, wants ‘B’ to say something.

(2 sec) (Contemplation)

S3: Then it’s more like “do you want to do something, to [say]?” (Attempt to reach a consensus and a common ground’)

S4: [Th- th- th-] that would make ‘B’ some sort of an- a- a- euhm… an asshole! (Mutual understanding)

S3: [<Laughs>]

S4: [’Cause why- If ‘A’…] I don’t think we’re supposed to swear.

No, but, why- why-

If ‘A’ really needs something he… and if he or she needs to say [something]

S3: [Yeah…]

S4: And ‘B’ doesn’t.

That would make ‘B’ mad, so why would you not help?
S3: [Yeah…]
S4: ['Cause it’s] not that much trouble…
    Just do it!
S3: Yah!
    Men… [<Laugh>]
S4: [<Laugh>] Men…
S3: Hmmm…
    Yeah that could be.
S4: Yeah!
    I find to…
        can’t really think
            of anything else,
                ‘cause everything
        that the two are just very closely related.
            They can’t get the couple idea
                out of my head.
S3: Hmm hmm!
    Maybe it could also be something
        that they saw.
            Anything?
    What they shouldn’t have seen,
        but what sh-,
            what she [like, the tell] someone?  (Pragmatic confirmation check)
S4: [Oooh!]
S3: And ‘A’ wants to say,
        or ‘A’ wants to tell someone
            and ‘B’ doesn’t.
S4: Well, like, yeah, like,
        they’re walking
            down the street.
            And maybe ‘A’ and ‘B’ are just friends
            and they’re walking
                down the street
            and they see, euhm,
                the… boy- or girlfriend
                with one
                    of their [friends]
S3: [Yeah]
S4: Kissing someone else
        for [instance]
S3: [Yeah]

(1 sec)

S3: Yeah,
        something like that.
S4: Someone else (incomprehensible)

(1 sec)
S4: Hmm <Snif> <Cough>
S3: Huh!
    I have nothing to say <Giggle>
S4: Wanna flip the [page?]
S3: [Yeah]
S4: Okay!

(Reading, 6 sec)

S3: That is really cold.
S4: Wow!

(Reading, 6 sec)

S4: <Snif> Aha!
    Euh, I get some sort
    of adventure feeling
    to this.
    Like they were
    in a cave,
    or something
    [and]
S3: [<Giggle>]
S4: Something was running away
    from them
    and there are two people standing there
    and one of them must’ve
S3: Threw
S4: Yeah! [<Laugh]
S3: [<Laugh]
S4: But it’s deep!
    Hmm… <Cough>

(1 sec)

S3: <Snif> And if- if they didn’t “sa- ve him,
    I would catch hold
    of ‘him’”.
    It.
    Then it would seem
    as if something dropped down
    in the water
    and… i- it’s quite important
    that they swim after it,
    but they…
S4: Yeah.

(2 sec)

S3: There’s a burglar running away,
I think.
S4: Yeah!

(2 sec)

S4: Maybe… Ah!
S3: And one person doesn’t wanna follow.
   Yeah, the second one.
   He says “it’s deep here”
S4: Yeah.
S3: He or she thinks it could help him,
   but I can’t.
   No he would help him, (Self-repair)
   but he can’t.
   And the other one’s a chicken.
   Don’t be a chicken.
S4: Just do it! [< Giggle>]
S3: [<Laugh>]

(2 sec)

S4: Well,
   maybe he- he’s that one person
   that eh- e- doesn’t really want to.
   It seems, like,
   that he’s reluctant to actually go
   in there.

(1 sec)

S3: But the second one really doesn’t want to.
   [Or-]
S4: [Yeah, so the- the person
   near the middle line
   might catch hold of [him]-
S3: [Yeah]
S4: But doesn’t really want to,
   like he can see
   that he should,
   but [he’s]
S3: [Hmmm..] Yeah.
   There’s a threshold [<Giggle>]
S4: [Yeah]
   and the first person is
   “just do it”.
S3: Yeah,
   but why isn’t the first person doing it?
Because [they’re actually ne-]

S4: [Yeah!]
S3: Standing next
to each other,
[righth?]  
(Pragmatic confirmation check)
S4: [Yeah!]
S3: Otherwise they wouldn’t [be talking]
S4: [Or, maybe] they’re not
    and one of them is across
    and the other person’s closer.
S3: Yeah.
S4: Or, the other person…
    I- i- if we’re talking very adventurous,
    then one of the people might be…
S3: Already swimming! [<Giggle>]
S4: [Maybe] yeah.
    Or, yeah, maybe he was, euhm, tied up
    or something. Or, euhm,
    you know,
    tied up
    in some way
    and he’s- he’s not really capable to do- go
    after whatever it is
    that is swimming.
S3: Hmm hmm!
S4: Or in there.
    And he- we- the thing
    that’s in there
    is actually necessary to help [him]
S3: [Yeah]
S4: And he asks the firs- the second person to swim.
S3: Yeah.
S4: Does that make sense?  
(Pragmatic confirmation check)
S3: Yes!  
(Exclamation of understanding)
S4: [<Giggle>]
S3: [<Giggle>]
S4: <Cough>

(1 sec)

S3: I think they’re quite closely related to each other
S4: Do you mean
    that they’re friends or some[thing?]  
(Explicit question relating
to pragmatics)
S3: [Yeah]
(3 sec)
S4: I get it.  
(Mutual understanding)
S3: But I don’t know why. [<Giggle>]
S4: [<Giggle>] **Why are you a friend?** *(Explicit question)*

S3: Maybe because-
   because the person
   in the last line said
   “you must swim”.

S4: Yeah?

S3: I think you wouldn’t really tell a total stranger
to go swim.

S4: True! Well…
   Hmm- true.
   Hmm depends
   on the situation.

S3: There could also be more people.

S4: **More than two?** *(Pragmatic explicit question)*

S3: That’s what the others were
   with ‘A’ and ‘B’,
   but [here]

S4: [Oh, right]

S3: It could also be ‘one’, ‘two’, ‘three’. <Giggle>

S4: Yeah, that’s true!
   M- There may be a whole crowd of people
   who are just very silent.

S3: Yeah.

S4: That’s true,
   but then
   why would two people
   cause one person to swim?
   That’s even worse.

S3: Hmm…

S4: Well, maybe the thing
   that’s in there,
   maybe it- it’s
   some sort of animal
   or something? *(Pragmatic confirmation check)*

   Maybe an amphibian? <Giggle>

S3: But then
   it would be not ‘him’, right?
   I think animals’ names are always ‘it’.

S4: Maybe?
   Yeah?
   Mah.
   I don’t know!

S3: Huh!

S4: I mean,
   if they’re talking to a dog
   it’s always
   “hey, good boy”.

S3: Yeah.

S4: [So they do acknowledge
   that it’s <Laugh>]


S3: [Yeah, that’s it may be general <Laugh>]

S4: Well, [perhaps, but]

S3: [Laugh>]

S4: Why would it matter
   if it’s ‘he’,
   ‘cause dogs can’t breathe
   under water.

S3: No.

S4: But maybe the person
   that is reluctant to swim can’t actually swim
   and that’s
   why he’s worried
   about the- that.

S3: Yeah.
   But then
   why does then- the people-
   tell the other one to swim
   in the water
   though they can’t swim
   by [themselves?]?

S4: [Important people] don’t swim either.
   [I mean]

S3: [Incomprehensible]

S4: It’s eighteen-eighty-five,
   [probably not everyone was able] to swim!

S3: [<Laugh> No! <Laugh>]

(1 sec)

S3: Tricky situation.
S4: Yeah.
S3: We got everything.

(11:58)
1.4.3 Transcription 3. (S5 – S6): Proficient – proficient.

(00:22)

S6: Okay.
S5: Okay.

(Reading, 15 sec)

S5: Hmm…
S6: Hmm, well, the first thing makes it sort of -
S5: makes it ask like, ‘cause more people use ‘God’ as an implication to-
S6: Hmm, yeah.
S5: or she - really pleads, so, you, so, like most people only in times of need [Erm…]
S6: [So], you think it’s like an extra [emphasis to]
S5: [Yeah, that’s right] It’s that she puts it on the…
S6: [first persona] Yeah, the persona! Like, the- the- the- [the person]
S5: [Oh!] Well, to me-
S6: [Yeah!] I instantly heard it in the female voice [and]
S5: [Yeah!] Me too!
[Me too]

S6: [Yeah, it’s] strange, ‘cause that doesn’t have to be, of course.

S5: No, but for me it- like, it seems that it’s, erm, one interpretation. Like, for me would have been that it really is something about, like, specifically like a doctor? (Pragmatic confirmation check)

That’s

S6: Yeah?

S5: That’s why- why she pleads, Like, she, in this case, she pleads to God that, erm, she wants this call, because there seems to be, like, important information, like, on the other end.

Like an- like when the doctor [calls]

S6: [I think] there’s much- there’s much at stake, [yeah]

S5: [yeah!] yeah. And she emphasises that that’s a really really little thing for God, so it has to be something like, huge, for her life? (Pragmatic confirmation check)

S6: Yeah, well, the emphasis, to me, seems like such bad-well, it seems to be like a matter of life and death. You know, that one telephone call could, you know, make him not jump of a bridge or something.

S5: Hmm…

S6: But it could also be that, erm, perhaps she… is in trouble and needs to get help.

S5: Oh.

S6: [Maybe]

S5: [Oh. Maybe]. So that she m- that she is basically, hmm- like, just really really wants him to call. To- Because she-
Once if you all feels above [him]

S6: [hmm hmm]

S5: Like she just wants
    that, like that outreached hand,
    so to speak.

S6: Yeah, perhaps.
    Or when she’s reaching out for him,
    he can help her.
    Like- erm, to-
    When she calls him
    he can fix something
    from the outside.

S5: Oh! Yeah….?
S6: [<Laughs>]
S5: [That could be].
    Could be,
    there are many possibilities [here]
S6: [Yeah!]
    Ok, it’s interesting.
    I didn’t expect to get so much out of that!

S5: Yeah.
    Like, from such a short extract.
S6: So, do you have any more ideas?
S5: Okay, maybe we should include, like, three
    instead of two [scenarios]
S6: [Yes!]
S5: So, the first one would be-
    What would your scenario be?

(4 sec)

S6: Hmm…
    It’s pretty difficult.

(2 sec)

S5: Okay,
    so I- I’m helping out,
    so how would it help erm…
    Like, assume
    that it’s like a woman
    in her mid- end of twenties, beginning of [thirties]
S6: [<Giggle>]
S5: No really!
S6: Yeah, I know!
    Seriously,
    I have the same idea!
S5: Okay, and, erm, like,
    she has this, like, personal relationship
    with this ‘him’ she speaks about
and it’s very close.
It’s a really really close relationship,
it seems.
And, erm-
S6: Yeah, a partner.
Not like a father or a bother.
S5: Yeah!
S6: Right.
S5: A really really strong relationship
    and that she’s… Erm…
    Yeah, in a way feels down?
So that she’s like
    at a low point? (Pragmatic confirmation check)
S6: Hmm hmm.
S5: So she needs, so she really needs,
    like you said,
    the help
    or this whole basically is something
    that might go through.
    That,
    I guess
    is why is she- why she’s pleading
    to God? [Because]
S6: [Yeah]
S5: I- I call it, that it’s,
    maybe it’s not necessarily
    what she thinks is happening.
    Happened.
    Will happen.
S6: Yeah.
    I only have to add
    that we-
    it’s clearly two diff- erm… power-.
    ‘Cause
    in most scenarios
    the woman is the one in trouble
    who needs a helping hand
    and the other-
    I think
    that she thinks
    that he is in [trouble
    and she has to reach him]
S5: Ah! Yeah.
S6: That’s-
    I think those-
    both are possible
S5: Ah, yeah, I agree
    with you.
    That’s a good point.
S6: Yeah.
S5: But, should we go to the next one?
S6: Yeah.
(Reading, 23 sec)

S5: <Laugh>
S6: Okay.
  This is very gender-pool, but here is ‘one’ in the male voice [No, no!]

