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Backchannels in Functional Discourse Grammar

A discussion of the device and its implementation into the theory of Functional Discourse Grammar

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Abstract

This thesis aims at describing and discussing the discourse device of backchannels in British English. Exploring the general concept of backchannels, their use in ongoing conversation and their implementation into the theory of Functional Discourse Grammar forms the main body of this work. The design of this paper is split into two parts. The first part describes the discourse device of backchannels. Reviewing past research, a typological profile concerning formal and functional features of backchannels is proposed. This typological profile then is transcribed into abstract representations in order to implement it into the theory of Functional Discourse Grammar. The second part revolves around describing the theory of Functional Discourse Grammar and the implementation of the proposed framework. The basic outline and conception of Functional Discourse Grammar will be explained, before two of the four levels, the so-called Interpersonal Level and Phonological Level will be presented in closer detail. Finally, the proposed frames for backchannels will be implemented into the framework of Functional Discourse Grammar. Afterwards the proposed framework will be tested against various examples taken from the BNC. Following the analysis of the data is a discussion on the device of backchannels itself, its implementation into the grammar model, as well as further implications and problems that arose during application. Lastly, the conclusion summarises the findings, while also providing an outlook for further research.

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List of abbreviations and symbols

A	Addressee	Conj	conjunction
BC	Backchannel	Contr	contrast
BNC	British National Corpus	DECL	Declarative
FDG	Functional Discourse Grammar	Emph	emphatic
		F_i	Illocution
H	Head	Foc	focus
IL	Interpersonal Level	Hort	hortative
PL	Phonological Level	ILL	abstract Illocution
REG	regulative function	IMP	Imperative
S	Speaker	INTER	Interrogative
SUP	supportive function	INTERP	interpellative
V_1	indexed variable	Iron	irony
↗	Global rise	M_i	Move
↘	Global fall	Mit	mitigative
=	clitic	$(P_i)_S$	Speaker
Interpersonal Level:		$(P_i)_A$	Addressee
A_i	Discourse Act	q-tag	tag question
BC_i	backchannel (unit)	R_i	Subact of Reference
C_i	Communicated Content	[+S]	Subject
Conc	concession	Sub	subordinator

T_i	Subact of Ascription
♦	lexical Illocution
π	(grammatical) operator
(…)	surrounding discourse
∑	(lexical) modifier
Φ	rhetorical/ pragmatic function

Phonological Level:

BC_i	backchannel (unit)
f	'falling' operator
F_i	Foot
h	'high pitch' operator
IP_i	Intonational Phrase
l	'low pitch' operator
n	'neutral' pitch
PP_i	Phonological Phrase
PW_i	Phonological Word
r	'rising' operator
S_i	Syllable
U_i	Utterance
[	begin of overlap
]	end of overlap
(( ))	paralinguistic events, e.g. ((laughter))
: : :	prolongation of the preceding sound (the more colons, the longer the sound)

1. Introduction

In any conversation there are at least two distinct parties, a Speaker and at least one Addressee, or Listener. While the Speaker's task consists of such events like providing new information and actively progressing forward with the topic, certain signals from the Addressee do not fulfil such a purpose. These Addressee related signals, usually described as taking forms such as *mhm*, *uhuh*, *yeah*, etc., have become well-known as 'backchannels' (cf. YNGVE (1970); ORESTRÖM (1983)). Throughout the literature, various characterisations pertaining to form and function of backchannels have been discussed. Most commonly the device is interpreted as a simple signal from the Addressee, directed towards the Speaker to communicate that information was received successfully and/ or that the Speaker may continue their turn. That such backchannels form an important and integral part of any conversation, regardless of participants and culture, seems natural and given. Also, a somewhat growing body of research, concerning discourse analysis but also specifically backchannels, is a testament to the importance of this discourse device (see e.g. MCCREARY (1986); WHITE (1989); HAYASHI & HAYASHI (1991); MAYNARD (1986), (1997); UEMATSU (2000); CUTRONE (2005), (2010); STIVERS et al. (2009)). However, a consistent analysis as to their various forms and functions, the interrelation between form and function, as well as how backchannels relate to ongoing discourse, has not yet been proposed. Given the peculiarity of backchannels, they hardly can be said to constitute an autonomous discourse contribution and as such must be analysed exceptionally. For this reason, the typologically based theory of Functional Discourse Grammar was chosen to be tested if a successful incorporation of the discourse device of backchannels is possible.

In the first part of this work, a typological profile for backchannels is proposed. It serves as an analysis and discussion of the device, investigating their functions (sections *2.1.1* and *2.1.2*) and forms (sections *2.1.3* and *2.1.4*) as discussed in the literature. This is necessary to be able to reasonably apply backchannels to Functional Discourse Grammar. It must be noted here that this work focuses on British English, as all data were received from the BNC. A brief summary (section *2.1.5*) will conclude the first part on backchannels. The second part of this thesis introduces the theory of Functional Discourse Grammar (sections *2.2* and *2.3*). However, due to the complexity of Functional Discourse Grammar, it was chosen to only account for the crucial parts of the theory, necessary for a first trial and error approach. Through the progression of section (*2.3*) the established typological profile of backchannels will be implemented into the framework. Functional aspects are implemented in section (*2.3.1.4*), formal aspects in section (*2.3.2.4*). The ensuing chapters serve for application (chapter *4*) and discussion (chapter *5*). In chapter (*4*), six selected examples from the BNC are analysed and explained according to Functional Discourse Grammar, while also taking into account the proposed framework.

Further examples are listed in the Appendix (chapter *7*). Chapter (*5*) mirrors the twofold architecture of this work, by firstly discussing the typological profile for backchannels established earlier (section *5.1*), before finally turning to various issues regarding their implementation (sections *5.2* and *5.3*). The examples provided throughout chapter (*5*) and the Appendix were analysed more thoroughly, since the discussion about them necessarily involves the deeper layers of Functional Discourse Grammar. Lastly, chapter (*6*) will summarise the findings of this work, also highlighting certain persisting issues concerning backchannels that need further investigation.

2. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this paper encompasses two main parts. The first part is concerned with the phenomenon of backchannels. To give the reader an overview of backchannels, a general outline of the device will be given in section (*2.1*). The following sections then serve as a summary and discussion of their various functional aspects (section *2.1.1*) and formal aspects (section *2.1.2*). Information on backchannels in this chapter, while derived from the literature, should in no way be seen as an exhaustive discussion on the topic. The aim rather was gathering available information in order to extract and derive a typological profile for backchannels according to their discussion in the literature. The typological profile for backchannels will render their formal and functional properties in order to make this linguistic device feasible for grammatical analysis. Such an approach finally allows for a formal and functional implementation of backchannels into the grammar framework of Functional Discourse Grammar.

Having presented the phenomenon of backchannels, next, the theory of Functional Discourse Grammar (henceforth FDG) will be dealt with in part. Before going into detail, firstly it will be clarified what FDG is in general, how it works and why it was used for the purpose of this paper. Also, it should be noted that the presentation of FDG will be kept as brief as possible, leaving out certain information not necessary for the question at hand. This is made possible because in this paper we only attend to the English language, while FDG serves as a grammar model for potentially any type of language[1] (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 25). Therefore, parts of the model of FDG were left out, since they attend to other language types. Another reason lies within the architecture of FDG itself. FDG consists of four levels, only two

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1 Given this claim, it must be noted here that the "rules used in Formulation are language-specific, i.e. FDG does not presuppose the existence of universal pragmatic and semantic notions" (HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 12)

of which (the Interpersonal and Phonological Level) were used to test backchannel implementation. The presentation of these two levels is followed by the chapter on implementing backchannels into the framework; after the Interpersonal Level, functional aspects of backchannels will be implemented (section *2.3.1.4*), while after the Phonological Level, the formal aspects will be implemented (section *2.3.2.4*). Of course, the reader who is already familiar with the theory of FDG may leave out its presentation and focus on (section *2.3.1.4*) and (section *2.3.2.4*) only.

2.1 Backchannels: a general overview of the device

In an ongoing conversation two types of utterances can be distinguished; the speaking-turn (or simply 'turn') and the backchannel ('BC') (cf. ORESTRÖM 1983: 23). A turn is "strictly speaking, the continuous period of time during which a person is talking" (ORESTRÖM 1983: 23). Furthermore, a "speaking-turn is a concept that conveys new information and expands the topic" (ORESTRÖM 1983: 23; from HENNE 1978: 124). Now, after the continuous period of time during which a speaker has given new information and/ or has expanded the topic we can state that the speaking-turn has finished. After each finished turn there will usually be a change of the speaker, so a new discourse participant may have the chance to contribute to the conversation. The Addressee's task during the Speaker's turn then is to support the ongoing conversation by 'guiding' the Speaker, among other things, through the signalling of backchannels. These backchannels do not expand the topic in any way and are not considered turns in their own right (cf. ORESTRÖM 1983: 104; also cf. PIPEK 2007: 44). They rather represent a kind of feedback woven into the ongoing conversation.

It is evident that Speaker and Addressee, regarding their communicative behaviour, fulfil different tasks in conversation. The Speaker follows tasks like claiming the speaking-turn, the act of speaking itself and also, most crucial for this paper, being attentive to the listener's reaction (cf. ORESTRÖM 1983: 24). The tasks of the Addressee, on the other hand, feature the act of (attentive) listening itself, but also consist of supplying "the speaker intermittently with feedback signals, verbally or non-verbally" (ORESTRÖM 1983: 24). These signals are described as "certain brief, spontaneous reactions from the listener […] signalling continued attention, agreement, and various emotional reactions" (ORESTRÖM 1983: 23). Prevalent examples include *m*, *mhm*, *yes*, *yeah*, *OK*, etc. (cf. ORESTRÖM 1983: 24). Their function as backchannels in general can be interpreted as informing the Speaker that their message has been received and caused a certain effect in the Addressee that potentially triggers the urge to provide direct feedback (cf. ORESTRÖM 1983: 24). Such feedback does not represent a turn in itself and will not be picked up and commented on. It becomes clear that backchannels form a crucial part in any

conversation, since, while not expanding the topic as turns do, "they help to sustain the flow of interaction" (ORESTRÖM 1983: 24). For example, signalling continued attention as Addressee is integral, since without such information the Speaker would sooner or later wonder if anyone is paying attention and evaluating what is being said (cf. ORESTRÖM 1983: 24).

Concerning this paper, a backchannel is considered any kind of verbal (inter)action uttered by the Addressee while the Speaker is holding the turn or is in the process of realising an active Move/ Utterance (see section *2.3.1.2*/ *2.3.2.2*, respectively). As will become clear later, for FDG it is important that a backchannel occurs within the unit of the Move/ Utterance in order to be reasonably evaluated. Contrary to the turn, a backchannel does not add new information in the sense that it would expand the conversation topic beyond the Speaker's intentions. Also, it is imperative that the backchannel is not interrupting or cancelling the Speaker's turn. Should the Addressee's backchannel urge the Speaker to immediately stop their turn in order to e.g. react to or comment on the backchannel, the utterance is no longer considered a backchannel but a turn itself, i.e. a Move/ Utterance. This requirement makes the status of backchannel heavily dependent on the Speaker's immediate reaction following it (cf. TOTTI 1991: 257, 260; also cf. PIPEK 2007: 44). Admittedly, while interruption of the Speaker is forbidden, a backchannel may very well cause minor disruptions in the speaking flow. Such minor disruptions allow the Addressee to be a bit more verbose with their backchannel (e.g. with phrasal backchannels), the speaking turn however, and thus the Speaker's intentions must be allowed to unfold uninterruptedly. It also should be mentioned here that laughter, although not represented in all the literature, is accounted for in this paper in one example only, (54) in the Appendix (laughter is treated for example in TOTTI (1991), UEMATSU (2000) and MAYNARD (1997).

From the above it becomes clear that listener behaviour represents an important indicator for the Speaker. Depending on its configuration, a backchannel may signal continued interest and understanding, surprise, agreement, etc. As a brief illustration of turns and backchannels consider example (1) (backchannels are marked in italics):

(1) A: Have you seen my jacket?
     B: No, sorry I haven't.
     A: I looked everywhere. In the closet,
     B: *m*
     A: in the car,
     B: *mhm*
     A: in my room,
     B: *ok*

A: but probably I've left it at Susan's yesterday.

B: Maybe that's it!   (own example)

In this sample conversation, B utters several backchannels in-between A's second utterance. While A exclusively has turns, only the first and last answer of B are considered turns. The rest of B's utterances are considered (classic) backchannel items.

In the following two sections the phenomenon of backchannels will be presented in closer detail. It serves as a brief summary of the literature to give the reader a general overview of how this phenomenon has been reflected in past research. Firstly, attention will be paid to the functional aspects of backchannels (section *2.1.2*), before secondly their formal aspects will be described (section *2.1.4*). This distinction of form and function is necessary for a useful implementation of backchannels into the framework of FDG. Each chapter, after reviewing the literature, will also abstract from the findings of past research in order to come up with a feasible interpretation and typologisation of backchannels to properly implement this device into our grammar model. Finally, section (*2.1.5*) serves as a brief summary of this chapter.

2.1.1 Previous research on functional aspects

The functional aspects of backchannels are represented to a varied extent throughout the literature. ORESTRÖM (1983: 24) describes backchannels as representing "rather special functions where the listener informs the speaker that his message has been received, understood, agreed to and/or has caused a certain effect thereby supplying him with direct feedback". Rather than extracting specific functions for backchannels, he stresses the broad, yet similar purposes of them. They serve as a 'go on' signal expressing both "a confirmation that he [the listener] will remain in the listening-mode and 'permission' for the other to continue" (ORESTRÖM 1983: 105). COULTHARD, MONTGOMERY and BRAZIL (1981: 25) describe backchannels as "supportive moves" ascribing to them three functions termed "supporting acts". These are *Acknowledge*, *Accept*, and *Endorse*. Acknowledge is seen as a minimal act that "simply indicates that an utterance has been heard and accepted into the stream of talk, and which thus indicates continued auditory presence" (COULTHARD, MONTGOMERY and BRAZIL 1981: 25). The act of Accept is fairly similar, albeit with a bit more understanding of the utterance and therefore argued to be slightly more committed than Acknowledge (cf. COULTHARD, MONTGOMERY and BRAZIL 1981: 25). Lastly, Endorse "substantiate[s] and support[s] the 'point' made by the preceding talk" (COULTHARD, MONTGOMERY and BRAZIL 1981: 25). The Endorse act is meant to back up, add weight to, approve, uphold, etc., the preceding talk (cf. COULTHARD, MONTGOMERY and BRAZIL 1981: 25). STENSTRÖM (1982: 321) also describes backchannels as 'support moves'. As for their function she stresses that they are not considered turns and do not "[cause] the current

speaker to give up the floor" (STENSTRÖM 1982: 320). A more specific investigation on backchannel functions can be found in CUTRONE (2010) and PIPEK (2007). In their work they detail various functions they ascribe to backchannels. PIPEK (2007: 48-50) gives the following discourse functional characteristics of backchannels:

i) Continuer: Its primary function is to maintain the flow of conversation and the desire of the current speaker to continue his turn. […] [I]t provides feedback that the attention is paid to what is being uttered (e.g. *mhm*).

ii) Captured interest token: It communicates that the information uttered by the current speaker is of great interest, or importance in relation to the listener (e.g. *hmmm great*)

iii) Consonance token: They inform the speaker that the listener agrees with the standpoint of the speaker or that the listener is in convergence with the conveyed idea (e.g. *brief restatements*).

iv) Information confirmation token: They express that the stated information has been received and in addition the agreement or disagreement with the information conveyed (e.g. exclamatory *NO*).

(cf. PIPEK 2007: 48-50)

A somewhat different list of functions is presented by CUTRONE (2010). His review of backchannel functions is taken from MAYNARD (1986) and (1997), where the following six functions are ascribed to backchannels (CUTRONE 2010: 31-4):

i) Continuers: signal to the primary speaker that they are indeed listening attentively and allowing the primary speaker to continue their speaking turn.

ii) Display of understanding of content: the listener shows that they understand the primary speaker

iii) Agreement: the non-primary speaker (the listener that is) reacts to a question or question like utterance made by the primary speaker

iv) Support and empathy toward the speaker's judgment: the non-primary speaker responds with a show of support or empathy to an evaluative statement

v) Strong emotional response: the non-primary speaker responds emphatically to a statement.

vi) Minor addition and request for information: the non-primary speaker corrects something the primary speaker has just uttered, when the non-primary speaker needs clarification or when the non-primary speaker attempts to add a word in completing the utterance the primary speaker hast just made

Lastly, Totti (1991) made an intriguing observation concerning backchannel functions. She notes that backchannels "have several functions, which normally occur simultaneously" (Totti 1991: 256). She then abstracts two main categories; backchannels with a 'supportive function' to signal understanding and agreement, and backchannels with a 'regulative function', signalling the speaker to continue their turn (cf. Totti 1991: 256). However, while she admits that "[t]he relation between the function and form of backchannels is an interesting problem" (Totti 1991: 257), she has little more to say concerning the functional aspects of backchannels.

Reviewing the functional aspects, we see that many researchers interpret backchannels as two types; firstly, they are used as a means to uphold the Speaker turn in signalling continued attention. This specific function was described quite early (cf. Schegloff 1982: 81) and from there on it has been stressed in almost any volume throughout the literature. Items with such a function fit nicely into the category of Totti's (1991) 'regulative backchannels'. Being intermittently uttered by the Addressee, they keep up, or regulate the flow of the speaking-turn. Secondly, throughout the literature it is commonly noted that besides this 'continuer' function, backchannels also serve to communicate certain other listener related reactions (e.g. emotional feedback, agreement, etc.) to the Speaker. Such functions have been reflected as listed above from Pipek (2007) and Cutrone (2010) (see also Maynard (1986), (1997)) and they fittingly fall under Totti's (1991) category of 'supportive backchannels', signalling understanding and agreement to varied extents.

2.1.2 The functions of backchannels

In the end it would seem that backchannels carry various functions that need to be evaluated within ongoing discourse in order to account for Speaker behaviour (remember that backchannel status depends on the Speaker's following reaction). It also seems true that, given the various formal and functional aspects of backchannels, "that no two researchers will arrive at exactly the same solutions" (Totti 1991: 261), i.e. one researcher's backchannel might very well be another researcher's full turn. Nonetheless, Totti's (1991) observation allows an attempt to subsume the manifold functions of backchannels into two main categories; backchannels with a 'regulative function' (e.g. signalling continued attention, understanding of the ongoing discourse, interest in the topic, etc.), and backchannels with a 'supportive function' (e.g. signalling (dis)agreement , empathy towards the Speaker and/ or topic, etc.). This interpretation leads us to the following schema of backchannel functions:

regulative	to e.g. signal continued attention, understanding of content, interest, demanding the floor, etc.
supportive	to e.g. signal (dis)agreement, empathy, endorsement or disapproval of proposition, etc

The regulative function (REG), as the name suggests, is a means for the Listener to 'regulate' the active Speaker's turn. To achieve this, these simple signals encompass the communication of various types of information. On the one hand, they help to sustain the speaking flow, signalling that the Speaker may continue the turn. Therefore, by using regulative means in discourse, the Listener conveys things such as continued attention, understanding of the communicated information, interest in the conversation topic, etc. Signalling such information towards the Speaker in ongoing discourse allows them to continuously update and evaluate the listening state of the Addressee. In that respect, regulative backchannels should be viewed as a more or less short and generic signal, readily identified by the Speaker without causing distraction. Given the purposes of regulative functions, their phonological form is expected to be rather short and reduced as not to disrupt the speaking flow (cf. ORESTRÖM 1983: 121; the next section will go into detail on formal aspects of backchannels).

Besides the purpose of sustaining the Speaker's turn, at least in theory, the action of 'demanding the floor' poses a possible regulative purpose of backchannels, considering transition of turns. Such a function also was discussed by SCHEGLOFF (2000). Researching the phenomenon of overlap in simultaneous talk, he defined what he calls the "pre-onset phase" (SCHEGLOFF 2000: 15). Based on similar phenomena recognised here (e.g. bodily gestures like frowning, head-nods or shrugs, etc.), it describes that "a speaker of a turn already in progress may detect […] that another is about to launch a turn" (SCHEGLOFF 2000: 15). Take, for example, the following scenario in (2)[2]:

(2) S: […] ja, und stellen die [Shoes] dann wieder woanders ab. Shoe to go! Shoe to go! Shoe, to go!

A: Ja … (raising his right hand towards the Speaker)

S: Geteilter Schuh is' halber Schuh.

A: … is' prima. Aber jetz' mal ... äh ... und was ... Wenn ich sowieso, ich sag jetz' mal 20 Schuhe im Regal hab', zu Hause, ne? Was hab' ich davon, dass ich [...]

(Dittsche (253) – KW 10/2020)

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2 Dittsche (253) – KW 10/2020 (13:59 – 14:16)

In this scenario of the German improvisation-comedy TV-show 'Dittsche', the character of 'Dittsche' takes on the Speaker-role, explaining a humorous idea where people supposedly benefit form sharing their shoes the same way e.g. bikes and scooters are shared, i.e. they are left and meant for others to use. The Addressee then signals that he wants to say something via body language (raising his hand) and the onset (*Ja*) of his upcoming turn. These two gestures, however, do not interrupt the active speaking turn, in fact its effect is the exact opposite. It signals to the Speaker that the Addressee would like to add something (in this case doubts about the obviously flawed idea) while beforehand the Speaker is allowed to finish the turn. This specific function then can be seen as a 'floor-demanding device', since it tries to make the Speaker yield the floor to the Addressee. Admittedly, such a function seems predominantly reserved for speech situations such as lectures, seminars, counselling, etc, where one participant is a dedicated Speaker, expected to elaborate on a topic. Yet it is also imaginable during any discussion or debate in, e.g. a private home where the Speaker is allowed to explain his point of view and the Addressee, instead of interrupting, communicates objections via backchannel devices in order to be next in turn.

