This volume places centrally the temporal nature of interactive language use. It explores the ways in which talk-in-interaction displays sensitivity to its temporal embeddedness using data from English, Estonian, French, German, Hebrew, and Swedish. The collection furthers the research agenda of examining language from an interactional perspective, assembling leading scholars in the allied approaches of conversation analysis, interactional linguistics, emergent grammar, on-line syntax, and dialogism. The detailed empirical studies collectively demonstrate the profound implications of examining grammar not as a system of decontextualized static mental structures, but as a practical and flexible resource inextricably bound to its temporal point of production.

While time is typically studied in linguistics in terms of tense and aspect, the perspective taken in this volume is rooted in a more phenomenological understanding. As the editors Arnulf Deppermann and Susanne Günther observe in their introduction, “chronological time is perceived with reference to lived temporality. Lived temporality is relevance-structured time. Time figures in actions in terms of expectations, opportunities and exigencies for action” (p. 3, emphasis added). This praxeological action-based view of language forces analysts to examine language with different conceptual tools. To this end, the editors introduce the notions that run throughout the volume: retrospection, projection, sequentiality, simultaneity, multimodal temporalities, and the temporality of interactional units. The volume is organized into three sections. Section I addresses the mechanistic underpinnings of language use in time. These chapters describe in depth the generic processes of projection, retrospection, structural latency, and unit expansion. Section II shows these temporal processes at work in five language-specific constructions. And Section III focuses on the temporal relationship between talk and other communicative modalities, such as gesture, manual action, and whole-body movement.

Section I (“Mechanisms of temporality in interaction”) features three contributions. In the first (“The temporality of language in interaction: Projection and latency”), Peter Auer summarizes and extends much of his recent reflections about
‘on-line grammar’. Using examples from German conversation, he articulates two fundamental processes used for the synchronization of participants’ minds in interaction – projection and latency. Both processes are exhibited in virtually every conversational utterance. Projection refers to speakers’ on-line predictions of structural slots in upcoming talk, mostly based on participants’ shared knowledge of grammar. This forward-directed process contrasts with latency, which refers to the many ways in which an utterance links back to prior talk, recycling and reassembling the latently available materials found there. Auer’s discussion of projection is lucid, well supported by the examples, and of transparent consequence for participants and for linguistic theory (i.e., his insistence on grammar as something for the projection of structural slots in talk). I wasn’t quite able to grasp the precise mechanism at work behind latency. Fortunately, it became clearer what was intended by the notion in the later chapters, which exemplified it, to my mind, in a more comprehensible way.

Arnulf Deppermann’s chapter (“Retrospection and understanding in interaction”) addresses the backwards-looking process of retrospection, which refers to how a current speaker uses the prior talk for generating, maintaining, or repairing understanding in conversation. He describes how intersubjective understanding, by means of retrospective mechanisms, is woven into the very turn-by-turn structure of conversation. Using German data, he demonstrates three systematically available positions in talk that participants use in doing intersubjective work. After some initial turn-to-be-understood, second position is reserved for demonstrating understanding, third position for confirming that understanding, and fourth position for restoring possible misunderstandings. I can easily see this chapter serving as an introduction to the interactional perspective on the subject of understanding. It clearly shows how the structural organization of talk systematically affords intersubjective coordination, and it contextualizes this approach relative to the treatment of understanding in other disciplines.

In “Ephemeral grammar: At the far end of emergence”, Cecilia Ford and Barbara Fox show how interactional units (words, clauses, turns, sequences, etc.) are eminently revisable and expandable. Their aim with this chapter is to refine a hypothesis in the program of emergent grammar, namely, that constructions move ever toward sedimentation. Using single case analysis of an extended turn-at-talk in American English, they argue that speakers can create “a locally emergent adaptation of a generic turn-design practice” (p. 114). In other words, not every constructional format is subject to grammaticization, but what’s more important for participants is the action being implemented through that format for that specific occasion of use. The chapter is a vivid illustration of the utility of conversation analytic methods for researching language in use. It deftly blends linguistic concerns (the grammaticization of constructions) with interactional ones (the sensitivity of
recurrent practices to local situated contingencies). Though authors are appropriately cautious in tone, I think they touch on a substantive line of inquiry – investigating the degree to which, and the precise places where, interactional practices are coextensive with grammatical processes (conventionalization, pragmatised, etc.) – and show through their analysis an empirically grounded way to proceed.