S5: [Hmm]
S6: Female voice and the second is the male voice.
S5: a really!
S6: Yeah!
  So, she’s, like, begging him for-
  Well, she’s very angry at him, obviously.
  Er, and then, well:
  “Are you going to say something?”
  Like, already implying that he has something to apologise for.

S5: Yeah.
S6: <Laugh>
  “What do you want me to say?”
  “I don’t know.
    Anything”
    And, erm, it’s like, erm, “No, no,
    it’s fine!” <Laugh>
    You know,
    this typical male-female [argument]

S5: [Yeah, yeah]
S6: Where she knows what she wants to hear but he has no [idea]

S5: Yeah.
He has no [idea]
S6: What that is.
S5: Interesting!
  Because, for me it’s like
  **Er, it’s more like a statement?**
  (Pragmatic confirmation check)
  Like, I thought it were two men, in this case,
  who were basically just, like…
  Thinking about seeing something.
  It’s, erm, like, like, exactly like from outside
seeing out at me like that
saying, well, ok,
“are you going to say anything?”
Like, “what do you want me to [say?]”
S6: Yeah, ok,
but, it says ‘dramatic dialogue’,
so, [I-]
S5: [Sure!]
S6: I almost, yeah,
but I do agree
with your interpretation
I just feel that-
S5: I mean it’s possible that-
Like, it’s [ambiguous]
S6: [Hmm hmm]
[Yeah, yeah sure]
S5: [It could be anything]
[But I-]
S6: [It could be, like-]
(1 sec)
Yeah, two policemen in a car,
well, hmmmm…
Like, you know that easy, erm,
when you’re going
from such a topic,
S5: Yeah,
when you’re just-
In a way it feels
like a really forced conversation.
S6: Yeah…
[Forced] to break the silence
S5: [Yeah]
Not necessarily,
so, erm,
I mean,
for me,
what that’s, erm,
or what that proves what that [was again]
S6: [Yeah]
S5: Is…
Like I said,
like two men
that are not necessarily friends,
more like a distant relationship
between the people.
S6: [Yeah.]
S5: [They] know each other,
yes,
but not necessarily really close
and, erm, yeah,
they’re just, basically, watching [something]
S6: [Yeah]
S5: Some- something where that person ‘A’ really thinks
that there needs something to be said,
but why would he think-
No, actually not < Laugh>
Yeah!
And, why,
I actually do not see why.
I think-
S6: Yeah, well,
to- to break that silence!
to ha- to say something.
That’s enough reason,
I think
S5: Hmm, true!
True, true.

(2 sec)

S5: Yeah,
so yours again? (Clarification request)
S6: That was, erm,
just a fight
between a husband and a wife.
Erm, like, do you think
that’s sort of a- a younger couple,
that, like young newlyweds
or something? (Pragmatic confirmation check)
And she still expects the answer
<Laugh>
And I think that- I’m not so sure
that he’s get used
to the fact of it yet.
He’s seen the fact
that it won’t work.
<Laugh> That’s one way,
I think, erm,
S5: Well, I only have said,
Like in your interpretation,
I would have said
that there is, like,
they’re in a rough patch?
In a way, right now,
because there’s, like, this,
in a way,
miscommunication.
S6: Yeah.
S5: Well, like you said
that she knows exactly
what she wants to hear,
[yeah, but]
S6: [Hmm hmm]
[Yeah, but he has no idea
what that is]
S5: [There’s him…]
S6: Yeah, exactly,
[so it’s]
S5: But she’s all about-
S6: Okay.
S5: Yeah.
S6: Yeah.
Which is then, again,
this dichotomy.
like, again, like the cold and distant men,
and…
like, in the world
S5: Yeah.
And also, well,
women always really roll
into things that’s really is,
[you know]
S6: [Yeah]
S5: (Incomprehensible)
(2 sec)
S5: Okay.
S6: So, that seems like it,
at least.
S5: Yeah.
Or…
I have this other scenario…
Maybe, erm, ‘A’ has caught ‘B’ doing something
that’s not completely right
and she wants that-
He or she wants an apology.
Erm, I thought maybe ‘A’ is not really aware
to the extent…
She knows, e- sh- he knows
what it was? (Pragmatic confirmation check)
So, it just feels like, er
“I have nothing to say!”
I’m not gonna apologise or explain any further.
Let’s just cut this short
And, erm, speak, perhaps!
S6: That actually makes sense!
[Yeah.]
S5: [Yeah],
you think?
S6: Yeah, it does make sense if you think about it that way.
S5: Hmm!
S6: It could be a lot of things, actually.
S5: Yeah <Laugh>
(1 sec)
This is fun; I should do this, erm, at my friend’s house.

S6: Yeah, this is really [interesting]
S5: [Yeah]
S6: It’s interesting and fun!
Just have them look at snip-its and then, like, “hmm, what’s actually the scenario?”
Like, outside of the [small piece]

S5: [<Laugh>]
I think we’ve exhausted this one as [well]
S6: [Yes]
I mean, We could talk, like, for hours about this.
S5: Hmm hmm.
S6: But, let’s go to number three!
S5: Yes.
S6: Yes.
S5: Hmm, Checkov!
I think I’ve [heard] that name.
S6: Ah, Checkov, yeah!
S5: Hmmmm…

(This could be a response to S6’s scenario. S6 may want to apply the specific scenario to a situation in her life, which, she thinks, may turn out to be fun)

(S7 may have misinterpreted the referent ‘this’, which may have referred to a specific scenario rather than the story-completion task. This response, however, considers the story-completion task. Possible mismatch in pragmatic definitions)
S5: It’s interesting, because, erm, like after the… Like, just by reading the name Checkov I, like, immediately, erm, picture the men, like, obviously are standing on [the shore,]

S6: [Yeah]
S5: Somewhere, or near, like, a lake. And [erm]
S6: [I thought more of a river] <Laugh>
S5: A really! Yeah.
S6: Yeah, okay.
S5: Yeah, okay, could also be, but at least, [like, near water]

S6: Yeah.
S5: I mean they swim.
S6: Hmm hmm.
S5: And why is there a tiny- And, like, this- In a way, like those mentor and mentee, like this-

S6: Yeah?
S5: This, erm, difference in their standing by the lake.
S6: Yeah, there’s a difference in relations.
S5: Yeah, there’s like, okay. The- the mentor says, basically, “what are you standing there for? You have to go!”

S6: Yeah!
S5: “You have to conquer this fear in a way, And, yeah, it doesn’t matter if it’s deep.

You must swim.”

S6: Yeah.
S5: I saw them, in a way.
S6: Well, to me it almost seems
   like the ‘him’ person is, like, drowning,
   or something.
S5: Yeah.
S6: Yeah.
S5: Only- only-
S6: Tha- that would

(1 sec)  
(Contemplation)

S6: Naaah, no, that would call
   for a different approach.
   “she would ca- tch hold
   of him…”
   Maybe!

(3 sec)  
(Contemplation)

S6: It’s deep there,
   so that we should just steal it.
   **Just below the surface?**  
   (Pragmatic confirmation check)
S5: Hmm
S6: Or he’s just far out
   on the lake
   and she’s afraid
   of the depth of it.
   And she’s jus-
   But then it’s-
   This is a really difficult one.
S5: Yeah,
   I don’t know,
   maybe it could also imply
   that “I would catch hold
   of him” could also mean,
   like, just to catch someone,
   to, like, instead
   of just res- maybe rescue someone.
   There’s, like, yeah, catch [him.]
S6: [Hm mhmm]
S5: It could also mean
   that they- this person has to,
   like you said,
   like to cross, like,
   in this case, a river,
   to cross a river,
   but he’s afraid,
   ‘cause it’s deep there.
   [And like]
S6: [Yeah]
S5: It doesn’t matter that it’s deep.
S6: Yeah.
S5: You still have to go if you wanna catch this person.
S6: Yeah.
S5: That’s why they go here.
S6: Yeah, because the rest of your life will depend on it.
S5: Yes! Exactly.
I mean, that would be another interpretation. There’s, like, this mentor-mentee, relationship with the mentee, erm, once you ca- catch this ‘him’, like, this, who- whoever it is, improves.
S6: Yeah.
S5: And, basically, like, this, you have to go, because you catch it- erm, him!

(3 sec)

S6: Yeah, it’s weird that- the ‘him’ is really problematic. Like:
I want more information as to ‘where’ or ‘who’<Giggle>

(2 sec)

S6: I think this one is harder than the other [ones]
S5: [Hrm hrm], Yeah.
S6: ‘Cause you… There’s more information missing.
S5: But you said, erm, **You said more, like, to, like, to help someone?** (Request for clarification)
S6: Hrmhm… No.
Well, it was my [initial], erm, train
of thought.

S5: [Yeah]
S6: **But, do you think**
   it’s more, like,
   people don’t want
   to lose their life
   by going after the man?

(2 sec)

S6: **Right?**
S5: Ooooooooh!
   **Like a [metaphor]?**

S6: [Yes!]
   **Well, no.**
   It could be
   that there really is someone
   that they want to get
   out of the water,
   sure.

[But I think it’s-]
S5: [Yeah,
   but it’s also-]
   **ah, okay, okay!**
S6: Yeah, yeah!

S5: Ah,
   that is a really good one,
   yeah.
S6: I remember my (incomprehensible) <Laugh>.
S5: Yeah, yeah,
   but I thought that as well
   in the beginning,
   but I ended up leaving,
   simply
   because of the “catch hold
   of him”.
S6: Yeah.
S5: I don’t know
   why I, like,
   immediately I snapped back [t-]
S6: [Well] that is the-
   more difficult,
   ‘cause that’s, like, more…
   It’s r- real action
   It’s no- re-, it’s not easy to interpret that
   in a global way.
S5: No, that’s-
   But I think that’s
what I-
  I don’t know, I-
    It’s really good
and I could-
  Yeah, and you actually said
    what I thought, like, my
    initially.
S6: That’s cool!
S5: As well.
S6: Glad to help! <Laugh>
S5: Yeah, thank you,
    because it’s like-
    It’s this, er,
    I mean
even in my case
  it’s, like, this old- old guy
    with a really nice, long, white beard
S6: Really! <Laugh>
    [Like a wizard!]
S5: [Yeah,
    I don’t know…]
    Like a wizard!
    [Yeah, like a wizard!]
S6: [<Laugh>]
S5: And he’s standing there
    and he’s saying
    to the man, like,
    “what are you standing there for?”
    Like, just…!
S6: “It doesn’t matter
    if it’s deep.
    You must swim!”
    With a Gandalf [thing! <Laugh>]
S5: [Yeah, yeah, exactly, exactly]
    exactly like that.
    [It’s like]
S6: [Okay]

(1 sec)
S5: Huh,
    that was really good!
    Yeah, hmmm!
S6: I like this one.
S5: Yeah, me too.
    Yeah; it’s really good.
S6: <Giggle>
S5: It’s, yeah
    “It’s too deep
    to swim;
you must swim.”

[oh no!]

S6: [oh no!]

There’s some things
in life
that you need to overcome!