As far as the supportive function (SUP) is concerned, basically all other purposes described above can be subsumed under that category. These include the manifold functional aspects proposed by PIPEK (2007) and CUTRONE (2010). And while their findings provide helpful insights, the definitions of their functions, however, proves to be indistinct. For example, PIPEK's 'Consonance Token' and 'Information Confirmation Token' both imply agreement towards the Speaker. This predicament renders a proper and distinct diagnosis of backchannel functions rather difficult. Is an agreeing signal of the Listener to be diagnosed as the one or the other function? A further indistinct example poses CUTRONE's proposition of the functions 'Continuers' and 'Display of understanding of content'. The latter conveys that the Listener is understanding what the Speaker is telling them. This specific purpose, however, is also necessary in any instance of a 'Continuer' function that signals that the listener is "indeed listening attentively" (CUTRONE 2010: 31-32). In sight of such difficulties, I eventually chose to subsume these purposes under the term 'supportive functions'. The primary purpose of supportive backchannels then is to convey the Addressee's attitude towards the Speaker and/ or about what is being said. However, while their function might be quite complex, supportive backchannels, like the regulative ones, will never interrupt the speaking turn. The supportive aspect of these backchannels is to be understood as a subjective and qualitative feedback by the Addressee, evaluating the Speaker's ongoing utterance and intentions, as well as their attitude.

Finally, keep in mind that the two functional categories do not always exclude each other, rather they often occur together and are complementing each other. If one of the crucial

characteristics of backchannels is their impossibility to interrupt the Speaker, then why is there a need for a distinct regulative function? Why is it not considered a default function, belonging to any instance of backchannels? In the present work I take the position that backchannels are often uttered with more than just one function in mind (cf. TOTTI 1991: 256). Therefore, both functional aspects, regulative and supportive, have to be described in order to relate them to each other. While the functions of backchannels usually occur simultaneously, one function may be more dominantly expressed than the other. Consider the following example in (3) (again, backchannels are marked in italic):

(3) S: I have told you about the new kid at school

A: *yeah*

S: who is interested in getting a band together

A: *sounds great*

S: but he can't play any instruments, you see

A: *m*

S: so I think it won't happen.   (own example)

In the first utterance, the Speaker introduces the topic of the new student with an inquiry in the form of a declarative utterance. The Addressee reacts with *yeah* to not interrupt the speaking flow of the Speaker, who, after A's backchannel, has 'green light' to continue with the topic. A's *yeah* in this case can be interpreted as carrying a predominantly regulative function. On the one hand, it signals understanding that the Addressee knows about the new kid. On the other hand, it conveys interest and attention to the Speaker so they may continue with their communicative intention to tell something about that new student. A's next signal, *sounds great*, can be interpreted as a supportive backchannel towards the Speaker. This utterance could potentially be seen as a turn, however, in this case the Speaker does not feel interrupted and continues to talk without digressing or reacting to A's backchannel. Thus, A's judgement can be ascribed backchannel status and by uttering *sounds great*, the Addressee conveys his empathy towards the Speaker and the matter at hand, i.e. the possible forming of a music band. In this case the supportive function overweighs the regulative one, which can be argued to be missing as a whole. The last backchannel, *m*, unites the regulative and supportive function. Let's presume it is realised with falling intonation, expressing frustration of the Listener. Then, on the one hand it has a supportive function, signalling empathy towards the Addressee's predicament (frustration, because the new kid can't play any instruments). On the other hand, it carries a regulative function, signalling the Speaker to fulfil their communicative intention to tell something conclusive about the present situation (S does not think a band will happen).

2.1.3 Previous research on formal aspects

Reviewing the formal aspects of backchannels, two major types can be distinguished; i) verbal backchannels (e.g. *m*, *mhm*, *yeah*, *oh I see*, etc.) and ii) non-verbal backchannels (e.g. head-nods and shakes, frowning, hand gesticulation, etc.) (cf. TOTTI 1991: 257). For the scope of this work, the non-verbal backchannels will be excluded. The reason behind this is on the one hand that the present data are available in audio form only, without any visual feed. On the other hand, this paper focuses on verbal backchannels that can potentially be incorporated in a linguistic grammar model. While it may not be impossible to account for non-verbal backchannels as well, they will not be focused on here[3].

In the literature on backchannels the formal characteristics are researched quite unevenly, depending on the researcher. It seems that mostly short expressions like *m*, *mhm*, *yeah*, etc. are described as opposed to more complex or even phrasal expressions. For example, TOTTI (1991), referring to DUNCAN (1974), describes backchannels such as *mhm*, *yeah* as "readily identified, verbalized signals" (TOTTI 1991: 257). Furthermore she distinguishes 'simple' (e.g. *yeah*), 'double' (including multiple repetitions of the same item, e.g. *mhm mhm*) and 'complex' backchannels (consisting of one or several items from different backchannel categories and/or one or several open-class lexical items (e.g. *yeah right*, *yeah I know*) (TOTTI 1991: 263). Complex backchannels in TOTTI (1991) were classified according to their most frequent constituent, i.e. backchannels such as *yeah…right* or *that's true yeah* are both classified as instances of YEAH (CF. TOTTI 1991:263). PIPEK (2007: 47) follows TOTTI's principles in making this exact same distinction and classification. ORESTRÖM (1983: 107) describes backchannels as supports, exclamations and exclamatory questions. Nonetheless, in his study he also includes sentence completions and restatements to which we will attend to later in this section. Complex backchannels in ORESTRÖM (1983) are treated as 'combined' instances (e.g. *m right* or *yeah I agree*), yet he notes that "brief (single-word) simple supports, [were] by far the largest group of BCs" (ORESTRÖM 1983: 121). COULTHARD, MONTGOMERY and BRAZIL (1981) classify backchannels in general as supportive moves and distinguish three supportive acts. Short expressions correspond to their support act of 'Acknowledge' (*yeah, uhuh, m,* etc.) and partly to the act of 'Accept' (*yeah, okay, I see*). Their last support act is represented by 'Endorse' whose exponents take the form of whole phrases (cf. COULTHARD, MONTGOMERY and BRAZIL (1981: 25). STENSTRÖM (1982: 321), in a similar fashion, terms backchannels "support moves". In her study

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3 It should be noted that laughter is present in only one example (54). It seems very likely, however, that the reason behind laughter as backchannel always is embedded within the context of the ongoing conversation, making laughter by definition a 'specific' form.

on feedback she covers various short expressions, such as *yes*, *yeah*, *m*, *right*, etc. Moreover, she presumes that backchannels may be inserted almost anywhere in the ongoing speech and often overlap with part of the ongoing talk (cf. STENSTRÖM 1982: 321). She also notes that backchannels are "mostly uttered fairly low, often with characteristic intonation" (STENSTRÖM 1982: 321). While her data prohibited a satisfying conclusion on that matter (cf. STENSTRÖM 1982: 337), this assumption was confirmed by the findings of ORESTRÖM (1983: 121). He notes that in most cases backchannels were "prosodically 'reduced', i.e. were uttered in piano/pianissimo, and/or had a nucleus with a narrow pitch range (width), and/or had a low pitch level" (ORESTRÖM 1983: 121). BENUS et al. (2007) research the prosodic and contextual factors of backchannel behaviour in Standard American English. They limited their data sample to "simple affirmative words", such as "*mmhm*, *uhhuh*, *okay*, *yeah*, etc." (BENUS, GRAVANO, HIRSCHBERG: 2007: 1066). CUTRONE (2010), while elaborating on backchannel functions, lists longer backchannel items as 'specific forms', referring to authors who include them in their work, such as ITO (2007) and BLUNDELL et al. (1982). In their description, the function of *Agreement*, for example, is expressed by backchannel items like *That's exactly true* or *I think so too* (CUTRONE 2010: 33).

Reviewing the literature in closer detail, it appears that TOTTI (1991: 263; and also PIPEK 2007) have made a helpful subclassification of backchannels into 'simple', 'double' and 'complex' backchannels. In this work, I would like to build on this idea and argue, with reference to BAVELAS, COATES and JOHNSON (2000), for an even higher node allowing for the following taxonomy: the formal classification of TOTTI (1991) (and PIPEK (2007)) can be subsumed under two major types of backchannels (cf. BAVELAS, COATES and JOHNSON 2000: 943-4); i) 'generic' backchannels, taking the form of readily identifiable signals, such as *m*, *mhm*, *uhuh*, *yes*, *yeah* and the like (which correspond to TOTTI's 'simple' and 'double' backchannels), and ii) 'specific' backchannels, taking more complex, often phrasal forms like *sentence completions*[4], *brief restatements*, *exclamations of surprise*, etc. (TOTTI's 'complex' backchannels). This distinction proves very helpful to a comprehensive understanding of backchannels and for their typologisation. Therefore, I took this insight as a basis to expand upon. Furthermore, the division into generic and specific backchannels, proves fairly intuitive when viewed from the Speaker's perspective. This will become clear in the next section, where the characteristics of 'generic' and 'specific' backchannels will be outlined.

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4 Given that the focus of this work lies on spoken discourse, such completions will be referred to as 'utterance completion' rather than 'sentence completion'.

2.1.4 The forms of backchannels

Generic backchannels are independent of the conversation topic and context. One and the same backchannel may occur in a wide variety of conversations (cf. BAVELAS et al. 2000: 943). They take the form of readily identified signals and the culturally trained/ experienced Speaker is able to predict them, knowing immediately what to make of them[5]. Generic backchannels can thus be expected to cause (almost) no disruption in the speaking-turn. The form of generic backchannels therefore is expected to be somewhat limited in length. This restriction of form is linked to the purpose of those linguistic items. Short signals, such as *hm*, *yeah* or *uhuh*, in the literature are often treated as so called 'continuers' (PIPEK 2007: 48; SCHEGLOFF 1982: 81; CUTRONE 2010: 31; MAYNARD 1986, 1997: 46). Given now this potential continuer function of items such as *hm*, *yeah*, etc. it follows that their form necessarily is restricted, since they need to be uttered without disrupting the Speaker too much in their turn. A short form with only very few syllables can easily be inserted at many locations during the Speaker's turn, they may even overlap with certain parts of the utterance. This shortness of form makes the backchannel readily identifiable for the Speaker, thus causing hardly, if any interruption at all in the Speaker's flow of the turn.

The specific forms, on the other hand, depend on the conversation topic and also the Addressee's stance towards the topic, in other words, they are heavily context dependent. BAVELAS et al. (2000: 943) write that "[t]hey take on a form specific to the narrative content of the moment and are not generically appropriate to all narratives". Thus, unlike their generic counterparts, they cannot be predicted by the Speaker beforehand. These backchannels might very well be expected by the Speaker, but it is impossible to predict their actual form of realisation. Specific backchannels, often being more complex, may contain significantly more syllables and sometimes even pose whole phrases. In the literature, such backchannels correspond to, e.g. 'sentence (utterance) completions' or 'restatements' (cf. ORESTRÖM 1983: 107). This is indicative of the specificity of these backchannels. Their form is specific because the actual realisation by the Addressee can be interpreted as similar to what the Speaker would have said. Utterance completions are, as the term suggests, the completion of an utterance by the listener. Consider example, (4) taken from ORESTRÖM (1983: 106):

(4) S: ... *eventually, it will come down to more concrete issues* ...

　 B: *As she gets more comfortable*

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5 HAYASHI & HAYASHI (1991) in view of backchannels talk about community competence, "which is a kind of competence that interactants must have in order to anticipate and evaluate utterances in an on-going conversation (cited from WHITE (1997: 323)).

A brief restatement means that the listener briefly restates an immediate utterance of the Speaker. Consider example (5), also taken from ORESTRÖM (1983: 106):

(5)   S: …*having to pick up the pieces*
      A: *the broken dishes, yeah*

With examples like these we see that backchannels can very well be of significant length. However, as with all other cases, they must never interrupt the Speaker's turn, or they will become turns themselves.

In the literature it seems as if specific backchannels are treated the rarest, as opposed to the generic ones. As mentioned above, ORESTRÖM (1983: 121) noted that simple supports posed the largest group in his data, and TOTTI (1991: 267) also finds that in her data overall "simple backchannels were in the majority in both [the Santa Barbara Corpus and the London Lund Corpus]". In later chapters backchannels will be given in their phonemic form, as demanded by FDG. The assessment of a clear form distinction nonetheless proved necessary. With the help of such a description we are able to gain more insight about the relation between certain forms and functions of backchannels. Taking the above into account, the resulting formal characterisation of backchannels is represented in TABLE 2:

| **generic** | readily identifiable signal (e.g. *hm, mhm, yeah,* etc.) |
| **specific** | (potentially) complex and context-bound form (e.g. utterance completion) |

TABLE 2: Forms of backchannels

2.1.5 Summary

What we can see with backchannels so far is that, firstly, the Addressee's intention to not interrupt the Speaker is present in any backchannel. As soon as the Speaker is interrupted, comments on the backchannel, or digresses from the topic because of the backchannel, it is considered a turn. Secondly, at least in theory, there seems to be a weak relation between form and function. Generic backchannels, having a primary function of regulating the Speaker's flow of communication are context-independent, usually short in their phonemic form and carrying predictable ('generic') discursive functions. Specific backchannels with a primarily supportive function, due to their context dependency, often will take a more substantial phonemic form and a specific function. However, we may not dismiss the possibility of co-occurrence of functions. Some backchannels may be more marked for the regulative function (and sometimes maybe even nothing else), while others are more intensely marked for the supportive function (sometimes missing any regulative function).

A classification of backchannels in this manner implies that the regulative functions are usually uttered with less subjective purposes from the Addressee. They rather have a dominant regulative function and should guide the Speaker through their narration, signalling that someone is still listening. The supportive function, however, is specifically meant to convey the Addressee's subjective stance towards the utterance of the Speaker, or the attitude of the Speaker towards the topic. Thus, supportive backchannels are usually uttered with a subjective thought in mind, making them less regulative and more supportive. Admittedly, supportive backchannels can be argued to potentially cause minor disruptions in the Speaker's narrative, allowing the Addressee to express their feedback a bit more verbose.

2.2 Functional Discourse Grammar: a brief and general overview

In the following sections the basic concept behind the theory of FDG will be outlined. First of all, we need to explain the basic idea behind FDG (section *2.2.1*) and how it is conceived (section *2.2.2*). In a second step, section (*2.2.3*) presents reasons as to why it poses a competent means for the analysis of backchannels. After these prerequisites, a more detailed outline of FDG's architecture, specifically the Interpersonal and the Phonological Level will be given. Bear in mind that the present work will not treat the theory in its entirety, only a downscaled version of the theory, necessary for the research question will be viewed. One of the reasons behind restricting FDG to its Interpersonal and Phonological Level is that communication of backchannels reflects interactive communicative behaviour between Speaker and Addressee, thus highlighting the interpersonal aspect of backchannelling. Further, as we will see later in this chapter, (HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 50) give us a first description of where to expect backchannels at the Interpersonal Level. This of course bears certain implications for the Phonological Level and allows a first conjecture of how and where to localise backchannels. Lastly, KEIZER (2015: 252) observes that the Interpersonal and Phonological Level constitute the two obligatory levels in the production of a linguistic unit, while the Representational Level (covering semantics) and the Morphosyntactic Level are not necessarily present in every utterance.

2.2.1 What is Functional Discourse Grammar?

FDG constitutes a grammar model that "starts with the speaker's intention and then works down to articulation" (HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 1). Such a design resembles our understanding of the general organisation of language processing (and production) in humans. Accordingly, FDG is construed in a top-down manner (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 1-2) and to be understood as a "model of encoded intentions and conceptualizations"

(HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 2). Within this top-down construction of utterances, FDG distinguishes two major operations; FORMULATION and ENCODING. The operation of formulation deals with the "valid underlying pragmatic and semantic representations in a language" (HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 2). This is reflected in the first two levels of FDG, the Interpersonal Level (covering pragmatics) and the Representational Level (covering semantics). Encoding, on the other hand is concerned with the translation of these pragmatic and semantic representations into morphosyntactic and phonological ones (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 2). Parallel to the operation of formulation, encoding also comprises two levels, the Morphosyntactic Level (covering morphosyntax) and the Phonological Level (covering phonology). However, it is not a model of language production per se (as e.g. psycholinguistic or neurolinguistic models) and it does not serve as a model for conversation analysis (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 2). Rather, FDG defines the various linguistic units of discourse that compose a conversation. To achieve this, the model provides a framework for the analyst/ linguist enabling the formalisation of such linguistic structures as they develop in ongoing discourse. The application of this framework helps in gaining a better understanding of how these various linguistic structures are used in conversation, as well as their accompanying communicative intentions are employed by the participants (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 2).

Thus, FDG is described as a "structural-functional grammar" (HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 29), i.e. it cannot lean towards just one approach of grammatical analysis, but rather positions itself in-between a radically functional and a radically formal approach (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 26). This is also described as a "form-oriented 'function-to-form' approach" (HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 39). It is 'form-oriented', because in any given language "only those interpersonal and representational phenomena which are reflected in morphosyntactic or phonological form" (HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 39) will be accounted for. The 'function-to-form' approach is reflected in how the Speaker's communicative intentions translate to language specific strategies and conventions in order to achieve those intentions. In other words, the Speaker's communicative intentions are considered the basis from where linguistic functions emerge. During the operation of formulation these communicative intentions then yield certain functional representations (of pragmatic and semantic nature). These functional representations will then impact the two levels of encoding where certain functional representations will trigger the respective morphosyntactic and/ or phonological forms (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 39).

2.2.2 How does Functional Discourse Grammar work?

Having described the general idea of FDG, let us turn to its architecture and how linguistic structures are modelled. FIGURE 1 resembles a brief, general sketch of FDG[6].
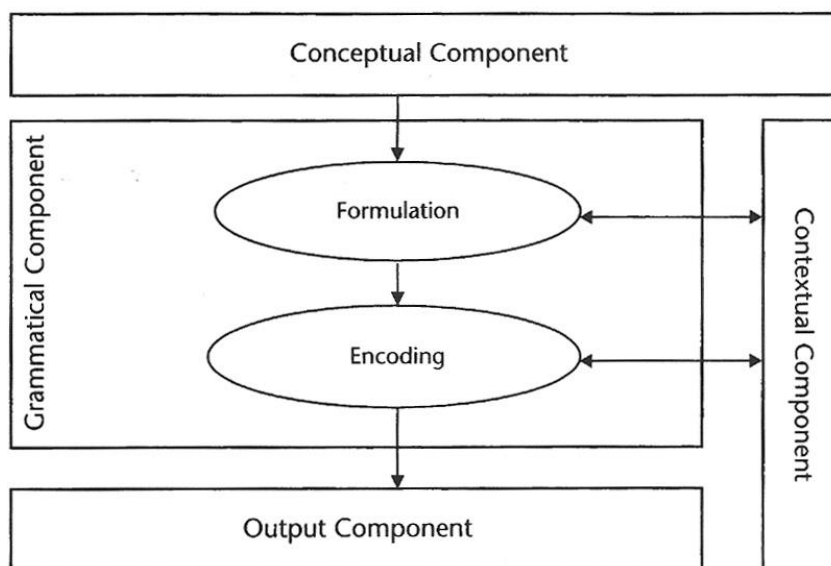
FIGURE 1: FDG as part of a wider theory of verbal interaction (HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 6)

In what follows, the various components will be outlined, starting with the Conceptual Component, via the Contextual Component, through to the Output Component. The Grammatical Component is not reviewed here, since it will be explained later in detail (at least for the Interpersonal and Phonological Level). Lastly in this section there will also be a few words on why this theory of FDG lends itself to the analysis of backchannels and what the crucial characteristics are that allow the implementation of backchannels.

The point of departure is the **Conceptual Component**. It is the driving force behind the Grammatical Component, and it is here where the mental representation of the Speaker's intention is located (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 7; KEIZER 2015: 23). The Conceptual Component triggers "the operation of Formulation which converts the prelinguistic conceptual information into the linguistically relevant pragmatic and semantic representations allowed by the grammar of a language" (KEIZER 2015: 23). Out of efficiency, the Conceptual Component is limited to only those cognitive aspects required to fulfil the present communicative intention (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 7; KEIZER 2015: 23). Innumerable parts of the participant's knowledge are activated throughout any given conversation. The sole mentioning

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6 Since FIGURE 1 resembles a very general view on FDG, additionally the entire sketch of FDG was added to the Appendix as FIGURE 2.

of a name can cause a series of cognitive effects like imagining this very person, worrying if they are well, various latest news about them, etc. Of all these active representations only those with communicative (and therefore linguistic) relevance will enter the Conceptual Component. Take for example the following (textbook) declarative utterance:

(6) It's chilly in here.

This utterance bears several potential meanings, e.g. the plain factual statement that it is chilly; a warning to close the window (lest someone falls ill); a request to close the window or turn on the heat. While (6) could be meant as a request or warning, it takes the form of a plain declarative utterance and will be treated as such within the Grammatical Component. Bear in mind that this relation holds for all indirect speech acts. These are not considered part of the grammar (i.e. the Grammatical Component), since while they will be coded in a language using certain grammatical features (like the declarative in (6)), the intention behind such utterances is not represented grammatically. Only in those cases where the Speaker's intention actually has an impact on the grammar system (e.g. a particle marking IMP or the distinction of rising and falling intonation for INTER and DECL utterances, etc.), will the Conceptual Component feed this information to the Grammatical Component. Nonetheless, being naturally connected to the utterance, the intention is regarded as being part of the Conceptual Component. Whether the specific intention behind (6) is achieved, will always depend on the successful decoding by the Addressee.

One of the basic claims of FDG is to "understand the structure of utterances in their discourse context" (HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 9). The discourse context in which a communicative event is embedded also contributes to the forming of the Speaker's communicative intentions. Therefore, the **Contextual Component** serves to keep track of the discourse context, "at least those elements of the communicative context that have a systematic impact on the form of the linguistic utterance" (KEIZER 2015: 25). In other words, the Contextual Component captures the interplay between the grammatical organisation of utterances and (long-term or short-term) information (cf. KEIZER 2015: 25). As an example for short-term information take an utterance like (7):

(7) She gave him the old book.   (own example)

This utterance contains various contextual clues that influenced the Speaker in their choices. First of all, there is the use of two pronouns (*she* and *him*), both referring to entities that, for the Addressee, must be retrievable from the context. If the actual entities behind those pronouns are no longer retrievable then the Speaker fails to successfully communicate the described situation, or more specifically by whom the described situation was performed. Also, note the

use of the definite NP (*the old book*). The use of a definite article shows the referent must be a uniquely identifiable entity in the immediate discourse context, readily retrievable for the participants (cf. KEIZER 2015: 26). Otherwise, again, the Speaker would either not be able to formulate the message or fail to successfully communicate what specific book they have been talking about.

Long-term information, on the other hand, are regarded features such as the sex of the participants, or the social relation between them. Consider the example in (8) (taken from HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 10):

(8) Qué   pálid-a   est-ás
     what   pale-F.SG   COP-IND.PRS.2.SG.FAM
     'How pale you look!'