Section II (“Temporally-structured constructions: A temporal perspective on syntactic constructions”) includes five chapters on specific constructions in four languages. In the first chapter (“Temporality and the emergence of a construction: A discourse approach to sluicing”), Paul Hopper continues the fruitful project of taking traditional syntactic analyses and respecifying them as motivated by discourse considerations. He addresses the phenomenon of ‘sluicing’, which, by syntactic accounts, refers to a wh-word that has its ellipted/deleted referent in some antecedent clause (e.g., the *when* in “Henry will submit his paper to ‘Language’, but I don’t know when.”, p. 127). Hopper demonstrates the incoherence of accounts based on ellipsis or deletion, and instead offers a pragmatic account whereby participants rely on latently available discourse elements. Further, he grounds their use in temporal operations, dividing sluices into ‘open’ and ‘closed’ types, which, respectively, are projective and retrospective in nature. The findings of this chapter align nicely with other works demonstrating the rarity of ‘full’ biclausal constructions. That is, the ‘truncated’ (ellipted, deleted, etc.) forms are the default, inasmuch as that’s what speakers use, whereas their ‘complete’ forms are marked or otherwise used for cause.

In the next chapter, Wolfgang Imo (“Temporality and syntactic structure: utterance-final intensifiers in spoken German”) takes up the phenomenon whereby German speakers place intensifiers after the final verb (the ‘right verb brace’). While prescriptive notions of German grammar forbid the placement of intensifiers after the right verb brace, actual language users regularly do so. Imo shows these intensifiers in ‘normative’ syntactic position, as freestanding units, across two speaker’s turns, within one speaker’s consecutive turn-constructional units, and in a semiautonomous construction with *aber* ‘but’. Imo argues that their occurrence across turns and positions reveals their inherently dialogical use, and that this serves as an instance of a congealing or emergent grammar. It shows that word classes like ‘intensifiers’, rather than exhibiting fixed patterns, are flexibly adapted to local use, take on new members, and are inextricably connected to prior discourse. He concludes more generally that “the interactional and temporal properties of language-in-interaction lead to a dissolution of the boundaries of grammar and sequential structure” (p. 168). Grammar resides in the sequences of action constituted by language-using participants, and so it is no surprise that each finds its reciprocal elaboration in the other.
Then, Simona Pekarek Doehler focuses on what has traditionally been analyzed as a biclausal presentational cleft in French ("Grammar, projection and turn-organization: *il y a* NP 'there is NP' as projector construction in French talk-in-interaction"). As with other constructions examined in Section II, she shows that what happens in actual talk-in-interaction differs from what has been discussed in the literature. What theories have stipulated as a biclausal pattern turns out to be a monoclausal one in practice. This divergence is explicable, Pekarek Doehler argues, if *il y a* ‘there is NP’ is analyzed as a projector construction, something that indicates a specific kind of thing coming up, and invites recipients to be alert for that kind of thing. She supports this idea by showing how the construction is used in the coordinated organization of multi-unit turns, turn-taking, and sequences of talk. The article offers additional evidence for the centrality of projection as a organizational device in everyday language use. She points out the family resemblance between this projector construction and ones in other languages. I find this suggestion – that all languages have projector constructions of this sort – highly suggestive, and Pekarek Doehler’s chapter fortunately provides an exemplary analysis for further work on this topic.

Yael Maschler also looks at projection in talk in her chapter ("Word order in time: Emergent Hebrew (N)\textsuperscript{V}/VN\textsubscript{V} syntax"). She argues that the subject-predicate alternation in Hebrew narrative is driven by temporal and discursive motivations grounded in the projectability of what follows the construction. Contrary to standard claims about the flexibility of Hebrew word order, she finds it to be rather fixed, with each pattern doing particular work in instances of storytelling. The (subject-)predicate order, she argues, projects highly predictable upcoming components, and so routinely gets used for story continuation. This contrasts with the predicate-subject order which indicates only weakly what might follow, and so gets pressed into use for things like narrative shift and referent introduction. She places these two syntactic alternatives on a ‘cline of projectability’, which is an idea that’s worth developing for other constructions and in other languages.

Susanne Günther closes Section II ("A temporally oriented perspective on connectors in interactions: *und zwar* (‘namely/in fact’) -constructions in every German conversations"). She details the interactional usage of *und zwar* as a Janus-faced construction that connects previous and upcoming discourse, and indicates their relationship. She uses a similar rhetorical strategy as other contributors. She first shows the *und zwar* construction in its ‘proper’ place (as normative grammar might require) linking an utterance to an immediately prior one, and then she shows it placed at increasingly greater remove – linking discourse across turns, speakers, longer sequences, and even linking to unspoken but implied prior discourse. Her analysis transcends typical grammatical analyses of the connector by capturing its
actual dynamicity of use by speakers of the language. This chapter provides strong evidence for the temporal exigencies of discourse (e.g., where are we now, what has happened so far, what’s next) structuring the usage of constructions.