S5: Yeah,
and sometimes you don’t know
if it’s deep;
you just have to go in there
[and find out]

S6: [Yeah.]
And a- also this swimming;
I mean,
you swim
on the surface
it doesn’t matter
how deep the [water is]

S5: [Yeah]

S6: Currents and stuff,
yeah,
you have to worry
about that,
but depth is still-

S5: It’s…

(1 sec)

S6: Okay.
I’m proud
of this.

S5: Yeah!
We just have the-
we’re just afraid
of the unknown.

S6: Yeah.
S5: That’s quite deep.
You know,
afraid of the deep.

S6: That’s deep man!
S5: Yeah,
that’s really deep.
Okay!
I think that’s it!

S6: Okay,
all right.
I’ll go get Michiel

S5: Do that.

(15:58)
1.4.4 Transcription 4. (S7 – S8): Proficient (S8) – unproficient (S7).

(00:28)

S8: Okay.
S7: Did you read it?
S8: Yes, I went over it,
    Yeah! Okay,
    So, what do you think?
S7: Well, I think it’s, er,
    it’s a girl, like, you’re erm…
    Thoughts,
    a [girl…]
S8: [Hmm hmm]
S7: Who is like, really excited,
    ra… I think a [guy]
S8: [Hmm hmm, yeah]
S7: Needs to call her back.
    It’s very…
    You know,
    That’s the story.
S8: I started with the same, like,
    there’s a girl,
    who’s very in love
    [with a boy]
S7: [Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah!]
S8: And she is sitting
    next to the telephone
    and she really [really wants him to call]
S7: [Really really, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah!]
S8: Yes, and he’s not calling
    and it makes her very nervous!

(1 sec)

S8: Yeah.
S7: Very nervous impression has she, yes.
S8: Yeah, yeah! Okay.
S7: Erm, another scenario.
    Erm…
S8: Yeah, I think-
S7: Oh maybe
    in department!
    When you did your exams
    You get a call
    from school.
    Not really the same, maybe, yeah.
    And you’re also very tensed
    [because they’re]
S8: [Yes]
S7: Really excited
about…
S8: Yeah, you want to lose this tension!
S7: Yeah, yeah, yeah!
S8: Yeah.
S7: And it’s very nerv-
You want to- to pass your exams
To…
S8: Yeah.
S7: Party
but you need to wait
until they say: “hey, you passed your exams”.
S8: Yes.

I thought as well,
like, it could be
that, erm, maybe she’s worrying
about her boyfriend,
who,
in fact,
didn’t call her for a long [time].
S7: [Oh, yeah!]
S8: He went on a vacation
and he- yeah,
she doesn’t know if he arrived safely
or not!
Now, she really wants to know
if everything is okay with him.
S7: Ohyeah, [yeah!]
S8: [I thought],
maybe this as well?
Like, that could be another scenario? (Pragmatic confirmation check)

(1 sec)

S7: Yes, yes, right!
Yeah, maybe or, yeah!

Maybe on vacation
Or maybe
in the military
or something?
Yes, [that they, yeah]
S8: [Yes, that’s possible as well!]
S7: Send to Afghanistan
or something…
You’re really
“Ooooh, I hopes everything is okay!”
S8: Yeah, yeah, exactly!
So, like, yeah, it’s a bit-
There are two scenarios
that are both

(Termination of the previous scenario. May be a cultural difference. German secondary school students may not receive school-related phone-calls, which results in S8’s not knowing about the respective examination procedure)

(Pragmatic confirmation check)

(Contemplation)

(Agreement)

(Repetition of the constructed scenario to convey understanding)

(Next scenario)
about excitement? (Pragmatic confirmation check)

S7: [Yeah]
S8: [Like] they are pretty excited and nervous and, ern, yeah, she can’t focus on anything else.
S7: No, no, no! She’s kind of praying, because they really really want the help of God to get done.

S8: And she really is praying! “Please [God!]”

S7: [Yeah, yeah, yeah] Please God!
S8: “It’s just a little thing. It’s not much to ask!”
S7: No, [no!] S8: [Yeah] <Laugh>
S7: [Yeah]
S8: [But] yeah! Hmm [So, may-]
S7: [Hmmm…] S8: Or, maybe, Then, it’s a very small thing, then! Like, then-
Yeah, I don’t know what she meant with this “it’s not very much to ask!”
That she- she thinks, yeah, that it’s a little job for God [to]

S7: [Yeah, yeah], [it’s a little God]

S8: [For, for God to just do it!]
S7: For God, things to,
aaaaah
I want him a ring- that he rings’

S8: Yes.

(The ‘needs the help of God’ is unrelated to the sense of excitement. S7 may have misunderstood the lexical item ‘excitement’ and the locutionary force. S7 may have introduced self-constructed meaning to keep the conversation going)

(Acceptance and premature termination of the ‘excitement’ scenario. Initiation of the following scenario.)

(Fairly hard to understand. May be a misinterpretation)

(Self-repair)

(Display of understanding, but, considering the following text, it
Oh, but, like, maybe you could focus on the questions?

Who are these people?

Yeah, like, we said that [already]

S7: [Yeah!]
A girl and a boyfriend,

S8: [Or a friend]
S7: [Or a man] or anything
S8: Yes!
S7: Male and female.
   Yeah, two- two people.
S8: Together.
   Yeah.
S7: Are they related?
   They’re yeah.
   You know?

S8: Yes!
S7: Relationship, something.
S8: What is happening,
   where,
   and why is this happening?
   Yeah.
S7: [Yeah.]
S8: [The first.]
   because, maybe he just wants
   to let pass a few days
   before he calls?
   Like this [“three or four days before you-“]
S7: [Yeah, yeah, timing]
   It’s a long time
   before the phone rings,
   or something.
S8: Or, I meant more that
if you,
    or, well, if it’s a date
    or a boy-
    because it’s

**The first scenario is like a [boyfriend]**

(Explanation)

S7: [Hmm hmm], yeah.
S8: Erm, or a date!
    And then you- you ask
    for numbers
    and then he doesn’t call for three days,
    maybe to make him more interesting,
    [you know?]

(Pragmatic confirmation check)

(Pragmatic confirmation check)

S7: [Yeah], yeah, yeah!
S8: That’s also possible
S7: Boyfriends,
    and the other scenarios may be husband
    or something?

(Pragmatic confirmation check)

S8: Yes, someone
    who’s worrying
    [if everything is] okay.
S7: [Yes, yes]
    Yeah, more stable relation, you have,
    but still exciting.
S8: Yes, exactly!
S7: Yeah.
S8: Okay!
S7: Hmm.. I think that’s the scenario,
    again with-
    Not very [certain]
S8: [No], me neither.
    Shall we pass
    [to the] other?
S7: [Yeah]

(Reading, 20 sec)

S8: Okay.

(5 sec)

S7: Yeah.
    I think it’s a difficult… scenario.
    Not really sure…
S8: Yes, it’s so short,
    and, like, it, yeah…
    They don’t really say anything <Giggle>
    [Right]
S7: [No, no], no,
    it’s really very very *abstract*.
    I don’t know…
S8: Yes.

(2 sec)

S7: Vague, yeah.
Maybe two people are talking
to each other
and their want to explanation
from something
or something what [happened]
S8: [Yeah]
S7: Or something
that is going on.
S8: Yeah.
S7: And this something is really really big.
S8: It’s so much!
So, I thought-

The first thing,
about, erm, someone
who got to know something
from someone else?

S7: Hmm hmm!
S8: And then, this person is going to, yeah-
Also talk
about girlfriend-boyfriend again
and then the girl asks the boy, yeah, erm,
“Do you say [something?]”
S7: [Ooh yeah!]
They’re having something along
or something!

Some kind of new, exciting, difficult thing.

S8: Yeah, I think
that they, like, never talk
to each other
about- about, [like-]

(Self-repair)

(Pragmatic confirmation check)

(The proficient- and less proficient speakers display different trains of thought in discussing two different scenarios at the same time. The proficient interlocutor speaks about a couple at the verge of a breakup as a result of never talking to each other, whereas the less proficient interlocutor tries to discuss “new, exciting, and difficult things”: the complete opposite)

(False display of understanding; the interlocutor thinks she understands the ideas of the more proficient interlocutors by explicitly uttering confirmation checks. She, however, continues
CONFLICT OF FORM AND FUNCTION

S8: [Other people came between it?]
And then they don’t really want to name it, what happened.

S7: No, no, no!
It’s- it’s very, maybe

(I sec)

S7: I- I’m not sure.
I’m not sure if it’s positive or negative.

It’s like something happened and the other person didn’t knew.
And “wow, wow, what’s going on?”

S8: Yes.
But I think it’s negative!

[more-]

S7: [Yeah, yeah]
It sounds a little bit negative “so, I don’t wanna talk about it, so leave me” A little bit.

S8: Yeah…
S7: ‘Cause, yeah, “I have nothing to say” Okay, that’s not really explanation.
I’m not sure what you’re saying, erm

S8: Exactly!
Maybe, if-
Would you mind if we would read it
in, like, different roles?

Because, then it gets…
You s- As you said already,
It’s so abstract,
I- I need to hear that,
I think!

S7: Okay.
S8: Okay?
S7: Do [you want to] be A or B?
S8: [I don’t]
I can start, yeah.
“Well, are you going to say something?”
S7: “What do you want me to say?”
S8: “I don’t know,
anything!”
S7: “I have nothing to say.”
S8: “Nothing?”
S7: “That’s right.”

[<Laugh>]
S8: [<Laugh>]
Yeah, *echt*
Erm, yeah, it’s really [mess-]
S7: [It’s] like,
they’re having a conversation
with somebody,
it’s like cheated,
or… *erm… thief- ing?*

or… something [wrong?]

(S pragmatic confirmation check)

S8: [Yes!]
S7: and didn’t want to explain why
or what happening
or why didn’t told before,
something like that!

S8: Yeah, yeah,
They’re not finished!
I may be still going on [and]

S7: [Yeah]
S8: And it’s like, yeah-
They don’t wanna say the words.
It’s also marked as a dramatic [dialogue]
S7: Yeah, it’s kind of dramatic,
like the bold and the beautiful!
It’s like <exclamation>

S8: [Yes]
S7: [Cliffhanger]
I’m not sure
what’s happening.
Is there something wrong?
I’m not sure was wrong?

S8: Exactly!
S7: Yeah.
S8: And I have the impression
    they are afraid-
        Or this person, ‘B’, is afraid
    that with everything he- he,
        maybe?  
        (Pragmatic confirmation check)
        Or she could say
S7: Hmm hmm
S8: She does something wrong.
S7: Yeah, yeah, yeah!
S8: It would be very fatal.
S7: Yeah, ‘B’ [is very]…
S8: To say something
S7: Yeah, yeah.
    He doesn’t want to say
        because he’s afraid
    that it’s going wrong.
S8: Yes.
    That he can’t control the situation
        [afterwards]
S7: [Yeah!]
    ‘A’ didn’t agree
        or… Very mad,
    or emotions are getting very highly,
        or didn’t want to go on it,
        so no [it-]
S8: [They go] to an extreme
    or [something]
S7: [Yeah,]
    so you don’t say anything!
S8: [Yes!]
S7: [You’re just, “no, nothing!”]
    [No, no, I have nothing to-]
S8: [No, no]
    But there is so much going on!
        [You know?]
S7: Yeah, yeah, yeah,
    It’s like
        Oh, what, feelings are all-
        Underneath there are some kind of emotions
        Not sure [which one]
S8: [A monster.]
        [Hidden somewhere]
S7: Or what’s happening.
S8: It’s between the lines
    in fact.
S7: Yeah.
S8: Was there another?
    Or, yeah
S7: Yeah!
S8: Do you want to say something more about this?
S7: Oh, no, no, no.
    Two is done.
S8: Okay.