Here the choice of *pálida* and *estás* reflects specifications of the sex of the Addressee and the formality of the relation between Speaker and Addressee. The respective information of which form to choose is stored in the Contextual Component and directly impacts the Grammatical Component (as indicated by the double-ended arrows in FIGURE 1 above) (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 10).

Lastly, a few words on what is not considered part of the Contextual Component. Naturally, every communicative situation is accompanied by innumerable contextual factors that mould our messages. Certain situations may call for adults to refer to their children as *kids* or as *children* or even as *young adults*, or *young grown-ups*. When playing in the garden this might be commented on by saying: *Look, how the children (or kids) are playing!* If the children did something very responsibly, parents might applaud this by referring to their children as *young grown-ups*. While such factors clearly impact our choices as Speakers, they are not directly influencing the grammatical choices we make. There is no systematic distinction between these expressions, they are always more or less valid options (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 10; KEIZER 2015: 27). Any of the above given references would be tolerated to refer to children and there is no reason to state the one is better than the other.

Last of the non-grammatical components, the **Output Component** serves to "[convert] the final structures of the Grammatical Component into output" (HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 8). After the operations of Formulation and Encoding are finished, the result is fed into the Output Component, where the digital information of the grammar is translated, through the operation of articulation, into their analogue form (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 8). This whole operation of articulation is not considered part of the Grammatical Component. It certainly is being affected by certain contextual factors such as a sore throat, or simply difference

in vocal pitch, elision of phonemes because of fast speech, etc. However, such factors usually pertain to "a-functional contextual influences" (KEIZER 2015: 255), such as the general physiological characteristics of the individual articulatory organs or emotional states. Therefore, they are not in direct control of the Participants, making grammatical encoding redundant (cf. KEIZER 2015: 28).

2.2.3 Why Functional Discourse Grammar to describe backchannels?

Familiarised with FDG, now we need to clarify why this model lends itself to the research question at hand and also give the reader the right mindset for the present work. Traditionally, in grammar models the unit under inspection is the clause. The problematic restriction with clauses, however, is that they usually are concerned with typical 'sentence' like structures (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 3-4). The idea of the clause as a basic unit is closely related to text linguistics and is as such readily applied to contexts where spoken dialogue is under inspection. However, when language is actively used in common day-to-day situations, it is highly unlikely for the participants to formulate fully fletched, grammatically sound clauses. Instead, it is more likely they will produce something like the answer in example (9) or interjections as in (10):

(9)   (What are you doing?) My homework.
(10)   Help!

Regardless the complexity of structures as in (9) and (10), FDG necessarily needs the capability to model such units that are smaller than the individual clause. While traditionally considered reduced or incomplete clauses, in FDG non-clausal utterances as in (9) and (10) are treated as fully grammatical discourse units (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 4). Thus, the basic unit of discourse in FDG is constituted by the Discourse Act (see section *2.3.1.3*), not the clause (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 4). Discourse Acts may group into larger structures, the Move, but may also take the form of clauses, clause fragments, phrases or words (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 4). The Discourse Act, as we will see later, is considered "the smallest identifiable [unit] of communicative behaviour" (HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 60; cited from KROON (1995: 65)). As such, the Discourse Act, including all of its internal content and configurations, also forms the unit an Addressee may react to, making this unit crucial for the topic at hand (cf HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 50).

Moreover, as mentioned above, FDG is a model aiming to grammatically formalise the structures of linguistic units in ongoing discourse. Therefore, it necessarily reflects the Speaker's perspective from their communicative intention to actual (phonetic, graphic, signed) realisation.

Considering the present thesis is about listener behaviour, more precisely backchannels, the reader can easily get the impression we deal with the Addressee's perspective. This, however, is not the case and FDG is not directly designed to reflect ongoing discourse from the Addressee's perspective. Rather, this thesis investigates how backchannels can be implemented into the framework in order to get a closer understanding of this discourse unit, as well as giving backchannels a typological profile within the grammar model. The means provided by FDG will be expanded to the findings of backchannels (as portrayed in chapter 2) in order to implement backchannels into the grammatical framework. Once this has been achieved it should be possible to firstly, precisely locate the backchannel in the Output Component and then secondly, trace the backchannel within the Grammatical Component. Locating the backchannel in the Output Component allows to pinpoint the exact moment a backchannel occurs. Tracing it throughout the Grammatical Component allows for an interpretation why the Addressee felt the need to communicate a certain backchannel. So, this thesis, while dealing with listener behaviour, still takes the Speaker as the point of departure, explaining how backchannels work within ongoing conversation, while also trying to hint at how backchannels may affect Speaker behaviour. Ultimately, we are still Speaker oriented but are taking the reactions of the listener into account.

2.3 The architecture of Functional Discourse Grammar

In this chapter the basic architecture of FDG's Grammatical Component will be outlined. As mentioned above, of the four levels in FDG, only the Interpersonal and Phonological Level will be explained. The Interpersonal Level belongs to the operation of formulation (i.e. pragmatic functions), while the Phonological Level represents the final stage of the operation of encoding. The design of each level proofs quite recursive. Each level consists of several layers. These layers consist of a 'head', which potentially takes (lexical) 'modifiers' and (grammatical) 'operators'. Levels, layers and their internal composition of heads, utilising modifiers and operators will be treated in the following chapters. After each of these chapters, the corresponding type of backchannel will be implemented. The Interpersonal Level will pertain to the functional aspects of backchannels (section 2.3.1.4), while the Phonological Level will regard the form (section 2.3.2.4).

2.3.1 The Interpersonal Level
A general overview

The Interpersonal Level (IL) "deals with all the formal aspects of a linguistic unit that reflect its role in the interaction between the Speaker and the Addressee" (HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE

2008: 46*)*. Any interaction entails that certain strategies are used in order to successfully arrive at a goal and "[e]ach participant in an interaction does so with a particular purpose in mind" (HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 46). Thus, in ongoing discourse, a Speaker will constantly shape their message according to the strategies they think will successfully convey their communicative goal to the Addressee. While the Speaker will formulate the message according to their own knowledge about the common ground, the process of formulation is additionally sensitive to "the knowledge that the Addressee also has his/her own purposes and strategies" (HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 46). In other words, the Speaker will mould their message in accordance to what they think the Addressee already knows, doesn't know, what their emotional state is, the entire (assumed) common ground, etc. This, as we will see in section (*2.3.2*), also implies certain repercussions for the structuring and realisation of the linguistic units at the Phonological Level (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 46).

The organisation of the Interpersonal Level

The IL describes the properties of linguistic units "that reflect, and indeed influence, their use in verbal interaction" (HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 48). Within FDG these linguistic units are modelled hierarchically, to reflect their part-whole relation as units of discourse (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 48). The top layer, the Move, consists of Discourse Acts, while Discourse Acts themselves are comprised of component elements, which again are built from even lower components (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 48). The formalised internal structure of each layer in FDG's IL and a corresponding explanation are given in (11) (HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 49):

(11) $(\pi V_1: H (V_1): \Sigma^N (V_1))_\Phi$ (the minimum structure being (V_1))

    (i)   each layer and each component of each layer is symbolized by an indexed variable (V);

    (ii)   each variable can be expanded by a lexical item or by a complex representation of a lower layer, to be known as the head (H);

    (iii) each head can be further modified by one or more modifiers (Σ), again either drawn from the lexicon, or internally complex;

    (iv) each variable can be specified by one or more operators (π), which will be expressed by grammatical or phonological rather than lexical means;

    (v) the units at each layer may have a function (Φ), rhetorical or pragmatic

(HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 48-49)

The application of the structure in (11) yields an IL organisation as depicted in (12) (HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 49). Since this work does not cover the entire IL, the layers

that are treated in this paper are marked in boldface. The layers lower than those in bold are given only for the sake of completeness, but can be disregarded for the purpose at hand:

(12) (πM_1: [**Move**

  (πA_1. [**Discourse Act**

    (πF_1: ILL (F_1): Σ (F_1)   Illocution

    (πP_1: … (P_1): Σ (P_1)) $_\Phi$ Speaker

    (πP_1: … (P_1): Σ (P_1)) $_\Phi$ Addressee

    (πC_1: [Communicated Content

      (πT_1: […] (T_1): Σ (T_1)) $_\Phi$ Subact of Ascription

      (πR_1: […] (R_1): Σ (R_1)) $_\Phi$ Subact of Reference

    ] (C_1): Σ (C_1)) $_\Phi$ Communicated Content

  ] (A_1): Σ (A_1)) $_\Phi$ **Discourse Act**

] (M_1): Σ (M_1))   **Move**

<div align="right">(HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 49)</div>

The highest layer in this structure, the Move, consists of at least one Discourse Act. Should more than one Discourse Act occur within a Move, they are aligned in linear order reflecting their temporal succession. There also can be cases where Discourse Acts within a Move overlap, such as in example (13) (taken from HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 49):

(13) The game (beginning of A_I), which began at 7.30 (A_J), ended in a draw (end of A_I).

In this case the IL will regard Discourse Act (A_I) as the first one, since (A_J) starts at a later point in the utterance (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 49-50). This difficulty in reflecting succession at the levels of formulation will eventually be resolved in the later levels of encoding. Depicting succession is not inherent to the levels of formulation. These levels have to be understood separately from the levels of encoding insofar the conceptualisation of the message to be encoded is regarded complete when it is transferred from the levels of FORMULATION to the levels of ENCODING. This also holds for the account of backchannels. While the Speaker's intentions may start to formulate inside the Conceptual Component without any backchannels (since in the Speaker's forming of the communicative intention, first of all, there is no actual listener behaviour), later, while realising their message, there will be an active listener using backchannels. Thus, when applying FDG, the internal layers of the levels of formulation will not be interrupted by a backchannel. The Phonological Level, however, belonging to the operation of encoding, potentially allows for an analysis also using lower layers, to e.g. relate the backchannel to pragmatic functions employed at the IL.

In this section the necessary layers of the IL will be presented according to HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE (2008) and KEIZER (2015). The IL is treated with multiple substantial chapters in both of these works. For reasons of brevity and conciseness the present chapter will summarise only those details necessary for an adequate understanding of the IL to reasonably implement backchannels into its formal frame. As stated beforehand, an analysis down to the layer of the Discourse Act should suffice to test the theory of its capabilities. The IL is comprised of six hierarchically organised layers (as given in (12)). The following pages will treat the necessary layers, that of the Move and the Discourse Act.

2.3.1.2 The Move

The Move constitutes "the largest unit of interaction relevant to grammatical analysis" (HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 50) and is seen as "a strategic unit that derives from the Speaker's communicative intentions" (HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 51). While a Move may pose an autonomous contribution in discourse, a more specific feature is considered its 'perlocutionary effect', i.e. "it either is, or opens up the possibility of a reaction" (HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 50). Another feature is that only a Move can trigger a (full) reaction (i.e. a turn, such as an answer, or an objection) from the Addressee. This reaction then must itself take the form of a Move (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 50). However, while a Move may often correspond with a turn, they are not in a default relation. A Speaker's turn may very well consist of several Moves. Have a look at the Butcher's first turn in example (14) (taken from HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 51):

(14)   Customer: Good morning. (Move C1)

      Butcher: Good morning. (Move B1) What will it be today? (Move B2)

      Customer: (Discourse Act A_I) 100 grams of ham ↗

               Butcher places ready-sliced ham on counter.

               (Discourse Act A_J) 200 grams of roast beef ↗

               Butcher places ready-sliced roast beef on counter.

               (Discourse Act A_K) And four meatballs ↘   (Move C2)

               Butcher places four meatballs on counter.

      Butcher: Here you are (Move B3)

      Customer: Thank you. (Move C3)

The completion of Moves, like B1 and B2 in (14), will typically be indicated via intonation, an encoding process belonging to analysis of the Phonological Level. The Butcher's answer in (14)

will thus be represented with according intonational operations at the Phonological Level. Besides such phonological cues, also consider the different interpersonal communicative intentions of Moves B1 and B2. With uttering B1, the Butcher is fulfilling the intention of greeting the customer. Move B2, on the other hand, fulfils the intention of eliciting certain information from the customer, i.e. the customer's order. Example (14) is also interesting since it is here where HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE (2008: 51) demonstrate the use of possible backchannels by the Butcher. The location of these backchannels is expected between the three Discourse Acts (A_I) - (A_K) of Move (C2). The butcher could have accompanied each of those by using a backchannel (e.g. *yes*) (possibly uttered as the goods are placed on the counter; this example will be discussed again later) (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 50-51).

A Move can, theoretically, be non-linguistic (a shrug, a nod, etc.), but where linguistic material is present, there will minimally be one Discourse Act (i.e. the Move's minimal structure consists of one Discourse Act (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 50)). A Move consisting of linguistic units is formalised as follows (HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 52):

(15) $(\pi M_1: [(A_1) \ldots (A_{1+N}) _{\{\Phi\}}] (M_1): \Sigma (M_I))$, where n ≥ 0

As given in (15) above, (M_1) represents the indexed variable, indicating the Move. The π indicates grammatical operations (see *Operators* below), while the Σ stands for lexical modifications (see *Modifiers* below). Enclosed within the square brackets is the unit of the Discourse Act (A_1) (see next section), of which at least one must be present within a Move. Finally, the (Φ) indicates rhetorical or pragmatic functions. A Move can very well take a function, too, yet the conception of this function is linked to the greater context of discourse. Since in FDG the Move is considered the highest layer of the IL, the functions of Moves within their respective conversation they appear in are not discussed within this framework (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 52).

Heads

The internal structure of Moves, as seen above, consists of a *head* which takes one or more Discourse Acts. The Discourse Act will be treated in its entirety right after this section. Beforehand possible (lexical) modifications (Σ) and (grammatical) operations (π) at the layer of the Move will be explained.

Modifiers

Moves may be lexically modified. These lexical modifiers "specify the Move's role in the ongoing discourse" (HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 58). In our frame in (15) these modifiers

appear in position Σ. In analysis it is formalised as in the following example (HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 59) (the modifier is marked in boldface):

(16) a. **To cut a long story short**, I'm still considering it, but I doubt very much I'll get there.

b. (M$_I$: [(A$_I$) -I'm still considering it- (A$_I$)) $_{Conc}$ (A$_J$: -I doubt very much I'll get there- (A$_J$))] (M$_I$): -to cut a long story short- (M$_I$))

Note that in (16) the modifier *to cut a long story short* has scope over the entire Move, i.e. also its two Discourse Acts (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 59).

Operators

Next to lexical modification, there is also the possibility to modify a Move with a grammatical element, represented by the operator π, as depicted with the operation of 'complete' in (17) (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 59). For English, consider the summarising and finalising *eventually*. This grammatical item may have scope over a whole Move, indicating that the Speaker is rounding up the narrative to come to an end. Consider the following example in (17):

(17) Eventually, we all were able to leave the ship.

(**complete** M$_I$: [(A$_I$: - we all were able to leave the ship - (A$_I$))] (M$_I$)) (own example)

In (17), the adverb *eventually*, preceding the proposition indicates that a narrative is concluded. The **complete** operator takes scope over the entire Move (M$_I$) and triggers the discourse marker *eventually*. The authors of FDG admit, that "it may be difficult to distinguish between Move operators and Discourse Act operators, since often the same item may be used for both purposes" (HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 60). What kind of operator it is, eventually will depend on its scope. Only if the operator has range over all the Discourse Acts within a Move can it be evaluated as a Move operator (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 60).

2.3.1.3 The Discourse Act

Discourse Acts are conceived as "the smallest identifiable units of communicative behaviour" (HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 60; cited from KROON (1995: 65)). They themselves do not necessarily contribute to arriving at the conversational goal. This is accomplished by the higher-order unit, the Move (bear in mind that a Move may very well consist of a single Discourse Act only). Being the smallest identifiable unit of communicative behaviour, the Discourse Act rather "will show only those components that have actually been deployed by the Speaker" (HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 61). Appropriately, there is no one-to-one correspondence between the Discourse Act and a linguistic unit, meaning that a simple NP (e.g. (9)), or an

exclamation (e.g. (10)), or other fragments (usually considered incomplete or reduced) may already be enough for the Speaker to express their communicative intention (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 60-61).

Since this paper deals with backchannels in the English language (more precisely British English), it needs to be said that realisation of Discourse Acts bears direct implications for the Phonological Level. Generally, a Discourse Act will correspond to an Intonational Phrase, "irrespective of the morphosyntactic counterpart of that Intonational Phrase" (see section *2.3.2.3*) (HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 62). And it is here, where the authors of FDG indirectly are hinting at a possible location of backchannels within ongoing discourse. A Discourse Act may trigger a backchannel as theorised with the butcher's example in (14). Now, if a Discourse Act at the IL corresponds to an Intonational Phrase at the Phonological Level, we are provided with a first conjecture of where to localise a backchannel. At the IL we can expect a backchannel to coincide with its preceding Discourse Act. At the Phonological Level then, a backchannel can be expected to occur in-between two Intonational Phrases (i.e. Discourse Acts). Further, if we acknowledge the definition of the Discourse Act given above by KROON (1995: 65), then it sounds fairly reasonable to expect non-interrupting, brief listener related reactions after the Discourse Act. Note again, a Move may consist of several Discourse Acts. This means, the communicative intention of a Move eventually is realised by the communicative behaviour expressed via its component Discourse Acts. A Listener then is expected to signal a backchannel, after the Speaker has expressed one of their Discourse Acts. Together with all other Discourse Acts, they will form the whole communicative intention of the Move. After the Speaker has formulated the Move, the Listener is expected to react with their own Move.

Of course, with different languages, there are different implications. A language might feature a morphological element hinting at a closed unit, such as the narrative converb *-Ip*, or the interrogative particle *mI* in Turkish, or the interrogative clitic *=aa* in Jamul Tiipay, where these grammatical elements indicate a coherent linguistic unit (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 62).

The formal frame for a Discourse Act in FDG is built as follows (HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 63):

(18) $(\pi A_1: [(F_1) (P_1)_S (P_2)_A (C_1) _\Phi] (A_1): \Sigma (A_1))$

As with the Move above, the (A_1) represents the indexed variable for the Discourse Act. The π and Σ indicate grammatical operations and lexical modifications, respectively. The square brackets represent the head of the Discourse Act, containing up to four different types of unit:

(i) the Illocution (F_1), (ii)-(iii) the speech-act Participants (P_1)$_S$ (Speaker) and (P_2)$_A$ (Addressee), and (iv) the Communicated Content (C_1) (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 63). These component parts comprise the layers beneath the Discourse Act. However, for the research question at hand, a full in-depth analysis is not necessary. Thus, the following paragraphs outline only the crucial features of the remaining layers within the head.

Heads

For this research question, the primary type of Discourse Act under inspection will be the 'Contentive Discourse Act'. The reason behind this is its property of always containing a Communicated Content and, by implication, an Addressee who is paying attention to it (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 64). Therefore, Contentive Discourse Acts are the type most likely to produce backchannels. The other two types of Discourse Acts are the Interactive and the Expressive Discourse Act. Both types can be disregarded for this work, since they are not expected to provoke any backchannel activity. The Interactive Discourse Act takes an Addressee, but is rather based on short pre-made conventionalised communication, e.g. *Congratulations on winning the race* (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 64). The Expressive Discourse Act represents the head's minimal structure and "give[s] direct expression to the Speaker's feelings rather than communicating some content to the Addressee" (HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 63). Examples include exclamations like: *Ouch!* or *Help!*. In the end, both types of Discourse Acts are deemed highly unlikely to trigger any kind of backchannels from the Addressee.

Since there will be no closer inspection of the IL, the internal structure of the Discourse Act will be outlined here briefly, to give the reader an idea and overview (also note the overview given in (12) on page 23). The Contentive Discourse Act is part of the set of Communicative Discourse Acts, which show the following formalisation (HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 64):

(19) A_1: [(F_1): ILL/♦ (F_I)) (P_1)$_S$ (P_2)$_A$ (C_1) $_\Phi$] (A_1)

In this structure the (F_1) slot is filled by either an abstract Illocution (ILL) or a lexical performative expression (♦) (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008 64). In FDG, Illocutions are defined "as the formally expressed conventionalized means available in a language to indicate the Speaker's communicative intentions" (KEIZER 2015: 60). Each Discourse Act contains only one Illocution, making the presence of such an Illocution an important diagnostic for Discourse Acts (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 69; KEIZER 2015: 60). The three main types of abstract Illocutions for English are posed by i) the declarative (*Barbara went to London*), ii) the

interrogative (*Where did Barbara go?*) and iii) the imperative Illocution (*Go to London!*) (cf. KEIZER 2015: 60-1). Besides those three main Illocution types, KEIZER (2015: 61) lists the minor types as well; iv) Optative (*Let her rest in peace*); v) Hortative (*Let us go to London*); vi) Exclamative[7] (*How easily she'd tricked him!*); and vii) Interpellative (*Peter!*).

Lexical performative expressions (♦) are Illocutions that make use of performative verbs. Such verbs are not used to describe any events in the real world, but to distinctly perform the action the verb is designating (cf. KEIZER 2015: 64; AUSTIN (1962)). Such performative verbs include examples like: *pronounce*, *declare*, *promise*, *proclaim*, *etc.* Consider the examples and respective analyses in (20); a) is an instance of an abstract Illocution, while b) poses a performative one (taken from KEIZER 2015: 65):

(20)   a. I'll be home by eight.

$(A_I: [(F_I: \text{DECL}) (P_1)_S (P_2)_A (C_I)] (A_I))$

b. I promise, I'll be home by eight.

$(A_I: [(F_I: \text{promise}) (P_1)_S (P_2)_A (C_I)] (A_I))$

The Speech Participants in FDG are represented as an alternation of S(peaker) $(P_1)_S$ and A(ddressee) $(P_2)_A$. Both are functions, indicating the distinction between self-related and other-related Illocutions (i.e. Expressive and all other types of Discourse Act), the latter of which is characterised through the presence of a Participant taking the Addressee function (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 84). In the present work, the Speech Participants mainly indicate the direction of discourse. Taking the Speaker's perspective into account, the default direction is as given in the frame of the Discourse Act in (18), i.e. from Speaker $(P_1)_S$ to Addressee $(P_2)_A$. When it comes to backchannels, obviously, the direction will be the other way around. A backchannel will always be articulated from Addressee $(P_2)_A$ to Speaker $(P_1)_S$. Thus, in the Interpersonal frame for backchannels, the Speaker Addressee functions will be analysed invertedly (cf. (24)).