Section III (“Temporal organization of multimodal interaction”) contains two chapters. The first, by Lorenza Mondada (“Multimodal completions”), addresses a matter of continuous importance for participants in interaction: unit completion. Knowing when some unit-in-progress might end is vital for interactants, as projecting its endpoint also indicates when some next unit could or should begin. She shows how hand gestures, object manipulations, and whole-body movements can each be used in the accomplishment of turn-and-sequence completion, self-initiated sequence recompletion, and other-initiated sequence recompletion. This important contribution extends our understanding of how interactional units like turns, actions, and sequences come to be closed in systematic ways through various multimodal resources. It shows how participants rely not only on indicators of syntactic, prosodic, and pragmatic completion, but also on a range of bodily movements in a situated ecology. Perhaps most radically for traditional linguists, she urges an integration of embodied resources into grammatical descriptions of units.

This blurring of the line between linguistic of bodily resources is amplified by the final chapter of the volume by Leelo Keevallik (“Coordinating the temporalities of talk and dance”). Keevallik extends her valuable work on talk and dance, focusing on the mutual adjustment of the two in the context of instructive dance sessions. She shows how participants construct their turns using verbalization, vocalization, and bodily movement, each mutually adjusted to the other in systematic ways. Dance instructors not only interleave their bodily movements and vocalizations into the grammatical structure of talk, but they also integrate their verbal and vocal productions into the rhythmic structure of concurrently produced dance. She argues that the projectability of both talk and bodily action supports the practical intertwining of one with the other. That is, participants’ use their knowledge of each modality’s temporal properties to predict and understand how one relates to the other. The intelligibility of such blended actions, she proposes, shows that participants use specialized grammars for specific activities.

For general linguists, the value of this collection mostly resides in the language-specific studies of Section II. Not only are these chapters more likely to be accessible to those without a background in language and interaction, but they also directly address several linguistic phenomena, like discourse connectors, clefts, sluicing/ellipsis, narrative development, and intensifiers. By showing these to be thoroughly temporal and interactional affairs, these studies respecify traditional linguistic concerns as first and foremost concerns for the participants. These chapters (along with the chapter by Ford and Fox) also take up a core concern for functional linguistics, the grammaticization of constructions. They show several
mechanisms by which constructions emerge in speech, over turns, and through courses of action.

For students of interaction, the volume as a whole repays close reading. Section I serves as a statement on the current state of the field with regard to grammar, temporality, and units of interaction – themes which are exemplified through the careful studies in Section II. Section III, though, was for me the most stimulating part of the collection, as it extended and deepened our understanding of time and interactional organization.

The two chapters in Section III are part of the ongoing, and now robust, integration of the visible and material world into studies of interactive language use. But while many studies only nominally consider such aspects in their analyses of interactional conduct, the contributions by Mondada and Keevallik extend our understanding of this domain by specifically taking up the issue of multimodal temporalities – the idea that words, clauses, prosody, gestures, manual action, gaze, and different segments of the body each exhibit distinct temporal profiles. To give but one example, talking is internally structured to a large extent by grammar and prosody; it fades as soon as it is produced, but persists into the future as latently available materials; and it is serially organized turn-by-turn, with minimal gap and overlap. These features comprise the temporality of talk-in-interaction. They intersect and diverge in important ways from the temporality of other modalities. Another, more abstract, way to think about this is that participants aren’t necessarily coordinating talk with gesture, for instance, but are coordinating the temporalities of those two channels of semiosis such that they elaborate one another in meaningful and relevant ways for a given moment of interaction. A systematic consideration of the temporality of different modalities, their normative organization relative to one another, and the skillful ways that participants blend and alternate between them could stand as an entirely separate volume on its own.

Furthermore, a consideration of the temporality of grammar versus the temporality of other modalities inevitably touches on the question of when grammar even needs to come into play, and what purpose it practically serves for interactants. As a number of the chapters suggest, grammar is useful as a organizational device, chiefly through the property of projection. Presaging what is likely to come is the primary means by which participants coordinate their behavior, both linguistic and otherwise. Participants use grammar for projecting and structuring actions and courses of action. One implication of this is a radically different conceptualization of grammar, in which it is in the first place a device for the accomplishment of coordinated action – of doing things together – rather than something for structuring thought or enabling conceptualization.

In addition to dedicating more space to multimodal temporalities, I think the collection could have been strengthened by a greater consideration of time
as phenomenally experienced in interaction. This volume, in other words, would have been the perfect venue for a linguistic exploration of Garfinkel’s observation about there being “no time out” from interaction. As it stands, Ford and Fox’s chapter is the only one that tackles the relationship between time, language, and dispreference, though not in a way that explicitly links those themes.

The volume as a whole aims to show how linguistic structure is shaped by local contingencies of unfolding interaction, and sensitive to the affordances and constraints of a given sequential moment. To this end, it is successful and consistent. Overall, it demonstrates the strength and vitality of the research program(s) on language and social interaction, and points the way forward for future work on the topic. Perhaps most importantly, it serves as a call to linguists and students of interaction to not neglect the ways in which language and grammar are responsive to and structured by the inescapably temporal nature of language use.

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