(Reading, 30 sec)

S8: Erm, I’m just checking if I understood.
S7: Yeah.
S8: “What are you standing there for?”
    Is it really, like, standing,
    or is it more, erm, a metaphor?
S7: Yeah, yeah, metaphor,
    It’s like, really,
    I’m not sure-
    It’s, yeah.

S8: Yeah.
    And what-
    “I would catch hold of him
        if it were possible,
        but it’s deep there”
        I would- Okay,
    so someone would rescue someone
        if it would possible- if it were possible,
        but it’s too deep?
S7: Yeah, it’s looking a little bit like
    if you’re in- in- like,
    if you’re in very- erm,
    how do you say…
    Very deep thing with water?
    Like-

S8: Like a well!
S7: Yeah, someone like that!
S8: Hmm hmm!
S7: And then you’re on top.
    Standing on the ground.
    It seems like a mine with- with water.

S8: Yeah!
S7: And then you think:
    “Oh god-
it’s very deep
    and I can’t see.
I don’t have a connection anymore
    I don’t know…”

S8: Yes!
S7: A little bit like that,
    I think.
S8: But is there someone in?
    “I would catch hold
        of him
   if it were possible,
        but it’s deep!
Doesn’t matter if it’s deep,
    you must swim.”
    So, oh!
So there is someone, like, swimming
    there!
S7: [Yeah!]
S8: [Or maybe drowning]
S7: Yeah!
S8: And they just look down
    and, and, one says
        “you have to swim,”
        But-
S7: Or maybe it’s like a kind of contex- contest
    or you need to-
    **they need to swim together?**
        (Pragmatic confirmation check)
And one is waiting
    and not wanting-
        Very scared.
The other is already swimming
    and then you say
        “no, no, no!
        I’m- I want to swim
            with him,
but it’s going…
    It’s too deep
        and I don’t-
        I’m afraid.
I don’t want to.
    I will stay here.
S8: [Yeah]
S7: [It’s like] they need [to swim] a few-
S8: [Yeah]
S7: a distance.
    I don’t know what one
        Something like that maybe.
S8: Yeah.
    **To swim you need to be brave,**
        (Confirmation check)
    [or something.]
S7: **Yeah,**

and then you get a teacher,

or somebody else

who push the persons to swim.

S8: Yes,

but this

“I would catch hold

of him”

That I [don’t understand]

S7: [No, no, no, I also] don’t,

but-

S8: I think-

S7: Catch hold mean-

If you’re going to get her.

Like you’re [swimming]

S8: [Hmm hmm]

S7: And you can **catch up later**

(Lexical misinterpretation. S8 had already mentioned the actual definition, but a different one is constructed here)

S8: [Aaah, ok-]

S7: **But I’m not sure**

if that’s the meaning.

**Maybe it’s another.**

S8: Yes.

S7: Catch hold

of him,

if you’re telephoning,

then you can also have maybe

that you can connect.

S8: Yeah…

S7: I mean,

It’s something

That you connect

between [two people]

S8: [Hmm hmm]

S7: I’m not sure [how]

S8: Yeah, to catch someone

on [the telephone]

S7: Yeah, I’m not sure-

It’s like telephone,

or if you go

to the person

with your-

And then you’re connected,

that then there’s catch hold

of him.

S8: Or, because, maybe he’s- he’s is really

How do you say…

**Diving?**

(Pragmatic confirmation check)
He’s [in the…]
S7: [Oh, diving!]
S8: Yeah, he’s diving!
   Or he’s really, like…
   He’s deep already-
S7: Yeah, yeah, yeah!
S8: He’s he’s examining something
   under water.
S7: Yeah, yeah,
   and [then it’s very deep]
S8: [That’s also possible]
S7: And, yeah, yeah, yeah
   And the- the real diving-[instructing-things]
S8: Yes.
S7: Then they can go <exclamation>
   and then you have the little cable
   when you can connect him
   but it’s not working,
   so you say
   “ooooh”
S8: Yeah,
   Yeah, maybe.
   “You must swim”
   I mean that’s not really swimming then,
   but still.
S7: [Yeah]
S8: [Yeah]
S7: Or the,
   you have the free diving
   like, without the things.
   But then it’s swimming,
   because you [don’t have the-]
S8: [Then it’s really swimming].
   Yes.
S7: And then there’s
S8: You have to use all your force then [hmm]
S7: [Yeah] yeah!
   I mean,
   something like that.
   It’s very vague.
   Very…
S8: It is.
   Yes.
S7: [Yaa]
S8: [But would] you say it’s, yeah, yeah,
   If you would say it’s positive
   or negative?
   It’s, yeah, it’s als- also a bit tense,
   right? (Pragmatic confirmation check)
   They didn’t really decide
what to do now,
or what they’ll not do.
   It’s, like, so-
   Yeah, there are so many [doubts]
S7: [Hmm hmm]
S8: And you don’t know
   what’s going to happen now

(1 sec)

S7: Ah, yeah, [true]
S8: [Yeah]
S7: Agree,
   Yeah, it’s a little bit hmmm…
S8: [Yeah]
S7: Not sure
   what’s happening
      and if it’s positive
      or negative not.
   I think it’s… not very negative
      also not very positive.
      It’s a little bit of-
S8: Yeah…
S7: In between, maybe.
   It’s not, like,
      There’s happening something
      and they’re not going something wrong,
      also not going something right…
      You just-
S8: Yeah.
   You- you can’t stay
      in such a situation
      for a long time.
      Something is happening!

S7: Yeah, [some-]
S8: Immediately,
    then afterwards.
    I think they- they don’t have a lot
    of time either
S7: No, [that’s true]
S8: [that’s all]
S7: Yeah, and maybe there’s something-
   There’s someone
      who doesn’t like deep-
      Like, there’s- there- “it’s a deep in there
      and I don’t wanna go”
      That’s all good.
      But, [deep where?]
S8: [Yes.]
   [Yeah, exactly]
S7: [Deep, what?]
   [What’s happening?]
S8: [Yes]
   What are the consequences
      of what they’re [doing]
S7: [Yeah]
S8: It may be very important,
      or maybe just for [fun]
S7: [Yeah]
S8: I mean,
      It’s j-
S7: It can be professional;
      It can be fun;
      It can be [everything]
S8: [anything]
   [Yes]
S7: [Yeah] yeah.
      Okay.
(14:13)
1.4.5 Transcription 5. (S9 – S10): Proficient (S10) – unproficient (S9).

(00:30)

S9: <Laugh>
S10: I mean, I could come up with one scenario where there is, erm, like, anything about, like, a lover
S9: Hmm hmm.
S10: Where you just as-, erm, the protagonist assumes, that-
    or not assumes, but wants this ‘him’, this person, to call.
S9: Yes.
S10: Why-ever that could be, [because something] bad
S9: [anything] [yes]
S10: Or something good. And it seems like It’s a really intense relationship? (Pragmatic confirmation check)
S9: Yes.
(2 sec)
S10: Yeah.
S9: And… Erm… (Struggle to formulate a scenario, probably resulting from linguistic difficulties)
(5 sec)
S10: Yeah?
S9: You think It’s good or bad news? (Explicit question relating to pragmatics)
S10: Erm.. I think, in this [case, erm…]
S9: [Yes]
S10: My first interpretation would be, like, good [news]
S9: [Yes, I thought that also] (Confirmation)
S10: [Like, to do, there,] for good news,
but,
I mean,
this reading capitals ‘please’
S9: [Hmm hmm]
S10: [would also] indicate
that it’s negative,
that something might have happened
and, just, like, confirmation
that this ‘him’ is still alive.
S9: Hmm hmm.
S10: But, this could be, like,
in any context.
I mean,
it could be
that, erm, the- the author,
or the…
how do you say,
protagonist-
(S10 poses a question to himself. He is momentarily looking for a word; the question serves to order thoughts and to structurally find the lexical item)
S9: [Yeah]
<Giggle>
S10: Basically hears some ill news,
or, erm, has, erm,
like a bad dream?
(S10 is structuring his thoughts)
S9: Yes.
S10: And, erm, what happens
is she has this- has these thoughts.
(2 sec)
(S9 has not yet found the words to respond to S10’s scenarios. Contemplation. S9 has not yet found the words to respond to S10’s scenarios. Premature termination. S10 establishes a new scenario while the previous has not yet been completed and agreed upon)
S10: Or,
it could also be
that it’s just
this ‘him’ said
he would call,
but did not,
so far,
(S10 poses a question to himself. He is momentarily looking for a word; the question serves to order thoughts and to structurally find the lexical item)
S9: Ah, yes.
Could be everything.
S10: Basically,
[yeah]
S9: [Yes]
<Giggle>
S10: Basically.
Okay.
S9: It’s very…
Erm…
(3 sec)
S9: That’s one.
S10: Yeah.
S9: And the second?

(2 sec)

S10: Hmm [seco-]
S9: [I-]
S10: Hmm?
S9: The second scenario.

S10: Hmm.
   Could be
      that, erm...

(3 sec)

S10: I mean,
   that-
      For me, like, that’s a [sh-]
S9: [Yeah]
S10: Like, in my own head,
      that’s all making a ‘she’
S9: Hmm hmm
S10: Like, that she, erm...
      Okay,
      first scenario
         she is a lover?

And she wants the ‘him’- she wants
   him to call her?
S9: Yes.
S10: Because, erm,
   because they, erm, have an intense relationship.
S9: Hmm hmm.
S10: And she wants, just, confirmation of
       what is is real?

(Premature-termination)
(S10 has constructed multiple scenarios already. ‘And the second?’ does not seem to fit into the course of the conversation. This is an impending miscommunication)
(Request for clarification)
(Further explanation of the intended meaning)
(S10 agrees to establish another scenario and thus terminates the instance in which the interlocutors talked at cross purposes. S10 seemed startled at first and displayed difficulties in continuing speech, but rapidly recovered and established a new train of thought.
(Contemplation)
(Further explanation)
(new scenario)
(Pragmatic confirmation check)
(Repetition of the scenario last constructed before S9’s explicit question for a second scenario. S10 re-establishes a common ground by repeating the former scenario, neglecting the once constructed before, and asking for confirmation by uttering an interrogative)
(Pragmatic confirmation check)
S9: Yes.
S10: But on the other hand

\textit{it could also be}

\begin{align*}
\text{that this is a mother?} \\
\text{Or a father,} \\
\text{Th- th- it doesn’t really matter, erm,} \\
\text{in this case,} \\
\text{but also wants} \\
\text{his older son to call}
\end{align*}

(Premature termination and pragmatic confirmation check)

S9: \textbf{Call} \\
Yes.
S10: In the middle of the night. \\
There’s, like, a storm outside.
S9: Yeah.
S10: Hmm…
S9: \textbf{Anything to add?} \\
S10: Anything to add? \\
S9: No, \\
\textit{it could also be, erm,} \\
\textit{the son or the daughter.} \\
\textit{That c- called}

(Confirmation)

S10: Aaaah
S9: \textbf{That’s right?} \\
S10: Ooh! \\
\textit{That’s also a good point,} \\
\textit{yeah.} \\
\textit{Could be.} \\
\textit{Anything else,} \\
\textit{[or shall we] move on?}
S9: [No]
S10: Sure
S9: Move on.
\textless Giggle\textgreater

(Encouragement to speak)

(Pragmatic confirmation check)

(S10: So)

\textbf{what is your first idea?} \\

(Attempt to get S9 talking)

(7 sec)
S9: Erm… \\
\textit{I think it’s}

(2 sec)
S9: \textbf{A discussion} \\
\textit{between two…} \\
\textit{lovers, maybe?} \\
S10: Hmm hmm.