Lastly, the Communicated Content (C_1) contains "the totality of what the Speaker wishes to evoke in his/her communication with the Addressee" (HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 87). The (head of the) Communicated Content contains one or more Subacts, either one of reference (to evoke a referent) or one of ascription (to evoke a property[8]) (cf. KEIZER 2015: 72). The information conveyed to the Addressee within the Communicated Content can either be

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7 Mirative in Hengeveld & Mackenzie (2008)

8 'Property' as used in FDG includes predications; i.e. in the utterance *Carl loves Susan*, the verb *love* is considered a 'property' pertaining to both arguments (*Carl* and *Susan*) of the utterance (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 110).

completely new, already given, or a composite of the two, new and old information (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 87). The layer of the Communicated Content is also where pragmatic functions are employed, e.g. to mark new and/ or given information. To achieve this, FDG predicts three major pragmatic functions within the Communicated Content: *Focus*, *Topic* and *Contrast* (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE: 2008 89-102), which are assigned to those specific linguistic units (representing the Subacts) that are singled out for special treatment (cf. KEIZER 2015: 74). For English, this commonly entails operations at the Phonological Level, e.g. extra pitch prominence on focused Syllables.

Modifiers

Discourse Acts may be modified by lexical elements. These modifiers "allow the Speaker to comment on that Discourse Act" (HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 64). Such modifiers are for example *briefly* (indicating stylistic properties of shortness), *in addition* or *dammit* (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 64-65). Since these modifiers occur with all kinds of Illocutions it becomes clear that they are indicated at the higher layer of the Discourse Act, rather than the lower layer of the Illocution. Modifiers are implemented directly into the IL occupying the Σ position in (18) (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 65). Have a look at example (21) (taken from HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 64):

(21)   Let's go dammit!

    b. $(A_1: [(F_1: \text{HORT } (F_1)) (P_1)_S (P_2)_A (C_1: \text{let's go } (C_1))_\Phi] (A_1): \textbf{dammit } (A_1))$

Operators

FDG assumes three different types of (grammatically coded) operators filling the operator slot π in (18). These three operators are; Iron(ic), Emph(atic), Mit(igative) (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 68). Generally speaking, each of these operators has scope over the whole Discourse Act and certain repercussions for the levels of encoding (the Morphosyntactic and Phonological Level), depending on the strategies of a particular language. Consider for example Irony in English. Usually, ironic utterances carry a distinctive intonation pattern; rather flat with stress on a non-Focal element, as in example (22) (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 65):

(22)   a. This IS fun.

    b. $(\textbf{iron } A_1: [(F_1: \text{DECL } (F_1)) (P_1)_S (P_2)_A (C_1: \text{this is fun } (C_1))_\Phi] (A_1))$

The Iron(ic) operator at the IL forces the Phonological Level to represent this shift in accent placement to arrive at the desired ironic intonation contour (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 65). The same pattern holds for the Emph(atic) operator, used to intensify a Discourse

Act. Where applied, it will trigger the Phonological Level to reflect this operation by indicating relatively extreme pitch movements (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 66). Note that the Emph(atic) operator can show up at other layers of the IL and is only considered a Discourse Act operator when it actually has scope over the whole Discourse Act (cf. KEIZER 2015: 59).

In the last few sections, the IL of FDG was introduced. As pointed out, FDG predicts the Discourse Act as the crucial layer in locating backchannels in ongoing discourse. Thus, we have accounted for the layer higher than the Discourse Act, the Move. This was necessary, since backchannels are expected to occur in-between the Discourse Acts of one Move. Also, we have clarified, at least briefly, how the internal structure of Discourse Acts is conceived. Now, after the crucial parts of the IL were introduced, the next section deals with incorporating the interpersonal functions of backchannels into the framework of FDG's IL.

2.3.1.4 The functions of backchannels in the Interpersonal Level

In section (*2.1.2*) we have clarified that backchannels serve as a device to 'guide' the Speaker, guarantee the flow of communication, often also supplying them with subjective and direct feedback. These basic purposes reflect the interpersonal and interactive nature of listener behaviour and backchannel use. FDG's Interpersonal Level, with its focus on the interaction between Speaker and Addressee, therefore, is an imperative instance for an adequate description of the communicative functions of backchannels.

Concerning the incorporation of backchannel functions into FDG's interpersonal framework, we have to bear in mind that we portray backchannels from the Speaker's perspective. This means that the basic formula of FDG remains to a large extent unaltered, since the utterance by the Speaker is not cancelled. In fact, to usefully incorporate backchannels it is necessary to formalise the Speaker's utterance, since it builds the basis into which any kind of listener reaction will be implemented. The backchannel thus has to be interpreted as belonging to the Speaker's Move (belonging to the unit of the Move that is), albeit the backchannel is uttered by the Addressee. At first this might seem counterintuitive, however, when viewing backchannels as belonging within the Speaker's Move we can adequately interpret the immediate effect a backchannel causes within the Speaker. Even more, it allows for an evaluation of discourse functions employed by the Speaker that surround the backchannel, i.e. the (Speaker related) preceding and ensuing discourse units. In the end we may gain a deeper insight about the interplay of discourse functions and their effect on speech participants. In what follows the functional characteristics of backchannels will be incorporated into the framework of FDG's Interpersonal Level.

To be able to properly insert the functions of backchannels into FDG, the model will receive a minor enhancement. The Discourse Act, being the central part of FDG and the unit where the speech participants are stored, will serve as our point of departure. Another reason for this is that HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE (2008: 50-1) admit that backchannels are to be expected after Discourse Acts. From an interpersonal perspective, FDG predicts backchannels as occurring around Discourse Acts rather than within. Given the definition by KROON (1995: 65), this makes sense, since the process of formulation within the Grammatical Component is not yet affected by listener behaviour. Consider the frame of the Discourse Act, repeated in (23) for convenience:

(23) $(\pi A_1: [(F_1)\ (P_1)_S\ (P_2)_A\ (C_1)\ _\Phi]\ (A_1): \Sigma\ (A_1))$

The orientation of discourse by default is interpreted as going from the Speaker $(P_1)_S$ to the Addressee $(P_2)_A$, represented by the order of the speech participants in (23). Obviously, backchannels are communicated vice versa, i.e. from Addressee to Speaker. This entails that an operation, indicating communication from Addressee to Speaker has to be implemented to enhance the Discourse Act frame. Keep in mind that the basic frame of the Discourse Act remains unaltered. Since the Speaker's narration is not interrupted, we have to account for the whole utterance as usual. For the description of backchannels, the following frame is proposed:

(24) $(\ldots)\ (BC_i: [\ \textsc{reg/sup}\ (P_2)_A\ (P_1)_S)]\ (BC_i))\ (\ldots)$

In this frame, *BC* is an abbreviation for *backchannel*, and (BC_i) demarcates its limits within the IL's framework. The index of (BC_i) relates the backchannel to its corresponding Discourse Act it occurred after. Thus, it usually will take the same index as its preceding Discourse Act. The square brackets contain all functional information and form a closed unit. Within, the REG/SUP indicate the backchannel's function (REG, SUP or both). The order of the participants represents the direction of communication of the backchannel, i.e. from Addressee $(P_2)_A$ to Speaker $(P_1)_S$. The Speaker's utterance, most commonly surrounding the backchannel but necessarily being present at one end of the backchannel, is indicated via the (…).

Consider the example in (25), taken from the BNC, which poses a textbook example for the REG function.

(25)   S: You've got to put it at chest height …
       A: Mm
       S: … make sure it's not knocked or covered by clothing   (BNC)

Implementing this fragment of conversation into our downscaled interpersonal frame of FDG yields the following formalisation:

(26) S: (A$_I$: [(F$_I$: IMP (F$_I$)) (P$_1$)$_S$ (P$_2$: you)$_A$ (C$_I$: [you've got to put it at chest height] (C$_I$))] (A$_I$))

A: (BC$_I$: [REG (P$_2$)$_A$ (P$_1$)$_S$] (BC$_I$))

S: (A$_J$: [(F$_J$: IMP (F$_J$)) (P$_1$)$_S$ (P$_2$)$_A$ (C$_J$: [make sure it's not knocked or covered by clothing] (C$_J$))] (A$_J$))

What we can see with this example is how the grammatical formalisation of the backchannel can be worked in-between the holistic units of formalisation of the Speaker's Move. The benefit of portraying the conversation in this manner is the possibility to evaluate the Speaker's interpersonal communicative behaviour (i.e. the illocution and various pragmatic functions deployed in the Discourse Act) and compare them to those interpersonal communicative intentions of the backchannel employed by the Addressee (see also section *5.3*). In (25) above, for example, the REG function is triggered by the Discourse Act *you've got to put it at chest height*. On the other hand, the REG function can be interpreted as triggering the following Discourse Act by the active Speaker to continue the narration. This way it becomes possible to relate speaker bound discourse units and their functions to listener bound backchannels and their functions.

2.3.2 The Phonological Level
A general overview

In this section the fourth and last of the levels of FDG, the Phonological Level (PL), is presented. The PL, together with the Morphosyntactic Level, represents one of the operations of encoding and receives its input from the former three levels, translating it into phonological representations (cf. KEIZER 2015: 251-252). The PL, like all other levels, also provides its own set of primitives that feed directly into the output component. It becomes clear that the PL's task is to (phonologically) encode information from the levels of Formulation. Where phonological processes are sensitive to morphosyntactic features of a language, the PL also receives input from the Morphosyntactic Level (cf. KEIZER 2015: 252). However, such input is disregarded here, since the Morphosyntactic Level is not treated in this paper.

The organisation of the Phonological Level

The structure of the PL is, again, hierarchically ordered and draws from the tradition of *Prosodic Phonology* (NESPOR & VOGEL 1986). Six basic units are distinguished as portrayed in (27) (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 428), again, the layers treated in this work are marked in boldface:

(27) (πU$_1$: [**Utterance**

     (πIP$_1$. [**Intonational Phrase**

        (πPP$_1$: [Phonological Phrase

           (πPW$_1$: [Phonological Word

              (πF$_1$: [Foot

                 (πS)^N Syllable

              ] (F$_1$))   Foot

           ] (PW$_1$))   Phonological Word

        ] (PP$_1$))   Phonological Phrase

     ] (IP$_1$))   **Intonational Phrase**

  ] (U$_1$))   **Utterance**

(HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 428)

The highest layer is represented by the Utterance (U$_1$) consisting of one or more Intonational Phrases (IP$_1$), which again consists of one or more Phonological Phrases (PP$_1$). Each Phonological Phrase contains one or more Phonological Words (PW$_1$), which are composed of one or more Feet (F$_1$), which, again, are made of at least one Syllable (S$_1$) (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 429; KEIZER 2015: 256).

When comparing the phonological layers above with the units at the IL, it becomes clear that certain default relations can be established. The higher layers typically correspond with interpersonal units; Utterances often correlate with Moves, Intonational Phrases with Discourse Acts and Phonological Phrases with Subacts (cf. KEIZER 2015: 256). Here we can already see where the phonological realisation of backchannels is supposed to be located. Since the Discourse Act is in a default relation with the Intonational Phrase, phonologically we can expect a backchannel to occur in-between two Intonational Phrases. This also gives us the necessary depth of analysis at the PL. As predicted by FDG, it should suffice to analyse the PL down to the layer of the Intonational Phrase, since lower layers are not expected to trigger backchannels.

Lastly, as mentioned above, the PL provides its own primitives that are applied at the various layers. These are as follows; firstly, there are prosodic patterns ('phonological templates' (KEIZER 2015: 257)) that apply at each layer of analysis, specifying the possible configurations of the various units for any given language. Secondly, there is an inventory of segmental sequences in order to express configurations of morphemes (e.g. *won't* for *will not*) or placeholders (e.g. /t/, /d/ or /id/ for past tense forms). Finally, there is also a set of operators to specify such prosodic configurations like '(f)all', '(r)ise', or '(h)igh' and '(l)ow' that have their ultimate effect in the Output Component (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 422; KEIZER

2015: 256-7). Each of these primitives will become clear as we briefly go through the internal structure of the PL.

2.3.2.1 The internal structure of the Phonological Level

In this section the necessary layers of the PL will be presented according to HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE (2008) and KEIZER (2015). As with the IL, the PL is treated exhaustively in both of these works. Again, this chapter will summarise only those details necessary for an adequate understanding of the PL to reasonably implement backchannels into its formal frame. An analysis beyond the layer of the Intonational Phrase is redundant, since our analysis at the IL stopped at the corresponding layer of the Discourse Act. The PL is comprised of six hierarchically organised layers (as depicted in (27)). The following pages will treat the necessary layers, that of the Utterance and the Intonational Phrase.

2.3.2.2 The Utterance

The Utterance (U_1) constitutes "the largest stretch of speech covered by the Phonological Level" (HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 430). Utterances typically correspond with the Move (IL) and are characterised by a substantial pause from surrounding Utterances. This pause, although recognisable, will never be interpreted as a hesitation by the Addressee (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 430). In addition, Utterances can be distinguished by pitch differences that mark them as a self-contained unit and are represented as operators, applied to the π-slot of the (U) variable (see (31)); '(f)alling' and '(r)ising' and '(n)eutral' (cf. KEIZER 2015: 258; HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 431). Consider the following example taken from KEIZER (2015: 258):

(28)   … the next day they got married. *And they lived happily ever after.*

The italicised phrase (Discourse Act) may be pronounced with extra low pitch movement on the last syllable of that phrase to mark the end of a whole Utterance, followed either by a pause or a turn. According to THOMPSON (1994), an Utterance ('paratone' in her words) is defined by "relatively high pitch on the first prominent syllable and by extra low pitch on the final tonic syllable, commonly followed by a significant pause" (HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 430; cited from THOMPSON 1994: 65-6). As described above, in example (28) 'relatively high pitch on the first prominent syllable' and 'extra low pitch on the final syllable' will be indicated by the use of the '(f)alling' operator as illustrated in (29) (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 431; KEIZER 2015: 258):

(29)   (fU$_1$: (fIP$_1$: /ðeɪˈlɪvdˈhæpəliˈevəˈɑːftə/ ^{IP}) ^{U})

Would this phrase be realised in the middle of an ongoing story, we could expect a similar pitch movement, however, only for this specific Intonational Phrase instead of the whole Utterance. Thus the '(f)' operator would not need to appear within the IP variable to indicate such pitch movement. In such a case it would suffice to mark the Utterance as falling, i.e. only the (U) variable would have taken the 'f' operator.

As was said in the beginning, Utterances consist of at least one Intonational Phrase and are conceptualised in FDG as follows (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 431):

(30) $(\pi U_1: (IP_1^{\ N \geq 1}) (U_1))$

2.3.2.3 The Intonational Phrase

Intonational Phrases (IP) typically correlate with Discourse Acts and are described by internal and external properties; internally, each IP contains a nucleus that defines the intonational characteristic of the whole IP (i.e. its global intonational pattern), by assigning the intended pitch movement to the respective Syllable(s). This, as we will see in the next section, bears implications for the lower layer of the Phonological Phrase. The same Syllable will also be present in the Phonological Phrase and it is here, where global pitch movement, as indicated by operators on the Intonational Phrase is realised (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 436). Externally, an IP will be "separated from other Intonational Phrases by a pause, typically less long than the pause used to separate Utterances from each other" (HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 432). Where Modifiers of Discourse Acts occur, they will usually be assigned their own Intonational Phrase, as in (31) below taken from HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE (2008: 432):

(31) Celtic won. However, Rangers lost.

$(\pi U_i: [(IP_i: /\textphonetic{ˈseltɪkˈwʌn}/ (IP_i)) (IP_j: /\textphonetic{haʊˈevə}/ (IP_j)) (IP_k: /\textphonetic{ˈreɪndʒəzˈlɒst}/ (IP_k))] U_i)$

Nonetheless, there is also the option to integrate such modifiers into the Intonational Phrase without being intonationally separated. Then modifiers like *however* could intonationally either be realised as separated from or integrated into their corresponding Discourse Act (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 432-3).

As mentioned before, IPs are characterised by a global pitch movement indicated with operators on the (IP) variable; '(r)ising' or '(f)alling' (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 434). These global pitch movements are in a close relationship to the Illocution (e.g. IMP or INTER) chosen at the IL. The IP in FDG is formalised as depicted in (32) (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 435):

(32) $(\pi IP_1: (PP_1^{\ n \geq 1}) (IP_1))$

Lastly, a few words on the layer below the IP, the Phonological Phrase (PP). It forms component part of the Intonational Phrase and stands in a default relation to the Subacts of the Communicated Content (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 436). The Phonological Phrase is characterised by containing a nuclear Syllable that, in stress languages like English, is more strongly stressed than any other surrounding Syllables (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 436). This nuclear Syllable is also the location where global pitch movement, as indicated by operators on the Intonational Phrase is realised (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 436). The general idea is that the Intonational Phrase carries the global pitch movement, reflecting illocutionary contrasts, whereas the Phonological Phrase is assigned local pitch movement and/ or pitch height, reflecting pragmatic functions. In other words, certain distinctions made at the higher levels (such as pragmatic functions ath the IL) can only be successfully encoded in the Phonological Phrase. The layers beneath the PP (the Phonological Word, Feet and Syllable) are disregarded in the present work, since these levels do no longer relate to any interpersonal configurations. These lower layers rather correspond to units at the Morphosyntactic Level (cf. KEIZER 2015: 256).

2.3.2.4 The form of backchannels in the Phonological Level

As explained in (*2.1.4*), there are two different categories concerning the form of backchannels; i) a generic form, independent of the conversation context, and ii) a specific form, dependent on the conversation context. The basic analysis of these forms will, as we will see in a moment, be based on the framework provided in FDG's Phonological Level, i.e. the same primitives will be used to formalise backchannels. The form of backchannels will be given in phonemic transcription, their prosodic composition outlined with the corresponding operators; r(ising) and f(alling) intonation contours; h(igh) and l(ow) or n(eutral) pitch level. Furthermore, it is important to note that a backchannel is analysed as belonging to the Speaker's Utterance (the unit of Utterance that is), just as with the Move at the IL. The reason behind this is, again, that we analyse the Speaker's perspective and have to account for the backchannel in an according manner.

For an analysis of backchannels at the PL, the following frame is proposed:

(33) $(BC_i: [(IP_1: /.../ (IP_{(1+N)}))] (BC_i))$

The indexed variable (BC_i) relates the backchannel to its corresponding Intonational Phrase, taking the same index. The square brackets enclose the totality of the backchannel's phonological composition. Within, backchannels are described using the same means as with the Speaker's Utterance. Just as the Speaker's Utterance, backchannels also carry a significant

intonational contour, represented by an Intonational Phrase (IP). The index of (IP$_1$) identifies more than one Intonational Phrases. Admittedly, considering the nature of backchannels, it seems highly unlikely for them to contain more than one IP[9]. Theoretically, a more exhaustive analysis, down to the layer of the Syllable, would be possible. In the remainder of this section the frame given in (33) is implemented into the frame of the Utterance. First, attention will be paid to generic backchannels, while in the latter part specific ones are implemented.

The generic form of backchannels, I argued above, is somewhat limited in length in order not to disrupt or even interrupt the Speaker. The specific form, however, is characterised by being highly context dependent, taking on a unique form, specific to the conversation context. Analysis will centre around the Intonational Phrase Level, just as analysis at the Interpersonal Level departed from the corresponding layer of the Discourse Act. The reason for that is that the Utterance is the highest layer, constituting the realisation of the Move which, according to the theory of FDG, produces no backchannels but (full) turns. Formalisation will also depend on our limits established at the IL, i.e. the Discourse Act. This limitation dictates that our analysis of an Utterance will, for now, end with the Intonational Phrase, since it is in close relation to the Discourse Act (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 429). As a case in point, take example (25), repeated here for convenience in (34):

(34) S: You've got to put it at chest height …

A: Mm

S: … make sure it's not knocked or covered by clothing   (BNC)

Here the backchannel *Mm* lies in-between two Intonational Phrases. There is no overlap or disruption. Analysis of such examples will be as in (35):

(35) (U$_I$: [(rIP$_I$: /jʊˈɡɔtʊˈpʊtɪtətˈtʃestˈhaɪt/ (IP$_I$))

(BC$_I$: [(rIP$_I$: /m:/ (IP$_I$))] (BC$_I$))

(rIP$_J$: /meɪkˈʃʊəɹˈɪtsnɔtˈnɔktəˈkʌvədbaɪˈkləʊðɪŋ/ (IP$_J$))] (U$_I$))

For an analysis of a specific backchannel, consider the utterance completion in example (36):

(36) S: but when it came to making their own up

A: they couldn't

S: they come up with half of one   (BNC)

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9 However, consider example (49) and its analysis in (51), where a backchannel is analysed containing more than one Intonational Phrase.

In (36) the backchannel *they couldn't* fits neatly between the two Speaker phrases without any overlap. With this short phrase, the Addressee attempts to complete the utterance of the Speaker, which reflects the specificity of this backchannel. Only with a grasp of the conversation topic and an idea about the Speaker's intentions will the Addressee be able to reasonably attempt completion of the Speaker's utterance. Consider the formalisation in (37):

(37)   (U_I: [(fIP_I: /bəʔˈwenɪʔˈkeɪmtʊˈmeɪkɪnðɛːɹˈəʊnʌp/ (IP_I))

(BC_I: [(fIP_I: /nðeɪˈkʊdn/ (IP_I))] (BC_I))

(fIP_J: /ðeɪˈkʌmʌpwɪθˈhɑːfəvwɔn/ (IP_J))] (U_I))

The Speaker utters the first Intonational Phrase (IP_I), which is reacted upon by an utterance completion *they couldn't* in (BC_I). In example (37) we also see that utterance completions may not be entirely successful. The phrase *they couldn't* somewhat reflects what the Speaker was attempting to formulate, yet not precisely. Afterwards the Speaker continues with her Move by uttering the succeeding Intonational Phrase (IP_J).

3. Methodology and data

3.1 Methodology

In the next chapter (*4*), the theoretical framework established in chapter (*2*) will be applied to six selected examples taken from the BNC (Transcripts G1-G3 and S1-S3). These transcripts contain generic (G) and specific (S) backchannel examples respectively and were chosen according to the predictions of FDG, i.e. the backchannel appeared exactly between two Discourse Acts/ Intonational Phrases. Further, next to the formal distinction, the functional aspects were also highlighted. The proposed possibilities (REG/ SUP, or both functions) are interpreted and reflected in turn with the examples of chapter (*4*).

Firstly, to give the reader an orientation, each example begins with a general but brief explanation of the current conversation topic. Then, each example is split into two parts. The first part (a) shows excerpts from the original transcript that were copied from the Audio BNC homepage[10]. The numbering of the so-called 's-units' in the original transcripts was copied to account for succession. The interpersonal unit of the Discourse Act (A_i) will already be demarcated within these transcripts. Such demarcations allow for readily identifying the corresponding Intonational Phrase, helping the reader recognising certain units of FDG in the transcripts, before they are put into the actual grammar model. Following the transcript in (a) is

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10 http://bnc.phon.ox.ac.uk/transcripts-html/KBG.html

a brief characterisation of the backchannel, naming the timestamp of when it occurred on file, the form of the backchannel and its function. In the second part (b), the established framework will be applied to the examples according to the realisation of the conversation as it was recorded on tape. To make the examples in chapter (*4*) more accessible to the reader, the internal structure of the Discourse Act was dismissed, i.e. analysis will end with the Discourse Act/ Intonational Phrase. Instead, orthographic representation of discourse is used to represent the internal composition of Discourse Acts. It must be noted here that the examples provided in the Appendix, however, were treated with a full in-depth analysis, exhausting the present Interpersonal Level framework. Some examples stored in the Appendix also pose exceptions to the predictions of FDG and thus will be discussed separately in chapter (*5*). Lastly, for transcripts G1-G3 and S1-S3, a brief explanation about the proposed application will complete each example. These explanations serve to justify the chosen arrangement of the examples into their corresponding FDG units and also to account for certain phenomena of the backchannels themselves and the features surrounding them.

Besides the phonological description provided by FDG's PL, the *List of abbreviations and symbols* keeps certain unique entries, such as e.g. '[' and ': : :'. These symbols are borrowed from SCHEGLOFF (2000: 59-63) and, in the present work, mainly are used to indicate overlaps. Still, various examples benefit from a closer description by using the borrowed symbols; These symbols are characterised in SCHEGLOFF (2000: 59-63) as such;

i) to demarcate sections of overlap, SCHEGLOFF (2000) uses square brackets. Left square brackets ([), "one above the other on two successive lines with utterances by different speakers, indicates a point of overlap onset, whether at the start of an utterance or later" (SCHEGLOFF 2000: 59). Right square brackets (]), "one above the other on two successive lines with utterances by different speakers indicates a point at which two overlapping utterances both end, where one ends while the other continues, or simultaneous moments in overlaps which continue" (SCHEGLOFF 2000: 59)

ii) For paralinguistic events such as laughter, double parantheses are used to mark descriptions of such events, rather than representations of them (e.g. ((laughter)), ((cough)), etc.) (cf. SCHEGLOFF 2000: 62)

iii) Colons (:::) "are used to indicate the prolongation or stretching of the sound just preceding them. The more colons, the longer the stretching" (SCHEGLOFF 2000: 59).

3.2 The data

For the analysis at hand, two files from the digitised Audio BNC[11] were chosen, restricting the sample language to British English exclusively. The files were randomly chosen, the only condition being that, at least for the analysed examples, maximally two people were talking at once. In total, the files encompass 94 minutes and 31 seconds of family conversation. The audio files are provided in 16-bit, 1-channel (monophonic) .wav files, with a sampling rate of 16,000 samples per second. The two files, as well as all used examples, consist largely of spontaneous, casual conversations between the parents, Susan and Carl. Every tape of the BNC was transcribed, with the transcripts being available in various formats. For the present analysis I chose to work with the html version of the transcript[12]. It is conveniently accessible and provides descriptions of the setting and additional information about the participants, as well as references relevant for identifying the tapes that were used. The first file comprises Tapes (033601) and (033602), recorded on 21.02.1992, with the location described as 'Suffolk: Saxtead (home)' and activity as 'reading and talking', as seen on the transcript. Tapes (033801) and (033802) compose the second file, recorded on the 27.02.1992, the location being 'Suffolk: Saxtead (car)' and activity 'going to visit Aldburgh with family'.

The conversations under inspection were all performed by Carl and Susan. Their description in the transcript must be read as follows: xml:id; age group; sex; (name; age; occupation, dialect) role. For Carl and Susan, the following entries are given:

xml:id	Age group	Sex	Name	Age	Occupation	Dialect	Role
PS051	Ag2	m	Carl	age 34	teacher	North-east England	self
PS052	Ag2	f	Susan	age 33	teacher (pt)	Home Counties	wife

TABLE 3: The Participants

The html version of the transcripts is organised in so-called 's-units'. These s-units are numbered as represented in the square brackets preceding them. This proves helpful for the analysis at hand, since the various utterances of the participants, including backchannels, are already demarcated and ordered as they unfold in discourse. Note however, these s-units are in no relation to the discourse units presented in our theoretical framework. The numbering was kept purely for reasons of organisation. In some cases, minor errors were found in the transcript, such as misinterpretation of onsets, where a backchannel starts earlier than transcribed. Another difficulty was posed by unintelligible parts or transcripts with obviously misheard sounds or

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11 http://www.phon.ox.ac.uk/AudioBNC

12 http://bnc.phon.ox.ac.uk/transcripts-html/KBG.html

words. Where necessary and possible, adjustments where applied and a note was left where such problems occurred.

4. Analysis of the data

In this chapter the theoretical framework will be applied to the data. Since the formal distinction into 'generic' vs 'specific' backchannels is fairly straightforward, the subchapters were arranged accordingly. Firstly, three 'generic' backchannel examples will be analysed (Transcripts G1-G3), afterwards three 'specific' ones will be treated (Transcripts S1-S3). Keep in mind that forms and functions of backchannels will be treated here only so far as they are reflected in the data. The theoretical framework of this paper is in no way meant to be absolute but should rather be seen as an attempt to typologise backchannels for the framework at hand. Theoretically, especially when it comes to functional aspects of backchannels, there may very well be functions that are not reflected in the present paper.

4.1 Generic backchannels

Transcript G1

Example (38) poses a Move, where Susan is the Speaker and Carl is listening. The Move comprises sentence units [102]-[104], with [103] representing the backchannel. In this part of the conversation Susan is introducing a new topic. She is telling Carl that she recently met an acquaintance, whose name was anonymised in the data (described as [redacted] here). Consider Transcript G1 in (38):

(38)a. Susan (PS052) [102] (A_I) And I saw Mrs [redacted] (A_I)

Carl (PS051) [103] (BC_I) Oh yes (BC_I)

Susan (PS052) [104] (A_J) in the bank, when I went up to the bank (A_J)

BC Timestamp	Form	Function
(05:07)	generic /ɔːˈjes/	regulative

When put into our theoretical framework of FDG we arrive at the following formalisation:

(38)b.   **Interpersonal Level**:

(M$_I$: [(A$_I$: [(F$_I$: DECL (F$_I$)) (1 P$_I$)$_S$ (P$_J$)$_A$ (C$_I$: [And I saw Mrs [redacted]] (C$_I$))] (A$_I$))

(BC$_I$: [REG (P$_J$)$_A$ (P$_I$)$_S$] (BC$_I$))

    (A$_J$: [(F$_I$: DECL (F$_I$)) (1 P$_I$)$_S$ (P$_J$)$_A$(C$_J$: [in the bank, when I went up to the bank] (C$_J$))] (A$_J$))]

(M$_I$))

    Phonological Level:

(U$_I$: [(rIP$_I$: /ənaɪˈsɔmɪˌsəs [redacted]/ (IP$_I$))

(BC$_I$: [(rIP$_I$: /ɔːˈjes/ (IP$_I$))] (BC$_I$))

    (fIP$_J$: /ɪnðəˈbænkwenaɪwentˈʌpðəˈbænk/ (IP$_J$))] (U$_I$))

Sentence units [102]-[104] represent one unit, the Move (M$_I$). [102] and [104] function as Discourse Acts (A$_I$) and (A$_J$) respectively, [103] functions as backchannel (BC$_I$). The unit of the Move is indicated on the one hand by the communicative goal of the Speaker, to inform the Addressee about Mrs [redacted] and the place she met her. On the other hand, phonological means are deployed to demarcate [102]-[104] as a closed unit, meaning that the Move in (M$_I$) is corresponding to the Utterance (U$_I$). Each Discourse Act is corresponding to an Intonational Phrase, (A$_I$) to (IP$_I$) and (A$_J$) to (IP$_J$). The first Discourse Act (A$_I$) is articulated with a continuation rise, while the latter (A$_J$) is realised with falling intonation, indicating the end of the discourse unit.

The backchannel in this example shows a generic form (/ɔːˈjes/) and carries a regulative function. As evidenced by the transcript, the backchannel is located in-between the two Discourse Acts. The index of (BC$_I$) relates the backchannel to its corresponding Discourse Act (A$_I$). The form, being generic, is not bound to this context alone but could be uttered in any other conversation. Its function is interpreted as regulative because it conveys firstly, understanding of the content, i.e. the Addressee confirms to know whom the Speaker is talking about. Secondly, the Addressee signals continued attention to hear what the Speaker has to say about Mrs [redacted]. Moreover, as its preceding Discourse Act (A$_I$), (BC$_I$) also is realised with a (slightly) rising intonation contour. This is indicative of the Listener awaiting further information about the topic introduced in (A$_I$). A supportive function seems highly unlikely, because the Speaker cannot be said to (dis)agree with the proposition 'I saw Mrs [redacted]' or that he shows any empathy towards the Speaker for that matter. The backchannel therefore must be interpreted as a means to communicate to the Speaker that she may continue telling something about Mrs [redacted].

The following example consists of sentence units [35] to [37], with [36] representing the backchannel. The Utterance is realised by Carl, Susan occupies the Listener mode. In this early piece of conversation, Carl is introducing the topic of *Matthew*, a pupil at their school, into the discourse. Consider the fragment in (39):

(39)a. Carl (PS051)   [35] (A_I) Well, you were right what you said though about (A_I)

        Susan (PS052) [36] (BC_I) Mm (BC_I)

        Carl (PS051)   [37] (A_J) Matthew (A_J)

BC Timestamp	Form	Function
(01:19)	generic /m:/	supportive

Formalisation of this discourse fragment within our framework of FDG is provided in (39b):

(39)b. **Interpersonal Level**:

(M_I [(A_I: [(F_I: DECL (F_I)) (P_I)$_S$ (P_J: you)$_A$

    (C_I: [Well, you were right what you said though about] (C_I))] (A_I))

(BC_I: [SUP (P_J)$_A$ (P_I)$_S$] (BC_I))

    (A_J: [(F_I: DECL (F_I)) (P_I)$_S$ (P_J)$_A$ (C_J: [Matthew] (C_J))] (A_J))] (M_I))

Phonological Level:

(U_I: [(rIP$_I$: /welˈjuwɛːˈraɪʔwɔʔjuˈsɛdðəʊəˈbəʊt/ (IP$_I$))

(BC_I: [(fIP$_I$: /m:/ (IP$_I$))] (BC_I))

    (fIP$_J$: /ˈmaðju/ (IP$_J$))] (U_I))

Sentence units [35] (A_I) and [37] (A_J), each represent a Discourse Act. Together with the backchannel in [36], they comprise one closed unit, the Move (M_I). The communicative goal of Carl is eventually realised by uttering the name *Matthew*. Susan's backchannel (BC_I) is interpreted as a reaction to Discourse Act (A_I). Another indication of a closed unit is the speaker shift after Carl's statement, when Susan is taking over the floor (sentence units [38] onwards). At the PL, within the Utterance (U_I), the Discourse Acts (A_I) and (A_J) each correspond to the Intonational Phrases (IP$_I$) and (IP$_J$) respectively. We can hear that (IP$_I$) ends with a continuation rise, suggesting that more information will follow. Discourse Act (A_J) however, ends with falling intonation, indicating that Carl's Move is finished. Note also that in (39), again, the interpersonal unit of the Move is in a default relation with the phonological unit of the Utterance. Lastly, another crucial feature for a closed discourse unit, there is also a significant pause between Carl's and Susan's turn.

The backchannel in [36] is functionally a supportive one, formally it has generic characteristics. It is generic, because a simple /m:/ with falling intonation can never be context bound. This is also directly evidenced by example (25) above, where the same backchannel occurs in a completely different conversation context (albeit realised with different prosody). The functional property can be interpreted since Susan, by signalling her backchannel, can be said to agree with Carl's proposition. Admittedly, it is difficult, nigh impossible, assessing to exactly which part of Carl's utterance she is agreeing to. Whether to the proper name *Matthew* or the proposition of 'being right', or perhaps both. Nonetheless, a dedicated regulative purpose can, in my opinion, be neglected. Firstly, because Carl has finished his Utterance, there is nothing he would like to add. Secondly, Carl's communicative intention is fulfilled and after a significant pause Susan takes over the floor. Finally, the prosodic characteristics of the backchannel itself hint at a dedicated supportive rather than regulative function. Consider again the /m:/ in (25) above, interpreted as a regulative backchannel. It is realised with a rising intonation contour, signalling that the Listener is expecting more information. Contrary to this, the /m:/ in (39) is realised with falling intonation. Besides the context, it is this distinct falling intonation that suggests the supportive function. Even more, it suggests that Susan already knows about what Carls is telling her. A rising intonation in this case would have suggested that Susan was expecting further information as to what or who she was right about. Thus, the falling intonation of the backchannel in (39) rather indicates a supportive function.

Transcript G3

This example shows sentence units [42]-[44], the backchannel occurring in [43]. Susan is taking the Speaker role, Carl is the Listener. [42] represents one Discourse Act, [44], for reasons of brevity, was reduced to three Discourse Acts, all belonging to Susan's Move that spans from [42]-[45]. The fragment below (A_L) printed in smaller font and in parenthesis is given for reasons of completeness and context and will not be analysed. In this fragment the topic still revolves around *Matthew* (from (39) above) and his problematic relations and interpersonal difficulties at school and in general. Consider Transcript G3 in (40):

(40)a. Susan (PS052) [42] (A_I) He's just got such a downer on himself (A_I)

      Carl (PS051)   [43] (BC_I) Mm (BC_I)

      Susan (PS052) [44] (A_J) and he's he's got such a (A_J)

                    (A_K)a negative (A_K)

                    (A_L) way of looking at himself (A_L)

                    (and everybody else looks at him that way now.

            [45] Cos he he, he cannot be positive ... he contributes nothing!)

BC Timestamp	Form	Function
(01:57)	generic /m/	regulative/ supportive

The formalisation for our FDG frame is given in (40)b:

(40)b. **Interpersonal Level**:

(M$_I$ [(A$_I$: [(F$_I$: DECL (F$_I$)) (P$_I$)$_S$ (P$_J$)$_A$

    (C$_I$: [He's just got such a downer on himself] (C$_I$))] (A$_I$))

(BC$_I$: [REG/ SUP (P$_J$)$_A$ (P$_I$)$_S$] (BC$_I$))

    (A$_J$: [(F$_I$: DECL (F$_I$)) (P$_I$)$_S$ (P$_J$)$_A$ (C$_J$: [and he's he's got such a (C$_J$))] (A$_J$))

    (A$_K$: [(F$_I$: DECL (F$_I$)) (P$_I$)$_S$ (P$_J$)$_A$ (C$_K$: [a negative (C$_K$))] (A$_K$))

    (A$_L$: [(F$_I$: DECL (F$_I$)) (P$_I$)$_S$ (P$_J$)$_A$ (C$_L$: [way of looking at himself] (C$_L$))] (A$_L$))] (M$_I$))

    Phonological Level:

(U$_I$: [(fIP$_I$: /hiːˈtʃəstgɔʔˈsʌtʃəˈdaʊnəɹɒnɪmˈsəlf/ (IP$_I$))

(BC$_I$: [(IP$_I$: /m/ (IP$_I$))] (BC$_I$))

    (fIP$_J$: /ənˈhiːsʔiːsgɒtˈsʌtʃə/ (IP$_J$))

    (fIP$_K$: /əˈnegətɪf/ (IP$_K$))

    (fIP$_L$: /ˈweɪəˈlʊkɪnæʔɪmˈself/ (IP$_L$))] (U$_I$))

Sentence units [42]-[45] constitute the Speaker's Move (M$_I$). The analysis of this quite complex Move is composed of four Discourse Acts, (A$_I$) - (A$_L$). It contains the full communicative goal of the Speaker, articulating to the Listener that there is a certain problem with *Matthew*. Phonologically, the Move consists of four corresponding Intonational Phrases, (IP$_I$) – (IP$_L$). All Discourse Acts (A$_I$) through (A$_L$), are realised with a falling intonation contour. However, (A$_I$) and (A$_J$) are realised fairly cohesive, with hardly any hesitation between them, so much that the backchannel in [43] almost does not fit in-between. The Speaker's Move/ Utterance is completed in sentence unit [45] that also ends with a characteristic falling intonation. Furthermore, after the Speaker has completed her Utterance there is a switch and the Listener takes over the turn.

    The backchannel in [43] is diagnosed as a generic /m/. It is a short and relatively high pitched /m/ that is articulated right in-between (A$_I$) and (A$_J$). At the Interpersonal Level, the index of (BC$_I$) indicates its correspondence to Discourse Act (A$_I$). Functionally speaking, (BC$_I$) poses an instance, where it can be argued that supportive and regulative means converge. The two participants have been talking about the topic of *Matthew* for a moment now. By articulating (A$_I$), the Speaker is summarising a crucial reason for *Matthew's* problems. The Listener is backing

up this information now by signalling agreement via the backchannel (BC$_I$). It is like a very condensed form of saying "Yes, I agree", or "I think so, too". While functioning as a supportive means, also a regulative purpose can be interpreted. Susan's whole Utterance spans over a significant amount of sentence units. The whole utterance can be interpreted as encompassing sentence units [38]-[45], consisting of even more Discourse Acts, yet only one backchannel. Since Susan is holding up her turn for quite a long time we may interpret (BC$_I$) with a secondary regulative function. It serves not only to reinforce Susan's proposition about *Matthew* but also as an update for Susan that Carl still remains in the listening mode and is paying continued attention.

4.2 Specific backchannels

Transcript S1

For Transcript S1, there is no BNC transcription anymore. For Tape 033601, transcription ends at (32:20). For this reason, I transcribed the following three sentence units myself and left them unnumbered. The conversation fragment under inspection here is about an article read by Susan. The topic is about a hit and run accident, leaving one man dead while on his way to work. Susan is taking on the Speaker role, Carl the Listener role. Susan is paraphrasing the article she is reading, to explain the details to Carl. Consider example (41):

(41)a. Susan (PS052) (A$_I$) The hit and run driver didn't erm (A$_I$)

  Carl (PS051) (BC$_I$) stop (BC$_I$)

  Susan (PS052) (A$_J$) go to the police station 'til the next morning (A$_J$)

BC Timestamp	Form	Function
(32:51)	specific /stɒp/	regulative

A formalisation for FDG is given in (41)b:

(41)b. **Interpersonal Level**:

(M$_I$ [(A$_I$: [(F$_I$: DECL (F$_I$)) (P$_I$)$_S$ (P$_J$)$_A$ (C$_I$: [The hit and run driver didn't erm] (C$_I$))] (A$_I$))

(BC$_I$: [REG (P$_J$)$_A$ (P$_I$)$_S$] (BC$_I$))

  (A$_J$: [(F$_I$: DECL (F$_I$)) (P$_I$)$_S$ (P$_J$)$_A$ (C$_J$: [go to the police station 'til the next morning] (C$_J$))] (A$_J$))]

(M$_I$))

Phonological Level:

(U$_I$: [(nIP$_I$: /ðɪˈhɪtəndˈɹʌndɹˈaɪvəˈdɪdntˈɛːm/ (IP$_I$))

(BC$_I$: [(fIP$_I$: /[stɒp]/ (IP$_I$))] (BC$_I$))

    (fIP$_J$: /[gəʊtʊ]ðəpʊˈliːsˈteɪʃənˈtɪlðəˈneksˈmɔːnɪŋ/ (IP$_J$))] (U$_I$))

Example (41) poses the Move (M$_I$), comprised of two Discourse Acts (A$_I$) and (A$_J$), with the backchannel (BC$_I$) occurring in-between them, although not as clear cut as in the other examples. In this case, the parts enclosed by the square brackets of (IP$_J$) and (BC$_I$) overlap. The intention of Susan with this Move is to inform Carl about the hit and run driver not turning himself in until the next morning. From a phonological perspective, Discourse Act (A$_I$), more specifically the Intonational Phrase (IP$_I$) ends with no distinct, neutral intonation. Together with Susan's *erm* such a level intonation indicates continuation of the turn. However, before Susan articulates her next Intonational Phrase (IP$_J$), Carl is reacting with (BC$_I$) in form of an utterance completion *stop*. Finally, Susan ends her Utterance (U$_I$) with falling intonation, to indicate the completion of Move (M$_I$).

    The backchannel (BC$_I$) takes on a specific form and a regulative function. It is considered specific, because Carl's *stop* is specific to this very conversation context. Admittedly, a simple *stop* could be expected in many instances, however, in this case it is a distinct attempt by Carl to complete Susan's utterance. It is also because of this utterance completion, why the regulative function can be interpreted. With his attempt to complete Susan's utterance, Carl is not only conveying attentiveness towards Susan, but also his understanding of the topic. Carl's *stop* is an attempt to fill Susan's brief thinking pause (indicated by *erm*), in order to prompt her to continue with the narration. A support seems unlikely, since Carl is neither (dis)agreeing with Discourse Act (A$_I$), nor is he endorsing (A$_I$) or directly sympathising with the event described. He rather tried to make Susan skip Discourse Act (A$_J$) with his attempt of an utterance completion. Thus, (BC$_I$) rather must be interpreted as a regulative means, trying to guide the Speaker in her turn.