(Pragmatic confirmation check)
S9: Hmmm…
S10: That could be.
   And…
   **So, why do you think they are lovers?**
S9: Erm…

(3 sec)

S9: That someone, erm…
   wants to know, erm…
S10: Hmm hmm

(2 sec)

S9: **What the other did?**
S10: Hmm hmm,
   yeah.
   S9: But the other…
   Erm…

(5 sec)

S9: For him
   it’s normally w- wh-
   **But for the girlfriend…**
   Erm…
   She wants that he explain.

S10: Hmm hmm.
S9: What he has done.
S10: Hmm hmm.
S9: I think.
S10: So that’s one [scenario]
S9: [Yes]
   **Who’s what?**
S9: Yeah.
S10: Like, ‘A’ is a man,
   or ‘B’?
S9: Erm, ‘A’ is a…

(2 sec)

S9: Woman.
S10: Okay.
S9: ‘B’ is a man
S10: Okay.

And they’re lovers.

(Pragmatic confirmation check)

S9: Yes.

I think.

S10: Okay.

Yeah, that could be!

S9: <Giggle>

S10: Erm, maybe you thought about, like, two men standing and, like, watching something?

(Pragmatic confirmation check)

S9: Yes.

S10: Erm, or that, I can’t, like, an argument before.

Also.

(Premature termination)

And then just, like ‘A’ ask- asks ‘B’, like, saying anything- something about this, so, ‘what do you want me to say about the situation?’ And then ‘I don’t know anything’.

S9: Yes.

S10: ‘I have nothing to say’.

S9: Yeah.

S10: So, ‘nothing’?

I mean ‘that’s right’.

S9: Yeah.

S10: So, [basically]

S9: [Yes]

S10: For example, a wedding And there’s [like]

S9: Oh yeah

S10: Like, something happened

S9: Yes.

S10: And he’s like ‘what do you want me to say?’.

S9: <Giggle>

Yeah, could be.

S10: Could be.

I mean, they se- they seem to be, like, at least, on friendly terms? (Pragmatic confirmation check)
S9: Hmm hmm
S10: So…
   Maybe there’s, like, a conflict
   or something
   that [they don’t agree on]
S9: [Yeah, conflict]
S10: Yeah.
   Okay,
   [let’s move on!]
(Premature termination)
(Premature termination (uttered at the same time as S10’s premature termination). Both interlocutors seemed to be aware of problems in establishing a common ground and prevented the breakdown of communication by prematurely terminating the attempt)

<Giggle>
(Reading, 24 sec)

S10: So it could be, erm, yeah, the first one,
   so that, erm, someone is standing
   on the, like, the shoreline?
   Of the- the- the beach
   (Pragmatic confirmation check)
S9: Yes.
S10: And then, like, someone is-
S9: Inside?
S10: Yeah, yeah,
   in the water.
   Like, maybe not drowning,
   but maybe struggling?
   (Pragmatic confirmation check)
S9: Hmm hmm.
S10: And this is, like, the inner voice.
   So, ‘what are you standing there for?’
   And then
   there’s the inner dialogue
   with, erm, yeah,
   ‘it’s deep there’.
   So, and, th- the voice again,
   I mean,
   ‘It doesn’t matter.
   You just have to swim’.
S9: ‘Swim’.
   Yes, I thought
   it wa- could be, erm… parent
   who says
   (Premature termination)
‘I would catch hold
of him
if it were possible.
It’s deep’.
And he says it
to his child.

S10: Hmm.
S9: That’s
in the water.
S10: Ah, so
‘it doesn’t matter
if it’s deep’
S9: Hmm hmm.
S10: But what is ‘him’
in that case?  
(Pragmatic explicit question)

(3 sec)

S9: Erm…
Erm, his child.
Just the son or daughter.
S10: Hmm,
[okay]
S9: [Son]
I guess
S10: Hmm…
Also more
in a metaphoric sense.  
(Premature termination)
It could also be, like,
that, erm…

Like, opposite ends,
and, erm, also, like, here, like, lovers?

S9: Yes.
S10: And they have, like, a third person there, like,
who says that
S9: Or
S10: To this- this-
this person says, like,
to her
‘yeah it’s deep there,
but you have to swim’
Like, metaphoric, like make that swim, like
S9: Yeah.
S10: Go into the deep end?  
(Pragmatic confirmation check)
Could be.
S9: Yes.

(2 sec)

S9: Anything to add,
or any other scenario?
S10: Hmm…

(2 sec)

S9: I think it’s good, no?
S10: No, no, it’s fine!
S9: <Giggle>
S10: Then we’re done!

(8:18)
1.4.6 Transcription 6. (S11 – S12): Proficient (S12) – unproficient (S11).

(01:16)

S11: Did you read?
S12: Yes
S11: Erm, yeah, my first impertation’s- s-, erm, someone wants to call somebody? (Pragmatic confirmation check)
S12: Yeah.
S11: But, [and I]
S12: [I think] she wants, or I… Yeah, I think i- it’s a woman, because it was written by a woman. And she wants someone to call her. ‘Cause “let him telephone me now”, [so it’s like]
S11: [Yeah]
S12: She’s waiting for a call. And, I think that maybe it’s from her son, or husband, who’s in war, ‘cause it’s, like, I don’t know, it’s agony.

S11: Okay. Oh, you [mean-] (Contemplation) (Initiation of an explicit question with respect to the content. S11 probably understood the locutionary force, but needs S12 to establish the illocutionary force)

S12: That’s possible. But [yeah] (S12 neglects S11’s utterance and moves on to question the scenario)

S11: [Because] they- S12: But maybe she… I don’t know, it could be that she- she brought it after the war, but in that [situation]
S11: [Yeah]
S12: She wasn’t worrying. She was just waiting for an answer.

S11: But do you think that person who- who she, erm, wants to call her is still alive, or is it a dead person? ‘Cause, I think it’s possible, ‘cause she’s asking God to… call.

S12: Oh! I didn’t think about that. Maybe, but…

S11: Yeah, I was thinking:

S12: Then it [would be] Why would you ask God to, erm, let someone call you? <Giggle>

S11: [Why] would you ask God to, erm, let someone call you? <Giggle>

S12: Hmm, maybe she’s really into God; that she’s really religious or something.

S11: Yeah.

S12: And then she asks of God “can you really do that?”

like, “let him telephone me, here, now?” (Pragmatic confirmation check)

Erm…

S11: But why, erm, would she ask… to telephone… her, instead of she’ll call him by him- herself? (Self-repair)

S12: Yeah, that’s a good question. I’m thinking about that too.

S11: Erm…

(2 sec)

S12: I don’t know, maybe she tried?

S11: [Yeah]

S12: [But she] can’t reach him? (Pragmatic confirmation check)

And that’s
why she’s so upset
and is really begging God to get a telephone
from him.

S11: Yeah.
   It’s very desperate,
   so
S12: [Yeah <Giggle>]
S11: [“It’s such a] little thing” <Giggle>
S12: Yeah, that’s true,
   so that is one scenario…
   Erm…
S11: And another one?
S12: And another one,
   the next one.
   Erm…
S11: Maybe
   in one scenario,
   he’s alive
   and
   in one scenario
   he’s not <Giggle>.

S12: Or
   in another scenario
   it has nothing to do
   with war
S11: [And?]  
S12: [And,] erm…
   She’s dying! <Laugh>
   And she wants e- the last telephone
   from him,
   maybe.

S11: Yeah.
S12: Or-
S11: Yeah, maybe
   she’s
   in trouble
   [or something]
S12: [Yeah]
S11: She’s nothing, erm,
   she has no phone-
S12: Yeah
S11: So all
   she can do is pray to call
   [him]
S12: [Yeah]
S11: That’s possible.
S12: Yeah.
   So in one scenario
   sh- she’s waiting
   for someone
who’s in trouble,
  who went to war
  and in the next scenario
  she’s in trouble
S11: I’m thinking so.
  Good scenarios <Giggle>
S12: I think
  it’s
    [in the war]
S11: [(incomprehensible)]
S12: (incomprehensible; reading out loud)
    Yeah, okay.
    She’s
S11: [Yeah]
S12: [Definitely] into a relationship
  with the man
    or, yeah, “him”.
S11: Yeah.
S12: They’re really close.
S11: Or he’s family!
S12: Yeah.
S11: But not just a friend,
    I think.
S12: No.

(2 sec)

S11: Shall we go to the next one?
S12: Yeah!
    Let’s go.

(Reading, 35 sec)

S12: Are you finished
  reading?
S11: Yeah.
    I think
      it’s a difficult one <Giggle>
S12: Oh, I don’t think so.
    I know,
      very interesting scenarios <Giggle>
S11: <Laugh>
S12: No,
    the first scenario is, like,
      it’s a break-up
        and, things are, like, very difficult,
‘cause ‘A’ can’t understand it
  and be serious
    or something,
      ‘cause ‘B’ wants to break up.
But ‘B’ is like, yeah,
“I’ve said it all.”
“I don’t care anymore.”

S11: Yeah.
Or s-, erm,

(1 sec)

S11: ‘A’ thinks that ‘B’ is some secret.

(1 sec)

S11: So se-

S12: Yeah, that would be the- the second scenario.
S11: I don’t know.

I guess that ‘A’ is a- is a ‘she’.
<Listen>
S12: Yeah, me too,
‘cause she doesn’t just say
what she’s thinking.
She doesn’t want to-
Yeah, the second scenario
that one is, maybe is
that he has an affair,
or [had a-]

S11: [Yeah]
S12: Yeah.
[And wanna,
Yeah]
S11: [That’s what I meant
with the secret],

S12: Yeah,
yes that kind of secret,
erm...
And maybe ‘A’ found out
and, erm, wants to talk about it, but ‘B’ is like:
  “yeah, it happened.”
  <Laugh>

S11: Yeah.
Erm, well,
I’m thinking about that was,
maybe is, erm…
that maybe it’s something to do with, erm…

**How do you say that?**
With the police, so…

*Ik weet niet* Someone is- has done something.

S12: Hmm hmm.
A crime?

S11: Yeah.

S12: Oh,
and you were thinking-
You mean one of them,

S11: [Yeah, or-]
S12: [or ‘B’.

**or one of them is a police officer.**

S11: Yeah.

**Or with an accident.**
Then: “would you say something?”
“No don’t want to say [anything”]

S12: [Oooooh
That means he’s-
Or it’s more, like,
  it’s kind of a relationship
and they’re both really pissed off.

S11: Yeah.
S12: Oh.

Yeah,
I think they’re in a fight.

(5 sec)

S12: Or one of them got a really bad message from a doctor, like, you were ill, you had cancer or something and then they want to talk about it, but there’s nothing to say.

S11: Hmm hmm.

(5 sec)

S12: But I think this secret is a really good one.

S11: Yeah.

S12: It’s a secret that came out, yeah.

And the break-up!

S11: ‘Cause the person don’t wanna say something about it.

S12: Yeah.

And ‘A’ is a woman and she want to know, and ‘B’ is a man [and he doesn’t want to talk about it]


S12: Do you want to go to the next one?

S11: Yes.

S12: Oh, this one’s extremely short.

(Reading, 33 sec)

S12: Okay.