Transcript S2

In this piece of discourse, the topic is about an episode ('My Sister-Wife') of the TV show 'Screen Two'. Reading through the plot, Susan learns that the film is concerned with the issue of polygamy in Asian communities. Intrigued by the subject, Susan reads on to find out, whether it is about a Muslim family. Since this fragment also lacks any transcription in the BNC, I again added it myself, leaving out sentence unit numbering. Consider example (42):

(42)a. Susan (PS052) (A$_I$) Oh, Hindus Carl, they are not Muslim (A$_I$)

    Carl (PS051)   (BC$_I$) No, they aren't (BC$_I$)

    Susan (PS052) (A$_J$) All three are devout Hindus, vegetarian and don't drink alcohol. (A$_J$)

BC Timestamp	Form	Function
(37:13)	specific /nəʊðeɪˈaːn/	supportive

A formalisation for FDG is given in (42)b:

(42)b. **Interpersonal Level**:

(M$_I$ [(A$_I$: [(F$_I$: DECL (F$_I$)) (P$_I$)$_S$ (P$_J$)$_A$ (C$_I$: [Oh, Hindus Carl, they are not Muslim] (C$_I$))] (A$_I$))

(BC$_I$: [SUP (P$_J$)$_A$ (P$_I$)$_S$] (BC$_I$))

    (A$_J$: [(F$_I$: DECL (F$_I$)) (P$_I$)$_S$ (P$_J$)$_A$

    (C$_J$: [All three are devout Hindus, vegetarian and don't drink alcohol] (C$_J$))] (A$_J$))] (M$_I$))

    Phonological Level:

(U$_I$: [(rIP$_I$: /ˈhinduːsˈkaːlðeɪˈaːnətˈmʊslɪm/ (IP$_I$))

(BC$_I$: [(fIP$_I$: /nəʊðeɪˈ[aːn]/ (IP$_I$))] (BC$_I$))

    (fIP$_J$: /   [ɔːlˈθ]riːədəˈvaʊtˈhinduːsvədʒəˈtɛɹɪənəndˈdəʊntdɹɪnkˈælkəhəl/ (IP$_J$))] (U$_I$))

Again, Susan is taking on the Speaker role, while Carl occupies the Listener role. The intention behind Susan's Move (M$_I$) is to inform Carl that the characters in the film in fact are not Muslims but Hindus. Discourse Act (A$_I$) serves as an instantiation of that fact, while (A$_J$) provides further evidence, probably taken from the plot description Susan was reading through. In (42), Move (M$_I$) is corresponding to the Utterance (U$_I$). Within (U$_I$), each of the interpersonal Discourse Acts, (A$_I$) and (A$_J$), reflects an Intonational Phrase, (IP$_I$) and (IP$_J$) respectively. The first Intonational Phrase (IP$_I$) is realised with continuation-rise, indicating that more information will follow. The ensuing Intonational Phrase (IP$_J$) then concludes Susan's Utterance/ Move, as expressed by the falling intonation on (IP$_J$), indicated by the 'f' operator. Lastly, the significant pause after Susan's Move allows for such an interpretation as well.

    Carl realises his backchannel (BC$_I$) in-between the two Discourse Acts (A$_I$) and (A$_J$) ((IP$_I$) and (IP$_J$) respectively), only this time with partial overlap as indicated by the square brackets within (BC$_I$) and (IP$_J$). In this case the specific form of the backchannel is made up of a whole phrase *no they aren't*. Its function is interpreted as supportive. The form is specific, because the phrase in (BC$_I$) is unique to this conversation context. Carl necessarily needed the preceding Discourse Act (A$_I$) in order to react with (BC$_I$). The supportive function lies in his agreement with Susan's proposition in (A$_I$). By uttering (BC$_I$), Carl agrees with Susan that the

characters in question are not Muslim, but in fact Hindus. A dedicated regulative purpose of (BC$_I$) is unlikely, since Carl's backchannel does not depend on the following Discourse Act (A$_J$). Carl articulated (BC$_I$) rather to express his agreement with (A$_I$) than to prompt Susan to continue. Theoretically, Susan's Move could have been completed with (A$_I$). However, as phonologically indicated in (IP$_I$), she wanted to add more information and continued with Move (M$_I$)/ Utterance (U$_I$). It is for this reason why Carl's utterance belongs within Susan's Move and is given backchannel status. Otherwise, without (A$_J$), (BC$_I$) could potentially be interpreted as its own turn. Thus, the function of (BC$_I$) here is interpreted as realised with a rather supportive purpose in mind.

Transcript S3

The following transcript is comprised by sentence units [3577]-[3579], the backchannel occurring in [3578]. The family is on a road trip, just passing an area where they used to live. Susan and Carl are commenting various things they observe while driving by the scenery. In this piece of conversation, Susan is telling about going to a place which was quite close to the area they are driving through. Consider example (43):

(43)a. Susan (PS052) [3577] (A$_I$) Well I went out to this place which is around here (A$_I$)

Carl (PS051)   [3578] (BC$_I$) It's down there (BC$_I$)

Susan (PS052) [3579] (A$_J$) just down this one by (A$_J$)

(A$_K$) oh of course you drove to get the cot from there didn't you?
(A$_K$)

BC Timestamp	Form	Function
(31:51)	specific /ˈdaʊnðɛə/	regulative/supportive

The formalisation for FDG is given in (43b):

(43)b: **Interpersonal Level**

(M$_I$ [(A$_I$: [(F$_I$: DECL (F$_I$)) (P$_J$)$_S$ (P$_J$)$_A$ (C$_I$: [Well I went out to this place which is around here] (C$_I$))]
(A$_I$))

(BC$_I$: [REG/SUP (P$_J$)$_A$ (P$_I$)$_S$] (BC$_I$))

(A$_J$: [(F$_I$: DECL (F$_I$)) (P$_I$)$_S$ (P$_J$)$_A$ (C$_J$: [just down this one by] (C$_J$))] (A$_J$))

(A$_K$: [(F$_I$: DECL (F$_I$)) (P$_I$)$_S$ (P$_J$)$_A$

(C$_K$: [oh of course you drove to get the cot from there didn't you] (C$_K$))] (A$_K$))] (M$_I$))

Phonological Level

(U$_I$: [(rIP$_I$: /ðeɹəˈwentˈaʊtuðə [inaudible] pleɪsˈwɪtʃɪzəɹˈaʊndɪə/ (IP$_I$))

(BC$_I$: [(fIP$_I$: /ˈdaʊnðɛə/ (IP$_I$))] (BC$_I$))

    (nIP$_J$: /daʊnˈðɪswənˈbaɪ/ (IP$_J$))

    (fIP$_K$: /əfˈkɔːsjʊˈdɹəʊftʊgetðəˈkɒtfɹɒmðɛəˈdɪdntju/ (IP$_K$))] (U$_I$))

In (43), Susan is functioning as Speaker, Carl as Listener. Sentence units [3577]-[3579] comprise the Move (M$_I$), characterised by the intention to tell about the place where Susan once went. Move (M$_I$) consists of three Discourse Acts (A$_I$), (A$_J$) and (A$_K$), with the backchannel (BC$_I$) occurring in-between (A$_I$) and (A$_J$). At the PL, the three Discourse Acts each correspond to an Intonational Phrase, (A$_I$) to (IP$_I$), (A$_J$) to (IP$_J$) and (A$_K$) to (IP$_K$). The first Intonational Phrase (IP$_I$) is realised with a continuation rise, indicating that Susan is going to tell more about this specific place she went to. (IP$_J$) ends with neutral intonation, while the last Intonational Phrase (IP$_K$) is realised with falling intonation, indicating the end of the Utterance (U$_I$). This is also indicative of its pseudo interrogative form. While (IP$_K$) is even taking the tag-question *didn't you* at its end, it is not really meant as a serious question. The falling intonation, as well as the adverb *of course* are indicating that (IP$_K$) is rather rhetorical in nature. Even more, Susan is not waiting for Carl to answer but is continuing with her next Move, depriving (IP$_K$) even more of its interrogative status. Thus, the intention of Move (M$_I$), to tell something about the place in question is concluded with Discourse Act (A$_K$), or its phonological equivalent (IP$_K$).

The backchannel (BC$_I$) takes a specific form and can be interpreted as combining the regulative and supportive function. The form is necessarily specific, since Carl needed Susan's preceding Discourse Act (A$_I$) to trigger his backchannel *it's down there*. (BC$_I$) therefore is unique to this specific conversation context. The regulative function is reflected, on the one hand, in Susan's immediate continuation of (U$_I$). On the other hand, Carl can be said only to specify already given information on the fly, without wanting to interrupt Susan. He perceived the continuation rise and probably knows that Susan is about to go on telling more. (BC$_I$) thus can be interpreted as a 'go-on' signal, specifying Susan's information while also prompting her to continue her narration. The supportive function lies in Carl's agreement and endorsement of Susan's proposition in (A$_I$). By uttering *it's down there* (probably even pointing in that direction), Carl conveys his agreement with Susan's recollection expressed in (A$_I$). For this reason, (BC$_I$) can be interpreted as articulated with more than just a regulative purpose in mind. Carl not only conveys confirmation of (A$_I$) and continued attention, but also shows support in form of agreement with the proposition of (A$_I$).

5. Discussion

The theoretical notions presented in chapter (*2*), as well as their application leave room for discussion. The present chapter firstly discusses the findings on backchannels in general. Secondly, the implementation of backchannels into the model of FDG is scrutinised on. Lastly, there are also certain questions concerning a more in-depth analysis, utilising more layers of FDG.

5.1 Discussion on backchannels

Considering the formal aspects of backchannels, the division into 'generic' and 'specific' proved reasonable and fairly intuitive. The two terms serve as a straightforward diagnostic when it comes to label the general forms backchannels may show. Regarding the Speaker's utterance surrounding the backchannel, it can readily be assessed whether a generic or specific form was employed. Even short expressions as the *stop* in (41) can successfully be analysed as a specific form, depending on the Speaker's utterance. In the present data, concerning specific forms, examples of utterance completions (41), brief restatements (49) and agreements (42), (43) were found. Next to these, as observed by ORESTRÖM (1983) and TOTTI (1991), the generic forms showed up far more often, even in such a restricted set of samples. In fact, the Appendix exclusively keeps generic backchannel examples. Keep in mind, this is not an empiric study, however, this tendency may be expected for the rest of the BNC as well. While the formal distinction into specific and generic backchannels ultimately will not be represented in any FDG related frame, it nonetheless proves a helpful insight that allows for a generalisation of the device. Also, considering the functional interpretation is similarly distinguished into the two-fold 'regulative' and 'supportive' backchannels, in the end we may gain a better understanding of the relation between form and function.

Another theoretical issue, concerning formal characteristics, is posed by the butcher's example in HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE (2008: 51; given here as example (14)). The customer's order is interpreted as one Move, consisting of three Discourse Acts. The non-terminal intonational contour of the first two Discourse Acts signals continuation of the Move, while the falling intonational contour of the third Discourse Act signals its end. Now HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE (2008: 51) describe the process of ordering as follows: "after each turn, the customer gives the butcher time to fetch or prepare the item ordered in that turn" and they further admit that "the butcher might also have accompanied the various actions with a backchannel (e.g. *yes*)" (HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 51). Crucial here is the non-terminal contour of the first two Discourse Acts, signalling continuation of the Move. Now let us assume the butcher would have accompanied each action not only with *yes*, but more substantially in

the specific form of a brief restatement, e.g. *100 grams of ham, here you go.* in such a case, the features proposed in chapter (*2.1*) still hold. In the present thesis, *100 grams of ham, here you go* would be interpreted as a specific backchannel. It is bound to the ordering context and the Speaker is not interrupted in his speech flow, but intentionally keeps waiting for the butcher to complete each single order. As long as the butcher is not digressing from the Speaker's Move, the butcher's reaction cannot be given the same status of Move. This scenario implies a crucial insight that specifically FDG's framework is able to shed some light on. The purpose of FDG is to demarcate and describe units of discourse as they unfold in conversation. Now if the active Speaker has not yet finished their Move, as maybe indicated by a non-terminal contour, we can presume that any Addressee related utterances that fulfil the requirements proposed in (*2.1*), are potential backchannels. In cases such as the butcher's example above, this implies that a backchannel may be, at least theoretically, unlimited in its formal length. The necessary condition is that the active Speaker is allowed to remain in and finish their active Move. As long as the butcher does not digress from the topic or urge the Speaker to talk about something unrelated to the ordering process, the butcher's backchannel is not directly restricted by its formal composition or length. The assessment of backchannel status is rather depending on the (in)completeness of the Speaker's contribution than on the form of the backchannel itself. Thus, the traditional approach to backchannels, being merely short, ready-made signals, such as *mhm*, *m*, *yeah*, *yes*, *I see*, etc. uttered intermittently by the Addressee can be significantly broadened to allow for more complex constructions.

The functional aspects of backchannels did not prove as easily distinguished as their form. In section (*2.1.2*), it was shown that the functional aspect of 'encouraging the Speaker to continue', i.e. 'regulative' means are not the only purpose of backchannels, they also fulfil a 'supportive' purpose. These two functions often occur simultaneously. For this reason, it was proposed that functions of backchannels have to be viewed as a scalar phenomenon, either predominantly regulative or supportive, or both. It must be noted however that such a gradual distinction proves helpful only in categorising the functions of backchannels very broadly. While I chose to subsume the various proposed functions of backchannels under the two representations SUPportive and REGulative, other work, such as PIPEK (2007) and CUTRONE (2010) provide further ideas to potentially render the description of backchannel functions more specific. Further, as evidenced by the examples there is no default relation between form and function of backchannels. The regulative, as well as the supportive function occur with the generic and/ or specific form. However, considering the regulative function, a certain tendency can be proposed. In (*2.1.2*) it was stated that backchannels with a regulative function are necessarily restricted in their form as not to disrupt the speech flow of the Speaker. In all

examples with a (predominant) regulative function, the backchannel does not exceed two syllables (the only exception being *carry on* in (63) showing three syllables). Backchannels with a (predominant) supportive function or a combination of REG and SUP, however, can pose whole phrases and sometimes even cause minor disruptions in the speaking flow (see (42), (43), (60)) For now, it remains as TOTTI (1991: 257) stated: "[t]he relation between the function and form of backchannels is an interesting problem", and while the few examples in this paper are insufficient to formulate a convincing conclusion on that matter, it nonetheless serves as a point of departure for further research. In the remainder of this chapter, the implementation of backchannels into the FDG frame, as well as its implications are discussed.

5.2 Discussion on implementation

Considering the examples of chapter (*4*) (and partially the *Appendix*), the predictions proposed by Functional Discourse Grammar were confirmed. As claimed by FDG, all backchannels can be located in-between two Discourse Acts (HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 50). Exceptions that are listed in the Appendix will be discussed in a few moments. Further, many examples were interpreted as "a response that encourages the Speaker to continue" (HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 50). Consider, among others, examples (38), (41) and (56) where a dedicated regulative purpose can reasonably be interpreted. That backchannels serve predominantly as a means to comment on preceding discourse also proved consistent along the analysis of the data. In all instances the backchannel referred to its preceding Discourse Act. The analysis also supports the frames proposed in section (*2.3.1.4*) and (*2.3.2.4*). Interwoven into the Speaker frame, they may serve as a means for closer inspection of backchannels in conversation. The interpersonal frame can be used to encode a backchannel's pragmatic function in-between two Discourse Acts. This function then triggers the necessary operations for the phonological frame used to transcribe the backchannel's realisation in-between the two corresponding Intonational Phrases. Admittedly, since the function-form relation of backchannels remains problematic, it may not always be absolutely clear-cut as to what function triggers what form. With the enhanced discourse frames proposed in this work, it might be possible to understand the elusive form-function relation of backchannels a bit closer. Lastly, as example (60) in the Appendix shows, this frame can also be applied successfully, when more than one backchannel occurs in a Move/ Utterance. By describing the functional and formal characteristics within the framework proposed by FDG, we eventually may gain a greater insight of the discourse unit 'backchannel' itself, as well as its relation to the surrounding Speaker utterance. This will be discussed in more detail in section (*5.3*). Beside these predictions, the analysis of the data

according to our frame allows for further observations on their implementation into the grammar model itself.

Firstly, the implementation allows presumptions about the identification of backchannel status and their functions. On the one hand, interpretation of backchannel status and function depends on the following Speaker reaction. In some instances, additionally, even accompanying phonological characteristics may serve as a diagnostic means. Take example (25) repeated here for convenience in (44) with the interpersonal units demarcated:

(44) S: (A_I) You've got to put it at chest height … (A_I)

A: (BC_I) Mm (BC_I)

S: (A_J) … make sure it's not knocked or covered by clothing (A_J)   (BNC)

In (44) the Speaker realises (A_I) with rising intonation, indicating that within this Move more information is to follow. The same intonation contour is articulated by the Listener in (BC_I). The similar intonational configurations of (A_I) and (BC_I), as well as discourse progression indicate that both speech participants are in accordance with floor control. Therefore (BC_I) can be interpreted as employing a predominantly regulative purpose, i.e. signalling the Speaker to continue. On the other hand, the supportive examples in Chapter (*4*) (and the *Appendix*) suggest that if the Listener expresses supportive signals, intonational characteristics may very well be falling. Consider examples (39), (42), (58) and (64) as cases in point. Such an intonation pattern may even be expected, since the Speaker rather offers a subjective evaluation via supportive backchannels. In other words, the regulative function distinctly encourages the Speaker to continue, thus it is likely to appear in and with according phonological characteristics (rising intonation). A supportive function, however, is not contingent on such characteristics, nor surroundings. When both functions occur in conjunction, the phonological characteristics are not as distinct. Since the functions converge, their phonological composition seems unpredictable and may vary. Compare example (43) where the backchannel is realised with falling intonation, with ((60) of the Appendix) showing the opposite composition. Again, a broad, thorough study with more data analysis is needed to formulate a more conclusive statement on backchannel functions and how they relate to their form.

Secondly, another important implication of the presented model is the need to account for the Speaker unit in its entirety. As seen in all examples, the Discourse Acts (and their corresponding Intonational Phrases), in-between which the backchannels occur, all belong to the greater unit, the Move (and its corresponding Utterance). This is necessary, because FDG is trying to model units of discourse as they develop in ongoing conversation. Naturally, in any conversation, there is one Speaker and at least one Listener. As stated above, Listener reaction

is likely to influence Speaker behaviour, thus potentially shaping the Speaker's intentions and way of expression. The backchannel, being a discourse unit itself, therefore needs to be implemented into the Speaker related framework. Further, this approach makes the Speaker's reaction on the backchannel immediately available to the analyst. This is important, since assessment of backchannel status is closely related to the Speaker's following reaction. Consider example (57) from the Appendix, repeated here for convenience in (45):

(45)a. Susan (PS052) [167] (A$_I$) I told you that I was punned today didn't I? (A$_I$)

[168] (A$_J$) I'd

Carl (PS051) [169] (BC$_I$) Mm. (BC$_I$)

Susan (PS052) [170] suddenly forgotten, it suddenly just ... it just didn't ... twig with them at all. (A$_J$)

(45)b. **Interpersonal Level**

(M$_I$ [(q-tag A$_I$: [(F$_I$: INTER (F$_I$)) (1 P$_1$)$_S$ (P$_2$: you)$_A$ (C$_I$: [(T$_I$) (T$_J$) (R$_I$: [+S] (R$_I$)) (R$_J$)] (C$_I$))] (A$_I$))
(BC$_I$: [REG (P$_J$)$_A$ (P$_I$)$_S$] (BC$_I$))

(A$_J$: [(F$_J$: DECL (F$_J$)) (1 P$_1$)$_S$ (P$_2$)$_A$ (C$_J$: [(T$_K$) (R$_I$) (T$_L$) (R$_K$) (T$_L$) (R$_L$)] (C$_J$))] (A$_J$))] (M$_I$))

where: (T$_I$) = *told*; (T$_J$) = *punned*; (T$_K$) = *forgotten*; (T$_L$) = *did not*; (R$_I$) = *I*; (R$_J$) = *you*; (R$_K$) = *something*; (R$_L$) = *them*; (T$_M$) = *trigger*

Phonological Level

(U$_I$: [(fIP$_I$: [(PP$_I$: /ɜɪˈtəʊldjʊ/ (PP$_I$)) (PP$_J$: /ðataɪwəzˈpʌndtʊdeɪˈdɪdntaɪ / (PP$_J$))] (IP$_I$))
(BC$_I$: [(fIP$_I$: /m:/ (IP$_I$))] (BC$_I$))

(fIP$_J$: [(PP$_K$: /sʌdnlɪfəˈgɒt/ (PP$_K$)) (PP$_L$: /ˈsʌmðɪndʒʌstədʒʌstˈdɪdn'/ (PP$_L$))

(PP$_M$: /ˈtrɪgəðemətˈɔːl/ (PP$_M$))] (IP$_J$))] (U$_I$))

The Move (M$_I$) encompasses the two Discourse Acts (A$_I$) and (A$_J$) including the backchannel (BC$_I$) in-between. Now, in order to reasonably analyse the backchannel, not only (BC$_I$) itself must be taken into account, but all surrounding Speaker related information as well. Therefore, firstly the frame for the Speaker has to be established before secondly, the backchannel is incorporated into that frame. In this manner, the backchannel can be evaluated in relation to its preceding (Speaker related) discourse unit and what immediate effect it had on ensuing (Speaker related) discourse units. With the help of such information, assumptions can be formulated as to the backchannels ultimate effect on the Speaker and their ongoing turn. This issue will be focussed on in the next section, where also further problems are discussed.

5.3. Discussion on further problems

In chapter (*4*) it was shown that backchannels can successfully be analysed in-between two Discourse Acts/ Intonational Phrases. It was also assessed that within Discourse Acts, the Subacts (of Reference and Ascription) correspond to pragmatic functions, such as Focus, Topic and Contrast. The IL then triggers the PL to encode such interpersonal information in the corresponding manner (e.g. extra pitch prominence of Focus constructions). In the present approach, we ended analysis at the layer of the Discourse Act. However, potentially, analysis can go beyond this layer, down to its component parts. Take the following example in (46) taken from the Appendix:

(46)a. Susan (PS052) [95] (A$_I$) But she said yes, she'd noticed (A$_I$)

(A$_J$) but she said they are getting more out of this Johnny Briggs book (A$_J$)

(A$_K$) than the other book (A$_K$)

Carl (PS051) [96] (BC$_K$) Mhm. (BC$_K$)

Susan (PS052) [97] (A$_L$) So she's quite pleased that she's put them on to it, it is difficult. (A$_L$)

In this example, the NP of Discourse Act (A$_K$) *the other book*, contrasts with the NP in Discourse Act (A$_J$) *Johnny Briggs book*. This is evidenced by a contrastive focus construction, where in (A$_J$) and (A$_K$) the elements comprising the Subacts of Ascription (*Johnny Briggs* and *other* respectively) receive primary stress. To properly encode this, a more exhaustive analysis of the process of formulation, comprising the Communicated Content (C$_i$) of both Discourse Acts is necessary. Also, the PL will be enriched by the layer of the Phonological Phrase (PP$_i$) that is corresponding to the Subacts within the Communicated Content. Consider the following IL and PL frames for example (46a):

(46)b. **Interpersonal Level**

(M$_I$: [**contr**ast (A$_I$: [(F$_I$: DECL (F$_I$)) (P$_I$)$_S$ (P$_J$)$_A$

(C$_I$: [(T$_I$) (R$_I$) (T$_J$) (R$_J$) (T$_K$) (R$_K$: (T$_L$) (R$_K$)) (R$_L$: (T$_M$) FOC/ CONTR (T$_L$) (R$_L$))] (C$_I$))](A$_I$))

(**contr**ast A$_J$: [(F$_I$: DECL (F$_I$)) (P$_I$)$_S$ (P$_J$)$_A$ (C$_J$: [(R$_L$: (T$_N$) FOC/ CONTR (T$_L$) (R$_L$))] (C$_J$))] (A$_J$))

(BC$_J$: [REG (P$_J$)$_A$ (P$_I$)$_S$] (BC$_J$))

(A$_K$: [(F$_I$: DECL) (P$_I$)$_S$ (P$_J$)$_A$ (C$_K$: [(T$_F$)(T$_O$) (R$_I$) (R$_M$: (T$_L$) (R$_M$))] (C$_K$))] (A$_K$))] (M$_I$))

where: (T$_I$) = *said*; (R$_I$) = *she*; (T$_J$) = *aren't*; (R$_J$) = *they*; (T$_K$) = *getting more*; (R$_K$) = *this*; (T$_L$) = property of being '*book*'; (R$_L$) = *book*; (T$_M$) = *Johnny Briggs*; (T$_N$) = *other*; (T$_O$) = *pleased*; (T$_P$) = *put on to*; (R$_M$) = *it* (book)

Phonological Level

(U$_I$: [(fIP$_I$: [(PP$_I$: /bətʃiˈsed/ (PP$_I$)) (PP$_J$: /ðeɪˈɑːnt/ (PP$_J$)) (PP$_K$: /geʔɪnˈmɔːɹ/ /PP$_K$))

(PP$_L$: /aʊtəvˈðɪs/ (PP$_L$)) (fPP$_M$: /dʒɒnɪˈbɹɪgsˈbʊk/ (PP$_M$))] (IP$_I$))

(fIP$_J$: (fPP$_N$: /ðənðɪˈʌðəˈbʊk/ (PP$_N$)) (IP$_J$))

(BC$_J$: [(IP$_I$: /mː/ (IP$_I$))] (BC$_J$))

(fIP$_K$: [(PP$_O$: /səʊʃiskwaɪʔˈpleɪzd/ (PP$_O$)) (PP$_P$: /ðætʃizˈpʊtəmˈɒntʊɪt/(PP$_P$))] (IP$_K$))] (U$_I$))

At the IL, (R$_L$) indicates a Subact of Reference (*book*), (T$_M$) and (T$_N$) the two Subacts of Ascription, *Johnny Briggs* and *other*, respectively. Both ascriptive Subacts are marked with Focus/Contrast. At the PL, this pragmatic choice will be reflected by assigning the corresponding pitch movements on the respective syllables, as depicted in the form of the PL above (primary stress on *briggs* and on *other*). As is considered the default case in English declaratives, each of the last PPs (PP$_M$) and (PP$_N$) are marked with end Focus. For this reason, there is no need for an explicit secondary operator on these last PPs (cf. HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 439). Now what we can see with this example is how a backchannel can be related to the internal layers of the Discourse Act, most prominently the pragmatic functions employed within it. The IL shows that different properties (T$_M$) vs (T$_N$) and their referent (R$_L$), are singled out for special Focus treatment. The PL then translates this special treatment in form of focal stress on these Subacts, as indicated by the respective operators. The Addressee now understands the intention of contrasting the two Discourse Acts (A$_I$) and (A$_J$) and is communicating this via the regulative (BC$_J$). Remember, one property of regulative backchannels is to communicate to the Speaker understanding of the proposition in order to keep up the speaking flow. The PL translates this regulative function into the corresponding phonological representations, such as rising intonation to indicate that the Addressee is awaiting further information.

Contrast this with an instance of a supportive backchannel in (47) below, taken from the Appendix:

(47)a. Susan (PS052) [217] (A$_I$) [...]Again, I'm talking about school! (A$_I$)

Carl (PS051)   [218] (BC$_I$) Yeah. (BC$_I$)

Susan (PS052) [219] (A$_J$) Oh!

[220] Oh!

[221] Oh!

[222] School's banned! (A$_J$)

In this example Susan has repeatedly been talking about work at school, which previously was unanimously 'banned' by both participants. By uttering (A$_I$), Susan reminds herself of this. An interpersonal and phonological analysis is given below:

(47)b. **Interpersonal Level**

(M$_I$ [(A$_I$: [(F$_I$: DECL (F$_I$)) (1 P$_1$)$_S$ (P$_2$)$_A$ (C$_I$: [(T$_I$) (R$_I$: [+S] (R$_I$)) (R$_J$: (T$_J$) (R$_J$))] (C$_I$))] (A$_I$))

(BC$_I$: [SUP (P$_J$)$_A$ (P$_I$)$_S$] (BC$_I$))

    (A$_J$: [(F$_I$: DECL (F$_I$)) (P$_1$)$_S$ (P$_2$)$_A$ (C$_J$: [(R$_J$: (T$_J$) (T$_K$)$_{FOC}$ (R$_J$))] (C$_J$))] (A$_J$))] (M$_I$))

where: (R$_I$) = *I*; (T$_I$) = *talking*; (R$_J$) = *school*; (T$_J$) = property of being 'school' (T$_K$) = *banned*

    Phonological Level

(U$_I$: [(fIP$_I$: [(PP$_I$: /əgˈɛ:nəmˈtɔ:kɪn/ (PP$_I$)) (PP$_J$: /əbaʊtˈsku:l/ (PP$_J$))] (IP$_I$))

(BC$_I$: [(fIP$_I$:   /[ˈjeə]/ (IP$_I$))] (BC$_I$))

    (fIP$_J$: [(PP$_K$: /[ɔ :::]:::sku:lzˈban:d/ (PP$_K$))] (IP$_J$))] (U$_I$))

In (A$_I$), again, the (default) end Focus marks the Subact of Reference (*school*). The whole declarative Discourse Act is realised with falling intonation. The PL will react by appropriately encoding these interpersonal choices. The supportive backchannel in (BC$_I$) is uttered after Susan articulates the Subact of Reference, i.e. *school*, which constitutes the crucial piece of information, necessary to properly interpret Susan's message. As soon as Carl realises the intention of Susan, he signals this by uttering a supportive backchannel. This then will trigger the proper operations for the PL, in this case, falling intonation interpreted as indicating agreement towards Susan's proposition.

    A further problem concerns the assessment of backchannel status in certain special cases. Consider examples (48) and (49) below. In (48) s-unit [74] is given in its entire BNC transcription, although, for reasons of brevity, analysis will only start at (A$_I$) marked in boldface:

(48)   Susan (PS052) [74] (M$_I$) and you know there's nothing you can really do for them, you can't make up for the fact … that they've got a rotten home life and that's **(A$_I$) top and bottom line that's what it is! (A$_I$)** (M$_I$)

           Carl (PS051)   [75] (BC$_I$) Yeah. (BC$_I$)

           Susan (PS052) [76] (M$_J$) (A$_J$) You're trying to be everything … and they're pushing it away cos it's not what they really want (A$_J$) (M$_J$)

(49)   Carl (PS051)   [130] (M$_I$) (A$_I$) The trials and tribulations of a family life! (A$_I$)

           Susan (PS052) [131] (BC$_I$) Mm.

                    [132] Trials and tribulations! (BC$_I$) (M$_I$)

                    [133] (M$_J$) I tell you a … ou … I said today when I was in school … cos that's like being at home with my three year old, it was just like that today being stuck in there! (M$_J$)

In (48) the backchannel (BC$_I$) occurs in-between two Moves (M$_I$) and (M$_J$), in (49) the backchannel occurs at the end of the Move (M$_I$) in [131/132]. In cases such as these the question arises whether the unit under inspection actually resembles a backchannel. In chapter (*2*) it was argued that a backchannel necessarily needs to occur within a Move. This means that, strictly speaking, neither sentence unit [75], nor [131/132] qualify for backchannel status. However, their form, as well as their function can reasonably be interpreted as such. (BC$_I$) in (48) clearly shows a generic form *yeah*. Its context, as well as the falling intonation indicate a supportive function. (BC$_I$) in (49) takes a specific form as restatement *Mm trials and tribulations*. Intonation is falling, thus its function can be interpreted as supportive, agreeing with Carl's proposition about trouble in family life. Another problem, as mentioned above, is the location these backchannels occur in. While all other backchannels are realised after the Discourse Act they relate to, these two instances show the backchannel right after a finished Move. One way to account for such backchannels is to allow for the Speaker frame to incorporate Listener signals that refer to the Speaker's last contribution. Both backchannels above can be argued to relate to their corresponding preceding Discourse Acts and therefore can be interpreted as direct reactions to these Speaker related units. When applying this to our proposed frame, the unit of the Move above will be enhanced to allow for incorporation of the backchannels. Consider the following analysis in (50-51):

(50) **Interpersonal Level**

(M$_I$: [(A$_I$: [(F$_I$: DECL (F$_I$)) (P$_I$)$_S$ (P$_J$)$_A$ (C$_I$: [(T$_I$) (R$_I$) $_{FOC}$] (C$_I$))] (A$_I$))] (M$_I$))

where: (T$_I$) = *having a rotten home life*; (R$_I$) = *that/ it* (reference to *having a rotten home life*)

(BC$_I$: [REG/SUP (P$_J$)$_A$ (P$_I$)$_S$] (BC$_I$)) (M$_I$))

(M$_J$: [(A$_I$: [(F$_I$: DECL (F$_I$)) (P$_I$)$_S$ (P$_J$)$_A$ (C$_I$: [(T$_I$) (T$_J$)] (C$_I$))] (A$_I$))

    (conj A$_J$: [(F$_I$: DECL (F$_I$)) (P$_I$)$_S$ (P$_J$)$_A$ (C$_I$: [(T$_K$) (R$_I$)] (C$_I$))] (A$_J$))

    (conj A$_K$: [(F$_I$: DECL (F$_I$)) (P$_I$)$_S$ (P$_J$)$_A$ (C$_J$: [(T$_L$) (T$_M$) (R$_I$)] (C$_J$))] (A$_K$))] (M$_J$))

where: (T$_I$) = *trying*; (T$_J$) = *being everything*; (R$_I$) = *they*; (T$_K$) = *pushing away*; (T$_L$) = *not being 'it'*; (T$_M$) = *really want*

    Phonological Level

(U$_I$: [(fIP$_I$: [(hPP$_I$: /ˈtɒpʔn̩ˌbɒʔəmˈlaɪn/ (PP$_I$)) (PP$_J$: /ˈðætswɒtɪʔˈɪz/ (PP$_J$))] (IP$_I$))

(BC$_I$: [(fIP$_I$: /ˈjeə/ (IP$_I$))] (BC$_I$))] (U$_I$))

(U$_J$: [(rIP$_I$: [(PP$_I$: /jʊəˈtɹaɪn/ (PP$_I$)) (PP$_J$: tʊbɪˈevɹɪðɪŋ/ (PP$_J$))] (IP$_I$))

    (rIP$_J$: [(lPP$_K$: /andðəɪˈpʊʃɪnɪtəˈwaɪ/ (PP$_K$))] (IP$_J$))

    (fIP$_K$: [(PP$_L$: /kɒzɪtsˈnɒt/ (PP$_L$)) (PP$_M$: /wɒtðeɪˈɹɪəliwɒnt/ (PP$_M$))] (IP$_K$))] (U$_J$))

(51) **Interpersonal Level**

(M$_I$: [(A$_I$: [(F$_I$: DECL (F$_I$)) (1 P$_I$)$_S$ (P$_J$)$_A$ (C$_I$: [(R$_I$: (T$_I$) (R$_I$))$_{FOC}$ (R$_J$: (T$_J$) (R$_J$))] (C$_I$))] (A$_I$))]

(BC$_I$: [SUP (P$_J$)$_A$ (P$_I$)$_S$] (BC$_I$)) (M$_I$))

where: (R$_I$) = *trials and tribulations*; (T$_I$) = property of being '*trials and tribulations*'; (R$_J$) = *family life*; (T$_J$) = property of
'*family life*'

Phonological Level

(U$_I$: [(fIP$_I$: [(PP$_I$: /ðəˈtraɪlzəntɹɪbjʊˈleɪʃənz/ (PP$_I$)) (PP$_J$: /əvəˈfamɪlɪˈlaɪf/ (PP$_J$))] (IP$_I$))]

(BC$_I$: [(IP$_I$: [(PP$_I$: /m:/ (PP$_I$))] (IP$_I$)) (IP$_J$: [(PP$_J$: /ˈtraɪlzəntɹɪbjʊˈleɪʃənz/ (PP$_J$))] (IP$_J$))] (BC$_I$)) (U$_I$))

In both examples above we can see how backchannels that occur in-between two Moves or at
the end of a Move can be reasonably implemented into our frame. The backchannels are
interpreted as belonging within the Speaker's overall unit (Move/ Utterance) as demanded by
our theory. Further, when analysing in such a manner, it can also be assessed whether an item
must be viewed as a backchannel (belonging within the Speaker's Move/ Utterance that is) or
as its own full turn (representing a Move/ Utterance itself). In the end we see that by using this
method we can account for backchannels that occur at the end or in-between Moves without
the need to necessarily ascribe them the status of full turns.

Lastly, there is the phenomenon of overlap. SCHEGLOFF (2000: 7) defines overlap as
"talk by 'more than one at a time'". He further argues that most commonly this implies that
exactly two persons are talking at the same time. Should more than two persons be talking at
the same time, it will quickly be reduced to two (or to one) Speaker very effectively (cf.
SCHEGLOFF 2000: 7). Considering the original purpose of FDG and its close relation to the
Speaker, by default there is no need to account for overlap. If by default only the Speaker
utterance is accounted for, there will be no overlap. When it comes to backchannels however,
overlap is to be expected, since they are uttered while the Speaker is articulating their turn
without actually interrupting it. As a case in point consider the following example in (52), where
Susan is telling Carl about troubles with one specific hen that entangled herself in a net:

(52)   Susan (PS052) [450] (A$_I$) I sort of bounced about, she sort of **bumped along** (A$_I$)

       Carl (PS051)   [451] (BC$_I$) **Yeah, you have to**. (BC$_I$)

       Susan (PS052) [452] (A$_J$) until she got onto that crossbar (A$_J$)

BC Timestamp	Form	Function
(21:22)	specific /jeɛːjʊˈhævtʊ/	supportive

The overlapping parts in (52) are marked in boldface. As can be seen, *bumped along* in (A$_I$) and
the whole of (BC$_I$) overlap. While the phenomenon of overlap is analysed extensively in

SCHEGLOFF (2000), in this work, only a few of his transcript symbols were adapted. Using his transcript symbols facilitates the representation of backchannel overlaps in the Speaker's utterance. Since our analyses show a top-down alignment, we can readily use SCHEGLOFF's (2000) method and apply it here. In the following example we can also attempt to relate the backchannel to a Subact of Ascription (T_J) within the Communicated Content. Consider example (53), which is the IL and PL representation of (52) above:

(53) **Interpersonal Level**

(M_I: [(A_I: [(F_I: DECL (F_I)) (1 P_1)$_S$ (P_2)$_A$ (C_I: [(T_I) (R_I: [+S] (R_I)) (T_K) (R_J: (T_J) (R_J))] (C_I))] (A_I))
(BC_I: [(SUP: (T_K)) (P_J)$_A$ (1 P_I)$_S$] (BC_I))

  (sub A_J: [(F_I: DECL (F_I)) (P_1)$_S$ (P_2)$_A$ (C_J: [(T_L) (R_J: (T_J) R_J)) (R_K): (T_M) (R_K))] (C_J)) (A_J))] (M_I))

where: (T_I) = the property of 'bouncing'; (R_I) = I ([+S] identifies the Speaker; i.e. (R_I) = Speaker);

(T_J) = the property of 'hen'; (R_J) = *she* (hen); (T_K) = *bump along*; (T_L) = *to get onto*; (T_M) = property of 'crossbar'; (R_K) = *crossbar*

Phonological Level

(U_I: [(fIP$_I$: [(PP_I: /əˈsɒʔɒʔˈbaʊnstaˈbaʊt/ (PP_I)) (PP_J: /ʃɪˈsɒʔɒʃ[ˈbʌmptəˈlɔːŋ]/ (PP_J))] (IP$_I$))
(BC_I: [(IP$_I$:   /[jeɛːjʊˈhævtʊ]/ (IP$_I$))] (BC_I))

  (fIP$_J$: [(PP_K: /tɪlʃɪˈgɒʔɒntʊðaʔˈkɪɒsˌbɑː/ (PP_K))] (IP$_J$))] (U_I))

We can see that *bumped along* in (PP_J) is spoken at the same time as (BC_I) is realised. They share the same onset and end simultaneously, as indicated by the square brackets within (PP_J) and (IP$_I$) of (BC_I) at the PL. At the IL, where encoded information is absent, such methods of representation are inapplicable. What can be represented however, is an indication of where the IL triggers the overlap at the PL. Consider the IL in (53) above; the representation (SUP: (T_K)) indicates that the supportive backchannel is uttered simultaneously with the Ascriptive Subact (T_K), i.e. *bumped along*. The PL then shows precisely which parts of backchannel and Speaker Utterance will eventually overlap in the Output Component. The same analysis can be applied to the example in (54), in which, with a tang of irony, Carl is telling Susan about certain 'fun' chores that need tending on the weekend. Note, however, that example (54) is a special case, where part of the backchannel consists of laughter. At the PL, this is indicated by double parenthesis, used in SCHEGLOFF (2000) to mark descriptions of events, rather than representations of them (e.g. ((laughter)), ((cough)), etc.):

(54)a. Carl (PS051)   [226] (A_I) Having carpet down in one corridor! (A_I)

  Susan (PS052) [227] (BC_I) [laugh] Nice. (sic) (BC_I)

  Carl (PS051)   [228] (A_J) And they're painting the walls! (A_J)

BC Timestamp	Form	Function
(12:35)	specific	supportive
	/((laughter)) əˈlaɪkɪt/	

(54)b. **Interpersonal Level**

(M$_I$: [(A$_I$: [(F$_I$: DECL (F$_I$)) (P1)$_1$ (P2)$_A$ (C$_I$: [(T$_I$) (R$_I$): (T$_J$) (R$_I$))] (C$_I$))] (A$_I$))

(BC$_I$: [(SUP: (T$_I$) (T$_K$)) (P$_J$)$_A$ (P)$_S$] (BC$_I$))

(A$_J$: [(F$_I$: DECL (F$_I$)) (P1)$_S$ (P2)$_A$ (C$_I$: [(T$_K$) (R$_J$) (R$_K$: (T$_L$) (R$_K$))] (A$_J$))] (M$_I$))

where: (T$_I$) = *carpeting-down*; (R$_I$) = *corridor*; (T$_J$) = property of 'corridor' (T$_K$) = property of 'painting'; (R$_J$) = *they*; (T$_L$) = property of 'being a wall'; (R$_K$) = *wall*

Phonological Level

(U$_I$: [(fIP$_I$: [(lPP$_I$: /hævɪŋˈkɑːpɪtdəʊn/ (PP$_I$)) (PP$_J$): / [ɪnwɒnˈkɒrɪdɔː]/ (PP$_J$))] (IP$_I$))

(BC$_I$ [(rIP$_I$: /[((laughter))] əˈlaɪkɪt]/ (IP$_I$))] (BC$_I$))

(fIP$_J$: [(PP$_K$: /[nðə]ˈpeɪntɪn/

(PP$_K$)) (PP$_L$: /ðəˈwɒlz/ (PP$_L$))] (IP$_J$))] (U$_I$))

In this case, the Addressee's laughter of (BC$_I$) overlaps with the ascriptive Subact (T$_I$). It also overlaps with a short part of (PP$_K$) in the ensuing (IP$_J$). Note that not the entire backchannel is overlapping, the /ə/, representing *I* remains without overlap. Overlap, at the PL, is indicated by the square brackets enclosing the representation of the act of laughing and the *in one corridor* of (PP$_J$). Afterwards, the *like it* overlaps with *and they're* of the ensuing (PP$_K$), also indicated by square brackets.

This section presented a number of cases, where use of backchannels in conversation digresses from the predictions of FDG and therefore needed to be discussed. It also showed, how the deeper layers of FDG's framework can be exploited for closer analysis of discourse relations. By and large, the examples above prove that there is more to the analysis of backchannels than FDG predicted. With the help of the proposed frames it is possible to discuss assessment of backchannel or full-turn status. A deeper analysis within the FDG framework allows for a narrower transcription of how backchannels relate to certain Speaker configurations. Also, overlap and the paralinguistic phenomena of laughter that typically occur with backchannels were described. Of course, the presented ideas remain but a hint towards further research in that regard. Nonetheless, it seems that the theory of FDG is capable of more than merely describing the Speaker side of ongoing conversation. It can be suggested that its description power encompasses entire discourse situations, including surrounding signals and even more complex feedback, employed by other participants not actively holding the floor.

6. Conclusion

In the first part of this thesis, a typological profile of backchannels was proposed, concerning their formal and functional features. Based on past research it was argued to reduce form and function of backchannels into two broad categories; 'generic' vs 'specific' form and 'regulative' vs 'supportive' function. These distinctions then were formulated into abstract representations to be incorporated into the framework of Functional Discourse Grammar. The second part served to introduce and explain the basic framework of Functional Discourse Grammar. Two out of the four levels of Functional Discourse Grammar, the Interpersonal and the Phonological Level, were scrutinised on, before the proposed backchannel representations were implemented.

As for the research question, a certain success can be stated. The somewhat scarce predictions of HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE (2008) were confirmed. The examples of chapter (*4*) show that backchannels may very well be expected after a Discourse Act. Also, functionally speaking, while not present in all backchannels, many carry a regulative function. Further, it was shown that the proposed framework is capable of incorporating backchannels into the pre-established Speaker's basic framework. This allows for a direct observation of Speaker and Addressee related phenomena and the comparison of them.