S11: It seems to me
like someone’s sinking
<Laugh>
S12: Yeah.
S11: Or can’t swim
    and someone’s still erm…
    Safe.
    He’s alive.
S12: Yeah.
    I think
    “I would catch hold
    of him
    if it were possible”
    Hmm…
    Maybe
(2 sec)
S12: I don’t know,
    maybe someone…
    jumped
    off a bridge
    or something.
    But two people,
    they saw it?
S11: Could you say
    “I would catch hold
    of him”…
    Does it mean
    you- you just, erm,
    [grabbing]
S12: [It would be true]
    if it was, like,
    in that situation,
    but not before.
S11: Yeah
S12: I don’t get it.
    Was it, like, you were also-
    it could be
    in the past
    and also not,
    I guess.
S11: But it isn’t possible
    because it’s deep.
S12: Hm, yeah.
S11: And you have to swim, just,
    so it’s in the water.
S12: Yeah.
    And maybe they’re
    on a boat?
[I don’t know]
S11: [Yeah]

(7 sec)

S11: But this one person is- is -s, erm, expectant to help
S12: Yeah.
S11: And the other is just saying, erm,
he has to help.
S12: Yeah.
And i- it’s a ‘him’
that is in the water.
S11: Yeah.
S12: But is it a man
or is it a child? (Pragmatic confirmation check)

(2 sec)

S11: Maybe it’s some son?
S12: Yeah,
Maybe it’s a mother talking
to the father
about a child.
S11: Yeah.
S12: Like,
the mother’s asking the father,
’cause she can’t swim,
maybe?
Or she doesn’t want to,
or, like, it was
in the eighteen hundreds
or something
and she had, like, this huge dress
and can’t swim
because of that?
And she’s expecting him to go
in there.
Yeah, maybe he’s afraid as well,
of the water,
because it’s deep.
S11: Yeah.
S12: [Yeah, may-]
S11: [‘Cause the other] person is saying
it doesn- doesn’t matter
if it’s deep,
[so]
S12: [Yeah]
S11: The other person is-
Yeah,
motivated to- to save him.
S12: Yeah.
S11: Or a man
S12: Yeah,
maybe it’s a boy,
it’s a child,
it’s their child,
so nothing matters,
just save him.
S11: Yeah.
S12: Maybe he was playing
and then got
from the boat
in the water,
because of the ball,
or something.
He was catching a ball.
The ball went
into the water
and then he wants to get it.

(2 sec)

S11: But what could be the other scenario?
S12: I don’t know.
S11: I don’t see it.
S12: Erm…

Maybe two men had a fight?

(1 sec)

S12: And one got
off the boat.
And, erm, it’s like
you had a fight
with him,
so you are supposed to get him back
on the boat.
S11: But maybe
it isn’t
on a boat.
S12: [Okay]
S11: [It could be]

S12: at a lake
or [at a stream]
S12: [Yeah,
that’s true]
S11: Yeah.
    It could be in some cold [and freezing] country
S12: [Yeah]
S11: So it’s…
    Then it’s a problem when you get in a *meer*.
    <Laugh>
S12: True.
S11: But then it w-
    It would also be a problem that it’s cold
    and not just that it’s deep.
    <Laugh>
S12: Yeah.
    Yeah, the deep…
S11: The deep will say someone can’t swim.
    I think.
S12: Yeah.

(1 sec)

S12: Because [he can’t see him]
S11: [Why would it then be a problem?]

(Pragmatic confirmation check)
S12: It would be, like, in the middle of a lake.
S11: [Yeah]
S12: [Or], you see across.
    It’s so deep there that you can’t see him.
    Right?

(Pragmatic confirmation check)

(2 sec)

S11: But the ‘him’ is definitely a person
    You could say that as well by a dog.
    “I’ll catch him.”
S12: Ah!
    A dog, yeah!
    <Giggle>
    Ah,
    but you’re right.

(S11 utters a different idea, thus abandoning S12’s train of thought and prematurely terminating the scenario. S12’s confirmation check has not been discussed as a result of either S11’s inability to code a response or S11’s unwillingness to discuss the specific scenario any further)

(False interpretation of S11’s
It’s definitely a person.

(1 sec)

S12: **But it could also be a dog!**
S11: <Laugh>
    I don’t know.
S12: It could be some kind of puppy.
S11: Yeah, could be!
    Then it’s just their little man
    <Giggle>
S12: <Giggle>
    Yeah.

(5 sec)

S11: That’s all, I think.
S12: Yeah, here it’s, like, one or two scenarios
S11: Yeah.
S12: One or two, so that’s okay.
    Maybe there’s another one or something.
S11: Yeah, so the relationship is family.
S12: Yeah.
    Okay.
S11: Or the dog <Laugh>
S12: <Laugh>
    The family dog <Giggle>
S11: Okay, we’re finished.
(14:03)
1.4.7 Transcription 7. Unproficient – unproficient (S13 – S14).

(00:52)

S13: Okay.
Did you read it?
S14: Hmm hmm!
S13: Okay.
S14: Do you have an idea?
S13: Erm, yes!
Okay,
I thought about…
a girl and
she wants a boy to call her,
because they…
went out

and, maybe,
on a date? (Pragmatic confirmation check)
S14: Hmm hmm!
S13: And, erm,
she likes him,
because…
She says
that she wants him to call her,
so I guess she likes him

and he is a bit, erm, hard to get? (Pragmatic confirmation check)
S14: <Laugh>
S13: Erm,
S14: Could be.
S13: Yeah,
that’s what I thought.
What did you [think?]
S14: [Yeah],
Or,
that’s one
and I thought
that, maybe, logically, erm…
It could be
that, maybe, it’s some mother’s son.
Maybe, just, he said
that he would call back,
but he didn’t.

and maybe she’s [now worried]
S13: [Ooooh, yeah]
S14: She could be scared
that something happened
to him.
She thinks
he might have had an accident,
or something like that,
S13: Ah, yeah.
S14: It could also [be-]
S13: [Ah, yeah]
    That could be true!
    My mother would say things
    like that
S14: Also because,
    it sounds very religious,
    with the “dear God”
    and she’s basically praying,
    so I thought,
    maybe that would be-
    **as if one would be the older person**
    <Cough>
    You could think <Sniff>

(1 sec)

S14: ‘Cause [she says “God”]-

S13: [Yeah, that’s true],
    **but**
S14: “And I won’t ask anything else of you”
S13: But, erm…

(2 sec)

S13: Yeah,
    I think
    more people say, erm, “God”
S14: [Yeah]

S13: [But- but-] because…
    Yeah, let me-, erm,
    [er, yeah…]
S14: [Yeah], right.

(1 sec)

S13: “I won’t ask anything else of you”
    Yeah, that- is a bit…
    Religious.

(Premature termination of the argument by acquiescing to the fact that it is a religious scenario.)

(Explaination of the preceding idea. The pause may have been interpreted as a sign of S13’s lack of understanding or her disagreeing with the scenario. Both interpretations would require further explanation of the scenario.)

(Initiation of contradiction. The constructed scenario seems to be inappropriate for S13, who wishes to introduce an argument with respect to why it is not appropriate)

(Start of the contradicting argument: S13 introduces non-religious people in the argument and may wish to exemplify why she thinks that the scenario is not necessarily a religious one)

(Struggle to find words)
S14: Yeah it’s-
    So sounds pretty religious.
    “It would be so little to you, God.
    Such a little [thing.]

S13: [Yes]
S14: It’s not much.”
    But it could be both
S13: Both! Yes.
S14: And…
S13: Erm, what do you think, erm…
    Why do you think that the boy is the caller?
S14: In your scenario?

S13: No,
    in you-
S14: Maybe because, I don’t know really,
    maybe he said tha- he’d call,
    that he wouldn’t end up at…
    Could be.
    I don’t know [<Laugh>]
S13: [Could be]
    That’s good <Laugh>
    Yeah, erm… <Sniff>

(2 sec)
S14: Any other ideas?

S13: Erm…
S14: Not at all? <Giggle>
S13: <Laugh>

S13 may have been unable to find the correct words to construct the argument, which resulted in S13’s acceptance of the situation

(Recognition and acceptance of the prematurely terminated alternative scenario)

(Self-repair)

(Explicit question to clarify the scenario at hand. The preceding utterance concerned S14’s scenario. Not a linguistically related question, but a question intended to create a common ground on a pragmatic level)

(Mutual understanding)

(Explicit question with respect to the construction of another scenario. Not linguistically based)

(Contemplation)

(S14 interpreted S13’s hesitation as a failure to think of a next scenario, but it may well be a failure to code thought into speech. S13 has proven to display difficulties in coding thoughts in English in contradicting S14’s argument before, which resulted in a premature termination of the
task. S13 may, again, be struggling to find the right words)

(Initiation of the next scenario, which, again, proves to be difficult in terms of communicating ideas) (S14, probably helpfully, interjects by providing a possible scenario, hereby prematurely terminating S13’s attempt to construct one)

Okay, maybe…
Erm,

S14: It could also be that they’re in a situation, like, erm…

(1 sec)

S14: Maybe a person applied for a job or something?

S13: Yeah!
[Could be-
S14: [And he’s] expecting the call.
S13: Yeah.
S14: To get the job.
S13: Or, erm, someone is in the hospital
S14: [Could also be]
S13: [Maybe, erm,] Maybe it’s a man.
*Oh, nee*
   Oh, no,
   it’s a wife.
   And then her man is in the hospital
   and she wants the doctor to call or something.

S14: Could also be.
   May be, yeah!
   Or even a different relation or something.

S13: Yes.
S14: And she’s waiting.
S13: Yes
S14: Yeah
S13: Shall we switch To the-
S14: Yeah.
   Let’s go to next page <Giggle>
S13: <Giggle>
   Erm…

(29 sec)

S13: This could be
in court, maybe.
   Or, maybe not
   in court,
but I didn’t know
   how to say
   wh- the police
   is asking [questions?]

S14: [Oh, an] *interrogation*.
S13: Yeah, that <Sniff>.
S14: Yeah!
   Could be.

S13: Or it’s
   in court,
   really.

(1 sec)

S13: *That the judge is asking questions?*
   [So it could be
   in] court.
S14: [Oh yeah!]
S13: But maybe also between two-
   I don’t know-
   A couple,
   or something.
   And then one caught
   the other person doing something
   and [then]
S14: Ooooh…
S13: <Giggle> I mean
   that could [also be]
S14: <Giggle> Yeah,
   that could be as well.
S13: <Cough>
S14: That one person wants the other
   to confess something.
S13: Maybe they cheated!
S14: And that person saw [<Laugh>]
S13: [Yes!] <Laugh>
S14: [Ah]
S13: I don’t think
   There’s anything to confess
S14: <Laugh>
S13: ‘Cause-, ah,
   but,
   yes.
S14: Yeah.

(Indication of possible unclarity. 
S13 did not know the word
‘interrogation’, so the speaker
constructed a scenario that was
close to the one that was actually
intended)
(Raising intonation to implicate a
request for S14’s help in
constructing mutual
understanding; mutual
understanding)

(Further explanation)
(Contemplation)
(Further explanation and
pragmatic confirmation check)
(Mutual understanding)
S13: Erm, or, erm,
   Erm,

(1 sec)

S14: It also could be
   in court
   or just a couple,
   I think.

S13: I think
   it’s-
   where-, wherever it is,
   it is always nega-
   tive.
   Yeah, I mean-

S14: Yeah.
S13: Angry,
   right?

S14: It sounds negative,
   yeah <Sniff>.
S13: Yes.
   Is there as situation
   where this could be positive?

(2 sec)

S14: I don’t think so! [<Laugh>]
S13: [<Laugh>] I don’t think so
S14: No,
   I wouldn’t know
   which scenario.
   Any other ideas
   [besides this one?]
S13: [Erm…]
   Yes.
   Okay. Erm <Laugh>
S14: <Giggle>

(1 sec)

S13: It’s a classroom <Cough>
   A classroom, erm,
   someone is, erm, making a test
   and he or she, erm, cheated.
   And then, erm, a teacher [asking]
S14: Hmm hmm.
S13: “What are you doing?”
   “Oh, nothing”
S14: Hmm hmm,
   yeah, true.

  But that’s generally
**in a classroom**
*that the- e- the teacher asks them to say how they have cheated.*

S13: **Oh yeah!**
Yeah, could be also.

S14: I could have a thing to say [Laugh]
S13: [Laugh]

S14: I mean
I could argue,
but the person doesn’t know
what to say.

S13: No <Giggle>
S14: Erm,
do you want to move on
to the next one?

S13: Yeah.
I think it’s everything.

(Reading, 25 sec)

S13: **This “catch hold of him” means**
**I would, like, ‘grab him’**
[*of zo?*]

S14: [Yeah,]
I think so!
Yeah,
so…

(2 sec)

S14: It sounds
like one person is drowning
and this other person needs to save him.

S13: Yes.
It sounds [like that]
S14: [Something like that] <Giggle>

(1 sec)

S13: Erm, I don’t know;
it reminds me
of, erm, *The Lion King*, er, movie,
but then-

S14: <Laugh>
S13: Erm, one of the lions falling,
but it’s not
in water,
but I, just, thought
that it was true. <Giggle>

S14: <Giggle>
S13: Yeah.
   Could be the little kids,
   oh!
   It’s a family
   on vacation
   and then the kid didn’t have erm…
   Those…
   inflatable…

S14: <Giggle> Yeah
S13: **Do you know**
   **what it’s called?**
(Semantic explicit question.
Attempt to clarify through
description and gestures)

S14: Erm,
(2 sec)
S14: Not really,
   **swimming aids,**
   I [don’t know]
S13: [Yeah!]
   Ah, well,
   **swimming aids then,**
   which, well,
   he or she want
   to swim
   and then-
   to could dive, erm, er…
   Her father had to save him.
S14: Ah [yeah]
S13: [<Giggle>]
S14: <Giggle>
S13: Well,
   I’m just making something up.
S14: Yeah, but,
   well.
   Could be.
   Or…
(1 sec)
S14: It could also be,
   maybe,
   if it’s like, erm,
   **It could also be a crime story**
   and then one person is escaping
   and then the person should catch him.
   But he doesn’t.
   So, that he’s escaping through the water,
   basically.
S13: Erm, **as if the…**
   **The second person is the police,**
   (S13 requests clarification with
*of zo?*

S14: Yeah, the police, or someone who wants to catch [him]

S13: [Ah, yeah. Okay]

S14: And the other is the person escaping through the water and the other person [that wants to catch him]

S13: [Yeah]

S14: Or is afraid of swimming, because it’s deep [<Laugh>]

S13: [<Laugh>]

S14: That could also be. Erm…

(1 sec)

S14: Yeah! Erm…

(5 sec)


Erm, someone was walking his dog and then the dog, erm, yeah, jumps into a pond?

So, and then, erm, someone said “what are you standing there for?”

S14: So that someone should save the [dog?] (Explicit question with respect to the previously constructed scenario. Again, a clarification of the mental image and creation of common ground)

S13: [Yes]

S14: That could also be, but in, yeah…

(1 sec)
S14: It does seem
   like someone is to catch someone <Giggle>
   [If you know
       what I mean]
S13: [Oh, yeah!]
   [Yeah, I think so too]
S14: ['Cause that’s-]
S13: Erm…
S14: I think that-
   Do you know any other?

(2 sec)
S13: No.
   ‘Cause in all situations
       there is someone
           falling
               into water.
   And someone has to rescue him.
   [Does that make sense?]
S14: [Yeah, yeah]
   Hmmmm…
       It could be a crime,
           or just someone drowning
               or something.
S13: Yes.
   There’s so many options [&lt;Laugh&gt;]
S14: [&lt;Laugh&gt;]
S13: Erm,
   I don’t know
       how long we’ve spoken.
       Any idea if we have to…
S14: Ten minutes.
S13: Can you see that?
S14: Yeah &lt;Laugh&gt;
S13: Oh!
S14: But I think
   that,
       or I don- I don’t have the answer.
S13: No.
   He told me
       it would take about ten minutes,
           s- like that.
S14: Okay!
S13: Okay!

(10:33)
1.4.8 Transcription 8. Unproficient – unproficient (S15-S16).

(00:33)

S15: Okay, now in English.
S16: <Giggle> Yes.
S15: Hmm… Did you read it?
S16: Yeah.
S15: Okay.

Two possible scenarios.

(14 sec) (Contemplation. May be either a struggle to form scenarios or difficulties in communicating ideas)

S15: So, someone wants a phone call.
S16: Yeah.
S15: And [why?] S16: [Maybe it] could be that someone’s in love with someone and…-
S15: Doesn’t call.
S16: Yeah[<Laugh>]
S15: [<Laugh>]
S16: No.
I think that she’s waiting for the call and, yeah… [<Giggle>]
S15: [<Giggle>]
S16: Not wait anymore.
S15: She’s praying to God that it would.
S16: <Laugh>

(2 sec)

S16: Erm, yeah, [she- ]
S15: [Hm]
S16: -wanted then that he would call and nothing else.
S16: Yeah.
   <Laugh>
   I don’t know.

S15: And why?
   Erm, she’s
   in love
   and he isn’t
   [<Laugh>]

S16: [<Laugh>]
S15: Yeah.
   That could be it.

S15: Erm,
   and other scenarios.
   Hmmm...

S16: [And it] could be
   that someone
   phoned somebody else
   and was sick

S15: Yeah.
S16: and it’s a…
   that it’s…

S15: He or she wants to know...

S16: Yeah, let me think

so...

*Krankenhaus*

*S16 realises that they do not yet have a common ground. The speaker requests time to process and order her thoughts (Continuation of the struggle to find the right word. S16, then, code-switches to the L1, i.e. German, to order her thoughts and, consequently, code-switches to the L1 of the interlocutor, i.e. Dutch, to request a lexical item as an ultimate attempt to establish a common ground) (Functional code-switch)*

*S16 provided the word with which they were struggling in Dutch to*
Hospital!
S16: **Hospital,** yes!
S15: And, erm, they wait for the, erm, **what do you call it...?**
**Phone call** Because they’re having an operation **of zoiets**
S16: **Yeah.** And the call isn’t coming, so the operation is…
S15: Going to be late, yes.
S16: **Okay, next one!**
[<Laugh>]
S15: [<Laugh>]

Fine.
S16: I don’t know any more.
S15: No. Hmmm...

(Reading, 10 sec)
S16: Oh, okay, that’s *moeilijk*

(Reading, 15 sec)
S16: <Giggle> Okay.
S15: The first one is two people breaking up or something.
<Giggle>
S16: Yeah.
S15: “I don’t have anything to say” <Laugh>
S16: Hmm hmm.

(3 sec)
S16: Maybe they are-
have a conflict  
and i- er, one, erm,  
is fighting  
for a relation,  
but [er-]

S15: **There is no explanation**
S16: <Giggle>

**There's no explanation**

S15: Or he or she doesn’t wanna give an explanation.
S16: Yeah.

Or one thing else is, erm,  
something happened  
that isn’t- that is not okay  
and the other one think  
that it’s a normal thing.  
That it doesn’t really matter.  
That it isn’t important  
[<Laugh>]

S15: [<Laugh>]

**Hmmm…**

Or one does not know  
what happened.  
Then they-

**That's why**

**they have nothing to say?**

S16: I don’t know.

That could be.

(2 sec)

S15: Hmmm…

(1 sec)

S16: Yes.

<Sigh>

S15: Or they just  
in a fight.  
And they’re both, erm, so angry  
that they won- don’t want to…

S16: **Say anything about-**
S15: Yes.
S16: Yeah.

**Let me think…**

**Hmmm…**

(2 sec)

S16: Hmm…
S15: Yeah,
it could be a boyfriend and girlfriend or something, or family, or…

S16: Yeah.
S15: Friends
  <Giggle>
S16: Everything.
S15: Everything.
S16: Erm…
  “what do you want me to say”
S15: Yeah, and “there’s nothing to say”.
  Hmm…

(5 sec)

S15: Most likely that one messed it up so bad that the other one…
S16: Yeah.
S15: Has nothing to say anything about it.
S16: That’s true.

(2 sec)

S16: Hmmm…
  I don’t know what I could say about it.

(10 sec)

S15: Yeah.
S16: Maybe one of them relationship have *iets* - had *iets*
  *met* someone else And
S15: <Giggle>
S16: Yeah, Dutch <Giggle>
S15: Yeah <Giggle>

(2 sec)

S16: Hmmm…
  I don’t know anything else; how to say about-
[<Giggle>]

S15: [Yeah,]  
  just angry.  
  Very angry.
S16: Yeah.

I think that also
S15: Okay,  
  next one?
S16: Yes, please  
  <Laugh>

(Reading, 28 sec)

S16: <Giggle>
S15: Seems like it’s  
S16: “you must catch…”

(2 sec)

S15: “you must swim”,  
  so maybe someone fell  
  in the water  
  and then the other one  
  doesn’t want to jump in?
S16: Yeah,  
  I think there’s a-  
  Maybe this other is drowning  
  or swimming  
  and the other must *spring*  
  from the- from the *plank*
S15: Yeah,  
  yeah!
S16: And then-  
  and then the other should…  
  I don’t know.

(2 sec)

S16: Because…  
S15: He’s scared  
  because it’s deep there?  
  <Giggle>

(Premature termination of the scenario constructed by S16, in which one of the protagonists cheated on the other. The ‘angry’ part of the utterance does carry a similar intention, but cannot be interpreted as being a continuation of S16’s utterance, since no signs of comprehension have been stated)

(Pragmatic confirmation check)

(Confirmation)

(Continuation of scenario)

(Confirmation)

(Explicitly stating the difficulties in communicating ideas)

(Introduction of a further explanation)

(Pragmatic confirmation check and continuation of a scenario. S15 interpreted S16’s utterance as an introduction of the second speaker. This speaker encourages the other protagonist to go in the water, which is what S16 probably tried to convey. S15 continues the scenario by uttering a reason for
S16: Yeah.
   <Giggle>
S15: But,
   “you must swim”.
   It’s like someone is…
S16: I guess someone is
   in [danger]
S15: [Is in] danger,
   yeah.
S16: Yeah.
S15: And “what are you standing there for?”
   I mean,
   **what- why the waiting?**
   (Self-repair)
(1 sec)
S15: Or something.
S16: Yeah.
S15: **It’s the-**
   Hmmmm…
S16: **That he can’t swim**
   **himself,**
   or something
   <Giggle>
S15: Maybe it’s another little push,
   so “do it now”
S16: Yeah.
S15: “Go there and get him”
   Hmmmm…
(6 sec)
S15: **I don’t understand**
   **this sentence:**
   “I would catch hold
   of him
   if it were possible”
S16: Yeah.
   It sounds, erm,
S15: [Like-]
S16: **It is bur- erm, *redden*”
   from (uninterpretable).
   (Self-repair and functional code-
   switching to German)
(1 sec)
S15: Yes
S16: And to catch him
   *of zo*
S15: Yeah, it’s too late to, erm…

(3 sec)

S16: **Maybe it’s erm-**

that someone can’t *red* the other one

and that someone tougher so they must do it by themselves

nobo- nobody can help them.

S15: Yeah.

S16: And then the-

Erm…

**It’s their decision**

to do things.

S15: Yeah.

If it was possible

he would do it,

but he’s afraid,

or something? (Pragmatic confirmation check)

S16: Hmm hmm, Yeah.

(4 sec)

S15: But it doesn’t matter

if it’s deep in the water.

It’s so deep that he’s scared of it.

(1 sec)

S16: Yeah.

(2 sec)

S16: Yeah, well, you see, maybe that, erm…

That it’s not, erm…

**Not good?**

Bad. (Incomprehensible)

S15: Yeah, It’s not bad.

S16: Yeah, it’s not- Yeah, not bad
and if it was, erm, a *zehr* good thing
and *zehr* doomed
and, erm, *zehr*…

Good… doomed?

S15: Erm…

S16: Then…

S15: Yeah.
S16: Yeah,
    I don’t know
    how to say it,
    *Maar*

    [Laugh]
    But

S15: [Laugh]
I understand.

S16: It is difficult to explain.
    Hmmmm…

(3 sec)

S16: If you can do it-
    something…
    Then, then, then what d-
    How does the-
    Yeah,

    how difficult it is
    [for-]

S15: [Yeah], yeah.
    Hmm hmm
S16: Don’t want it,
    Yeah,
    you have to do it.

S15: Yeah,
    just do it,
    so you have to learn,
    so you better try?

S16: Yeah,
    that way works good.
S15: So just jump
    in the water
    and see you, like-

S16: What will happen?
S15: Yeah [<Giggle>]
S16: [Yeah <Laugh>]

(Struggle for words and incomprehensible speech)
(The intended meaning has not been interpreted as a result of incomprehensible speech)
(Initiation of further explanation, but premature termination as a result of incapability of communicating ideas)
(Encouraging further explanation)
(Expression of the incapability of stating the scenario in English)
(Understanding of the inability of communicating ideas)
(Further explanation)
(Self-repair)
(Uttering understanding. May be a false indication to move to the next topic. Premature termination)
(Pragmatic explicit question)
(Confirmation)
(Pragmatic confirmation check)
Someone will be there.

(1 sec)

S15: But who are these people?
S16: Oh yeah,  
  erm…

(2 sec)

S16: Could be a rerun.  
  It could [be, yeah]
S15: [Hmm]
S16: **As the last scenario.**  
  (Further explanation)
  Could be child  
  with his father [or mother]
S15: [Yeah]
S16: Erm…
S15: Could be someone  
  with an instructor  
    who’s saying  
      you have to do it
S16: Yeah.
S15: Yeah.
S16: Yeah,  
  *als in*,
  erm,  
    if it is a scenario  
      where a man must make a difficult decision  
        it could, erm…  
          that he don’t want to swim
S15: Yeah,  
  yeah,  
    could be.
S16: A man, erm, someone  
  who just, erm…  
    stopped there to rescue.
S15: Yeah!
S16: Must erm,  
  and must take now a decision,  
    but, erm…
S15: Yeah,  
  doesn’t know  
    what to do.
S16: Hmm.
S15: <Cough>

(3 sec)

S16: Yeah,
I think
that was everything.
<Laugh>

S15: <Giggle>
S16: I know
about
S15: Yeah.
S16: **I can think** (Self-repair)
about
S15: I don’t know
any more.

(1 sec)

S16: There’s another one,
or?
S15: No
[They] are gone.
S16: No.
I’ll call Michiel.
<Giggle>
S15: <Giggle>

(12:08)
1.4.9 Transcription 9. Unproficient – unproficient (S17 – S18).

(00:53)

S17: I think it’s a women. Who… it’s worried about someone?

**Someone he loved?**

(S18: Yes.)

S17: Erm…

S18: And she waits for a call

S17: Yeah!

And she, erm… **believes in God?**

(S18: Yes.)

(Pragmatic confirmation check)

S17: Yeah. And she’s praying for help from God, erm, so, erm her loved one will call. Maybe she’s afraid Erm, there’s happened a accident or something.

(a sec)

S17: [For the] date?

S18: After the date, yeah.

S17: Oh [yeah]

S18: [For the] date?

S17: After the date, yeah.

S18: And she seems a little bit flu- frustrated.

(5 sec)

S17: “Such a littl- little thing”

(3 sec)

S18: And I think, erm,
she does not of- often, erm, pray to God.

(2 sec)

S17: Yeah.

**Why do you think she doesn’t…**

often pray **to God?**

(Pragmatic explicit question)

S18: Hmm…

‘Cause, erm…

(1 sec)

S18: She says that it’s a little thing for her and… <Laugh>

(4 sec)

S17: Hmm…

(5 sec)

S18: But it seems, erm, to be very important for her that he calls her.

S17: Yeah, he could be warn him.

Family, maybe.

S18: Yes, family.

Erm, a son or a daughter.

(5 sec)

S17: Yeah.

**I don’t know what to say any more.**

(Indication of difficulties in constructing more scenarios)

S18: Yeah, perhaps it’s someone or family who is on vacation and doesn’t call.

S17: Yeah,
maybe the- there’s happened a…

A accident

S18: Oh, [yes]
S17: [may-]
   Like, erm..
S18: **Hard storm**
   or something
   like that.

   **In the… Vacation.**

S17: **Or like a plane [fell down]**

S18: [Yes]
S17: In the air.
   Erm, she’s afraid, erm,
   her son or daughter is
   in the [plain]

S18: [Yes]
S17: She wants to know
   if [she’s still okay]
S18: [I- if they’re still alive]
S17: Yeah.

(2 sec)

S17: Yeah.
S18: <Laugh>
S17: [Next!]
S18: [Want to go
to the next one?]
   Okay.

(Reading, 27 sec)

S17: It sounds
   like there’s a fight
   between two persons.
   **Erm, a discussion,**
   or…

(5 sec)

S17: **“What do you want me to say?”**
   Yeah.
S18: Yeah, erm…
   **Yes.**
   [That’s possible]
S17: [“I have nothing to say”]
   Yeah, it sounds

(S18’s interpretation of ‘accident’)

(Further explanation of the original intention of ‘accident’ to get back on the same page)

(Mutual understanding)

(Self-repair. ‘Discussion’ may be interpreted more easily for S18 than ‘fight’, since it’s closer to both the German and the Dutch equivalent)

(Further explanation following contemplation)

(Understanding of the scenario that is constructed by S17, but the initial hesitation hints at a disagreement. S18 possibly has a
Like this…

(1 sec)

S17: Maybe, fight?
    Or argument.
S18: Yeah,
    someone is, erm…
    Perhaps…

*Wie sagt mann dass*
    Agry [and]

S17: [Yeah]
S18: The other one asks
    what happened.

(4 sec)

S17: one person-
    Person ‘A’ wants to talk
    about it.
    Person ‘B’…
    Erm…
    Doesn’t feel anything
    but talking.
S18: [Yes]
S17: [She-] He or she wants…
S18: She’s angry perhaps.
S17: Yeah.
S18: But perhaps
    if she don’t know
    why she’s angry.
S17: Yeah.
S18: Or it’s-
    She doesn’t want to say it.

(2 sec)

S17: *Of*- Or she doesn’t know
    how to…
    Erm…
S18: Hmm.
    [Yes]
S17: [To explain] her feelings

(12 sec)

S18: Perhaps it’s a talk
    between a, erm…
    some married people
S17: Hmm hmm
(2 sec)

S17: Erm…

“Who are these people, how are they related to each other, what is happening, and why is this happening?”

S18: Yeah, erm, perhaps it’s a wife and man.

It’s an argument, or someone- some is angry and this other one want to know why he’s angry, or something

S17: Hmm…

I think person ‘A’ is a- a woman.

I [think]-

S18: [Yes]

S17: Women wants to talk all the time and men

S18: Yes.

S17: Don’t want to talk. So I think person ‘A’ is a women- woman and person ‘B’ is a man.

S18: Yes.

<Laugh>

S17: Yeah, I think they are partners.

S18: Yes. Partners, erm…

(1 sec)

S17: Yeah.

S18: Okay.

S17: Next?

S18: *Ja*, next.

(Reading, 32 sec)

S17: What is happening?

S18: That’s a question <Laugh>
S17: Maybe it’s someone fell in the water? It’s deep there and they want to… (Pragmatic confirmation check)

S18: Yes. What means “what are you standing there for?” (Semantic explicit question)

S18: if someone wait to, erm… [rescue] them? (Further explanation and possibly an answer to S18’s own question)

S17: [Yeah] (Explanation of the scenario rather than explanation of the explicit question posited by S18. Premature termination)

S17: Maybe, erm… the person doesn’t know what to do. Maybe… Shocked!

S18: Yes. S17: And, erm, and then… Frozen!

S18: [And it’s-] S17: [Afraid for the] deep. S18: Yes. S17: It’s deep there. Maybe not- not a good swimmer.

S18: “I would catch hold of him?” (Semantic explicit question)

Catch hold…
S17: It sounds like he or she already tried to save him.
   “I would catch hold of him if it [were possible]"
S18: Yes.
S17: So he tried before, but it’s… [didn’t work]
S18: [It seems-]
   Yes.
   It seems that he can’t get him, or can’t rescue, because he’s, erm, self-
S17: [Afraid of his own life]
S18: [Afraid for the water] (Self-repair)
   or something. Yeah.
S17: Maybe afraid to-
   It’s going to happen something to him or herself? (Pragmatic confirmation check)
   (Contemplation)
S17: But what I don’t understand is why the other person, erm… [Doesn’t try it]
S18: [Doesn’t do-] Yes.
S17: Him or herself.
S18: Yes. [That’s the question]
S17: “What are you standing there for?”
   I-
   Hmm, yeah.
   (1 sec)
S17: I would say [try to get him]
S18: [Why-] [We can do-] [Yeah.]
   With] two persons. Perhaps.
S17: We can do more than by your own.

(6 sec)
S18: Perhaps it’s a…

**Someone who learnt swimming?** (Pragmatic confirmation check)

Or *so*

That, erm…

They must try to swim

or something

like that.

But…

**Catch.** (Difficulties with the utterance ‘catch hold’)

(1 sec)
S17: Oh, erm, you mean, erm
S18: [Erm, that’s, erm]
S17: [That, erm]

**That they are just the two of them?** (Pragmatic explicit question)

And one of them, [erm, has to learn to swim.]

S18: [Learns swimming. Yes, yes.]

**There’s a te-** (Further explanation)

If there was a teacher, perhaps.

“What are you standing there for?”

S17: Yeah. “Just go!”

(2 sec)
S18: That could be possible too, but
S17: But then, I don’t know, erm, what they mean with [“I would catch hold of him”]

S18: [“Catch hold of him”]
S17: yes. “If it were possible”.
S18: “Catch hold of him”, yeah,
it’s a question.
    “Catch hold”.
S17: “But it’s deep there”
    That means
    he or she can’t stand there?  (Pragmatic confirmation check)
S18: Yes,
    perhaps.
S17: And if you can’t stand,
    what can’t- can’t you hold,
    then?  (Pragmatic confirmation check)
S18: Yes.
    He must hold it,
    so-
S17: Erm…
(2 sec)
S17: Well,
    I don’t know.
S18: <Laugh>
(10 sec)
S18: Hmm.
S17: Hmm,
    yeah,
    I wouldn’t-
    I think
    this is it.
S18: Yes.
S17: Yeah.
(11:15)