However, also various difficulties and problems were encountered that needed discussion. It is evident from the data that backchannels in ongoing conversation usually behave more complex. Many examples, especially in the Appendix, often overlapped with preceding or ensuing talk of the Speaker, instead of fitting nicely in-between two Phrases. With the help of SCHEGLOFF's (2000) transcription symbols, indication of such overlaps was rendered possible. Yet also basic conceptional questions, such as the status of backchannel and their location in unfolding discourse emerged. The proposed framework allows to account for such questions as well. As was seen, backchannel status can be related to the (in)completeness of the Speaker's communicative intention. Now, should an Addressee related linguistic item occur at the very end of the Speaker's utterance, backchannel status of that item will depend on how it relates to the Speaker's last contribution. It also must be mentioned that the functional properties of backchannels, especially when combined, as well as their relation to form, remains an important issue that needs more research.

Finally, drawing from this last appeal, backchannels, their language-specific description, as well as the theory of Functional Discourse Grammar provide a rich research field. For example, while there is a research corpus on English backchannels, there hardly is any work on backchannel behaviour in the remaining languages of the world. As WAN (2018) put it "the exact relationship of back channel responses to language and culture has yet to be specified".

This also directly links to the problematic issues just mentioned above. The power of the proposed framework, while only applied to the examples provided in this paper, must undergo further testing to challenge its validity and reliability. It must also be noted here that out of the four levels provided by Functional Discourse Grammar, only two were examined. The two remaining levels, the Representational and Morphosyntactic Level, still need to be evaluated to account for proper incorporation of backchannels. The inclusion of those remaining levels will also yield more information concerning the use of backchannels in discourse. For example, while the Interpersonal Level is sensitive to the interactive nature of communication, the Representational Level covers semantic aspects. With focus on semantics, this level can be explored to account for, e.g. how a backchannel relates to the actual representations evoked by the various Subacts within the Communicated Content. Given the issues mentioned above and the lack of backchannel research in the world's languages, the proposed framework is met with ample opportunities for testing. This, again, will help in refining the framework itself, since in this paper it resembles a mere sketch, as well as possibly give incentives for further research and discussion on the device of backchannels in general.

7. Appendix

(55) a. Susan (PS052) [74] and you know there's nothing you can really do for them, you can't make up for the fact ... that they've got a rotten home life and that's **(A_I) top and bottom line that's what it is! (A_I)**

Carl (PS051) [75] (BC_I) Yeah. (BC_I)

Susan (PS052) [76] (A_J) You're trying to be everything ... and they're pushing it away cos it's not what they really want (A_J)

BC Timestamp	Form	Function
(03:37)	generic /ˈjeə/	regulative/supportive

(55) b. **Interpersonal Level**

(M$_I$: [(A$_I$: [(F$_I$: DECL (F$_I$)) (P$_I$)$_S$ (P$_J$)$_A$ (C$_I$: [(T$_I$) (R$_I$) $_{FOC}$] (C$_I$))] (A$_I$))] (M$_I$))

where: (T$_I$) = *having a rotten home life*; (R$_I$) = *that/ it* (reference to *having a rotten home life*)

(BC$_I$: [REG/SUP (P$_J$)$_A$ (P$_I$)$_S$] (BC$_I$)) (M$_I$))

(M$_J$: [(A$_I$: [(F$_I$: DECL (F$_I$)) (P$_I$)$_S$ (P$_J$)$_A$ (C$_I$: [(T$_I$) (T$_J$)] (C$_I$))] (A$_I$))

(conj A$_J$: [(F$_I$: DECL (F$_I$)) (P$_I$)$_S$ (P$_J$)$_A$ (C$_I$: [(T$_K$) (R$_I$)] (C$_I$))] (A$_J$))

(conj A$_K$: [(F$_I$: DECL (F$_I$)) (P$_I$)$_S$ (P$_J$)$_A$ (C$_J$: [(T$_L$) (T$_M$) (R$_I$)] (C$_J$))] (A$_K$))] (M$_J$))

where: (T$_I$) = *trying*; (T$_J$) = *being everything*; (R$_I$) = *they*; (T$_K$) = *pushing away*; (T$_L$) = *not being 'it'*; (T$_M$) = *really want*

Phonological Level

(U$_I$: [(fIP$_I$: [(hPP$_I$: /ˈtɒpʔn̩ˌbɒʔəmˈlaɪn/ (PP$_I$)) (PP$_J$: /ˈðætswɒtɪʔˈɪz/ (PP$_J$))] (IP$_I$))

(BC$_I$: [(fIP$_I$: /ˈjeə/ (IP$_I$))] (BC$_I$))] (U$_I$))

(U$_J$: [(rIP$_I$: [(PP$_I$: /jʊəˈtɹaɪn/ (PP$_I$)) (PP$_J$: tʊbɪˈevɹɪðɪŋ/ (PP$_J$))] (IP$_I$))

(rIP$_J$: [(lPP$_K$: /andðəɪˈpʊʃɪnɪtəˈwaɪ/ (PP$_K$))] (IP$_J$))

(fIP$_K$: [(PP$_L$: /kɒzɪtsˈnɒt/ (PP$_L$)) (PP$_M$: /wɒtðeɪˈɹɪəlɪwɒnt/ (PP$_M$))] (IP$_K$))] (U$_J$))

(56) a. Susan (PS052) [95] (A$_I$) but she said they are getting more out of this Johnny Briggs book (A$_I$)

(A$_J$) than the other book (A$_J$)

Carl (PS051) [96] (BC$_J$) Mhm. (BC$_J$)

Susan (PS052) [97] (A$_K$) So she's quite pleased that she's put them on to it, it is difficult. (A$_K$)

BC Timestamp	Form	Function
(04:55)	generic /m:/	regulative

(56) b. **Interpersonal Level**

(M$_I$: [**contr**ast (A$_I$: [(F$_I$: DECL (F$_I$)) (P$_I$)$_S$ (P$_J$)$_A$

(C$_I$: [(T$_I$) (R$_I$) (T$_J$) (R$_J$) (T$_K$) (R$_K$: (T$_L$) (R$_K$)) (R$_L$: (T$_M$) (R$_L$)) FOC/CONTR] (C$_I$))](A$_I$))

(**contr**ast A$_J$: [(F$_I$: DECL (F$_I$)) (P$_I$)$_S$ (P$_J$)$_A$ (C$_J$: [(R$_L$: (T$_N$) (T$_L$) (R$_L$)) FOC/CONTR] (C$_J$)] (A$_J$))

(BC$_J$: [REG (P$_J$)$_A$ (P$_I$)$_S$] (BC$_J$))

(A$_K$: [(F$_I$: DECL) (P$_I$)$_S$ (P$_J$)$_A$ (C$_K$: [(T$_F$)(T$_O$) (R$_I$) (R$_M$: (T$_L$) (R$_M$))] (C$_K$)] (A$_K$))] (M$_I$))

where: (T$_I$) = *said*; (R$_I$) = *she*; (T$_J$) = *aren't*; (R$_J$) = *they*; (T$_K$) = *getting more*; (R$_K$) = *this* (T$_L$) = property of being 'book'; (R$_L$) = *book*; (T$_M$) = *Johnny Briggs*; (T$_N$) = *other*; (T$_O$) = *pleased*; (T$_P$) = *put on to*; (R$_M$) = *it* (book)

Phonological Level

(U$_I$: [(fIP$_I$: [(PP$_I$: /bətʃiˈsed/ (PP$_I$)) (PP$_J$: /ðeɪˈɑːnt/ (PP$_J$)) (PP$_K$: /geʔɪnˈmɔːɹ/ /PP$_K$))

(PP$_L$: /aʊtəvˈðɪs/ (PP$_L$)) (fPP$_M$: /dʒɒnɪˈbɹɪgsˈbʊk/ (PP$_M$))] (IP$_I$))

(fIP$_J$: [(fPP$_N$: /ðənðɪˈʌðəˈbʊk/ (PP$_N$))] (IP$_J$))

(BC$_J$: [(rIP$_I$: /m:/ (IP$_I$))] (BC$_J$))

(fIP$_K$: [(hPP$_O$: /səʊʃiskwaɪʔˈpleɪzd/ (PP$_O$)) (PP$_P$: /ðætʃizˈpʊtəmˈɒntʊɪt/(PP$_P$))] (IP$_K$))] (U$_I$))

(57) a. Susan (PS052) [167] (A$_I$) I told you that I was punned today didn't I? (A$_I$)

[168] (A$_J$) I'd

Carl (PS051)   [169] (BC$_I$) Mm. (BC$_I$)

Susan (PS052)   [170] suddenly forgotten, it suddenly just ... it just didn't ... twig with them at all. (A$_J$)

BC Timestamp	Form	Function
(09:36)	generic /m:/	regulative

(57) b. **Interpersonal Level**

(M$_I$ [(q-tag A$_I$: [(F$_I$: INTER (F$_I$)) (1 P$_1$)$_S$ (P$_2$: you)$_A$ (C$_I$: [(T$_I$) (T$_J$) (R$_I$: [+S] (R$_I$)) (R$_J$)] (C$_I$))] (A$_I$))

(BC$_I$: [REG (P$_J$)$_A$ (P$_I$)$_S$] (BC$_I$))

(A$_J$: [(F$_J$: DECL (F$_J$)) (1 P$_1$)$_S$ (P$_2$)$_A$ (C$_J$: [(T$_K$) (R$_I$) (T$_L$) (R$_K$) (T$_L$) (R$_L$)] (C$_J$))] (A$_J$))] (M$_I$))

where: (T$_I$) = *told*; (T$_J$) = *punned*; (T$_K$) = *forgotten*; (T$_L$) = *did not*; (R$_I$) = *I*; (R$_J$) = *you*; (R$_K$) = *something*; (R$_L$) = *them*; (T$_M$) = *trigger*

Phonological Level

(U$_I$: [(fIP$_I$: [(PP$_I$: /ðɪˈtəʊldjʊ/ (PP$_I$)) (PP$_J$: /ðɑtaɪwəzˈpʌndtʊdeɪˈdɪdntaɪ / (PP$_J$))] (IP$_I$))

(BC$_I$: [(fIP$_I$: /m:/ (IP$_I$))] (BC$_I$))

(fIP$_J$: [(PP$_K$: /sʌdnlɪfəˈgɒt/ (PP$_K$)) (PP$_L$: /ˈsʌmðɪndʒʌstədʒʌstˈdɪdnˈ/ (PP$_L$))

(PP$_M$: /ˈtrɪgəðemətˈɔ:l/ (PP$_M$))] (IP$_J$))] (U$_I$))

(58) a. Susan (PS052) [217] (A$_I$) Again, I'm talking about school! (A$_I$)

Carl (PS051)   [218] (BC$_I$) Yeah. (BC$_I$)

Susan (PS052)   [219] (A$_J$) Oh!

[220] Oh!

[221] Oh!

[222] School's banned! (A$_J$)

BC Timestamp	Form	Function
(12:26)	generic /ˈjeə/	supportive

(58) b. **Interpersonal Level**

(M$_I$ [(A$_I$: [(F$_I$: DECL (F$_I$)) (1 P$_1$)$_S$ (P$_2$)$_A$ (C$_I$: [(T$_I$) (R$_I$: [+S] (R$_I$)) (R$_J$: (T$_J$) (R$_J$))] (C$_I$))] (A$_I$))

(BC$_I$: [SUP (P$_J$)$_A$ (P$_I$)$_S$] (BC$_I$))

  (A$_J$: [(F$_I$: DECL (F$_I$)) (P$_1$)$_S$ (P$_2$)$_A$ (C$_J$: [(R$_J$: (T$_J$) (T$_K$)$_{FOC}$ (R$_J$))] (C$_J$))] (A$_J$))] (M$_I$))

where: (R$_I$) = *I*; (T$_I$) = *talking*; (R$_J$) = *school*; (T$_J$) = property of being 'school' (T$_K$) = *banned*

  Phonological Level

(U$_I$: [(fIP$_I$: [(PP$_I$: /əgˈɛːnəmˈtɔːkɪn/ (PP$_I$)) (PP$_J$: /əbaʊtˈskuːl/ (PP$_J$))] (IP$_I$))

(BC$_I$: [(fIP$_I$:   /[ˈjeə]/ (IP$_I$))] (BC$_I$))

  (fIP$_J$: [(PP$_K$:   /[ɔ :::]:::skuːlzˈbanːd/ (PP$_K$))] (IP$_J$))] (U$_I$))

(59) a. Carl (PS051)　　[258] (A$_I$) But theirs is bigger

　　　　　　　　　　they've got a pottery room

　　　　　　　　　　they've got careers education there (A$_I$)

　　　Susan (PS052) [259] (BC$_I$) Yeah, [...] (BC$_I$)

　　　Carl (PS051)　　[260] (A$_J$) they've got two classes, they're looking to the library. (A$_J$)

BC Timestamp	Form	Function
(13:48)	generic /ˈjeːə/	regulative/ supportive

(59) b. **Interpersonal Level**

(M$_I$ [(A$_I$: [(F$_I$: DECL (F$_I$)) (P$_1$)$_S$ (P$_2$)$_A$ (C$_I$: [(R$_I$: (T$_I$) (T$_J$) (R$_I$)) (T$_K$) (R$_J$) (R$_I$) (T$_K$) (R$_K$) (R$_I$))] (C$_I$))]
  (A$_I$))

(BC$_I$: [SUP (P$_J$)$_A$ (P$_I$)$_S$] (BC$_I$))

  (A$_J$: [(F$_I$: DECL (F$_I$)) (P$_1$)$_S$ (P$_2$)$_A$ (C$_J$: [(T$_K$) (R$_L$: (T$_L$) (R$_L$)) (R$_I$) (R$_L$: (T$_M$) (R$_L$)) (R$_M$)] (C$_J$))]
  (A$_J$))] (M$_I$))

where: (R$_I$) = *school* (referenced by *their's* and *they*); (T$_I$) = property of 'school'; (R$_J$) = *pottery room*; (R$_K$) = *careers education* (T$_J$) = *bigger*; (R$_L$) = *classes*; (R$_M$) = *library*; (T$_L$) = property of being 'class'; (T$_K$) = have

  Phonological Level

(U$_I$: [(fIP$_I$: [(PP$_I$: /bədðɛːzɪzˈbɪgə/ (PP$_I$)) (PP$_J$: /hðeɪgɒrəˈpɒtɪɪɪuːm/ (PP$_J$))

        (hPP$_K$: /ðeɪgɒʔkəˈɪɪəzedjʊˈkɛːʒnðɛːə/ (PP$_K$))] (IP$_I$))

(BC$_I$: [(fIP$_I$: /ˈjeːə/ (IP$_I$))] (BC$_I$))

  (rIP$_J$: [(PP$_L$:/ðeɪgɒʔˈtʊˌklɑsəs/ (PP$_L$)) (PP$_M$: /ðeɪɑˈlʊkɪntʊðəˈlaɪbɪəɪi/ (PP$_M$))] (IP$_J$))] (U$_I$))

(60) a. Susan (PS052) [277] (A_I) And the only way ... place I could ... think to send them was the girls' changing room! (A_I)

Carl (PS051)   [278] (BC_I) Oh. (BC_I)

Susan (PS052)   [279] (A_J) There wasn't anywhere else! (A_J)

Carl (PS051)   [280] (BC_J) Wasn't it? (BC_J)

Susan (PS052)   [281] (A_K) Cos the library was being used (A_K)

BC Timestamp	Form	Function
(14:28)	generic /ʔmʔm:/	regulative/ supportive
(14:30)	generic / əˈnəʊ /	regulative/ supportive

(60)b. **Interpersonal Level**

(M_I [(A_I: [(F_I: DECL (F_I)) (1 P_1)_S (P_2)_A (C_I: [(R_I: (T_I) (R_I)) (T_J) (R_J) (R_K) (R_L: (T_K) (R_L))] (C_I))]
   (A_I))

(BC_I: [REG/SUP (P_J)_A (P_I)_S] (BC_I))

   (A_J: [(F_I: DECL (F_I)) (P_1)_S (P_2)_A (C_J: [(T_L) (T_M)] (C_J))] (A_J))

(BC_J: [REG/SUP (P_J)_A (P_I)_S] (BC_J))

   (conj A_K: [(F_I: DECL (F_I)) (P_1)_S (P_2)_A (C_K: [(T_O) (R_M: (T_N) (R_M))] (C_K))] (A_K))] (M_I))

where: (R_I) = *place*; (T_I) = property 'place'; (R_J) = *I*; (R_K) = *them*; (T_J) = *could think to send*; (R_L) = *girl's changing room*; (T_K) = property of 'changing room'; (T_L) = *not being*; (T_M) = *anywhere else*; (R_M) = *library*; (T_N) = property of 'library'; (T_O) = *being used*

   Phonological Level

(U_I: [(fIP_I: [(PP_I: /ənðɪəʊnlɪweɪˈpleɪs/ (PP_I)) (lPP_J: /əkʊdˈðɪnktʊˈsenddem/ (PP_J))
       (PP_K: /wəzðəgɛːlˈʃtʃeɪndʒɪŋrʊm/ (PP_K))] (IP_I))

(BC_I: [(rIP_I: /ʔmʔm:/ (IP_I))] (BC_I))

   (rIP_J: [(PP_L: /ðeəˈwɒznt/ (PP_L)) (PP_M: ənɪweəˈels/ (PP_M))] (IP_J))

(BC_J: [((rIP_I: /əˈnəʊ/ (IP_I))] (BC_J))

   (rIP_K: [(PP_N: /kɒzðəˈlaɪbɹəɪɪ/ (PP_N)) (PP_O: (/wɒzbiɪnˈjuːzd/ (PP_O))] (IP_K))] (U_I))

(61) a. Susan (PS052) [335] (A_I) The wrinklies (A_I)

[336] (A_J) now there's a word! In common [laughing] usage, the wrinklies [] ! (A_J)

Carl (PS051)   [337] (BC_J) Yeah. (BC_J)

Susan (PS052)   [338] (A_K) As the children ... so sweetly call them! (A_K)

BC Timestamp	Form	Function
(16:40)	generic /jeə/	regulative

(61) b. **Interpersonal Level**

(M_I [(A_I: [(F_I: INTERP (F_I)) (P_1)_S (P_2)_A (C_I: [(R_I: (T_I) (R_I))] (C_I))] (A_I))

    (A_J: [(F_J: DECL (F_J)) (P_1)_S (P_2)_A (C_J: [(R_J: (T_J) (R_J))] (C_J))] (A_J))

    (A_K: [(F_J: DECL (F_J)) (P_1)_S (P_2)_A (C_K: [(T_K) (R_I)] (C_K))] (A_K))

(BC_J: [REG (P_J)_A (P_I)_S] (BC_J))

    (A_L: [(F_J: DECL (F_J)) (P_1)_S (P_2)_A (C_K: [(T_L) (R_K) (R_L)] (C_K))] (A_L))] (M_I))

where: (R_I) = *wrinklies*; (T_I) = *old*; (R_J) = *word* (T_J) = property of being '*a word*'; (T_K) = being in '*common usage*'; (R_K) = *children*; (T_L) = *sweetly calling*; (R_L) = *them* (reference to *the elderly* that were mentioned before in conversation)

Phonological Level

(U_I: [(fIP_I: [(PP_I: /ðəˈwɹɪnkliːz/ (PP_I))] (IP_I))

    (rIP_J: [(PP_J: /nəʊðeəzəˈwɛːd (PP_J))] (IP_J))

    (fIP_K: [(PP_K: /ɪnˈkɒmənjʊˈsɪdʒðəˈwɹɪnkliːz/ (PP_K))] (IP_K))

(BC_K: [(fIP_I: /jeə/ (IP_I))] (BC_K))

    (rIP_L: [(PP_L: /əzðəˈtʃɪldɹənsəʊˈswitlɪˈkɒlðem/ (PP_L))] (IP_L))]

(62) a. Susan (PS052) [375] (A_I) But when you used to look at the te (A_I), (A_J) you know, the children's television programmes(A_I), (A_K) they're

Carl (PS051)   [376] (BC_J) Yeah. (BC_J)

Susan (PS052)   [377] nearly all American, the cartoons. (A_K)

BC Timestamp	Form	Function
(17:51)	generic /jeə/	regulative

(62) b. **Interpersonal Level**

(M_I [(A_I: [(F_I: DECL (F_I)) (P_1)_S (P_2)_A (C_I: [(T_J) (R_I: (T_I) (R_I))_FOC] (C_I))] (A_I))

    (you know A_J: [(F_I: DECL (F_I)) (P_1)_S (P_2)_A (C_J: [(R_J: (T_K) (R_J))] (C_J))] (A_J))

(BC_J: [REG: (R_K) (P_J)_A (P_I)_S] (BC_J))

    (A_K: [(F_I: DECL (F_I)) (P_1)_S (P_2)_A (C_K: [(R_K: (T_L) (T_M) (R_K))] (C_K))] (A_K))] (M_I))

where: (R_I) = *tele* (TV); (T_I) = property of being '*TV*'; (T_J) = *look*; (R_J) = *children's television programmes*; (T_K) = property of being a '*TV programme*'; (R_K) = *they* (children's TV programmes) (R_L) = *cartoons*; (T_L) = property of being a '*cartoon*'; (T_M) = *American*

      Phonological Level

(U_I: [(rIP_I: [(PP_I: /bʌʔwenjuˈlʊkəʔðəˈtelɪ/ (PP_I))] (IP_I))

    (rIP_J: [(PP_J: /jʊˈknəʊðəˈtʃɪldɪənztələˈvɪʒənˈpɪəʊgɪams/ (PP_J))] (IP_J))

(BC_J: [(rIP_I: / [jeə   ]/ (IP_I))] (BC_J))

    (fIP_K: [(PP_K: / [ðeɪənɪəlɪ]ˈɒləˈmeɪɪkənðəkɑˈtuːns/ (PP_K))] (IP_K))] (U_I))

(63) a. Susan (PS052) [384] (A_I) Ace, was the word (A_I) (A_J) that we used a lot. (A_J)

      Carl (PS051)   [385] (BC_J) Carry on. (BC_J)

      Susan (PS052) [386] (A_K) It's ace! (A_K)

BC Timestamp	Form	Function
(18:05)	generic /kaɪɪˈɒn/	regulative

(63) b. **Interpersonal Level**

(M_I [(A_I: [(F_I: DECL (F_I)) (P_1)_S (P_2)_A (C_I: [(R_I) _FOC (R_J: (T_I) (R_J))] (C_I))] (A_I))

    (A_J: [(F_I: DECL (F_I)) (m 1 P_1)_S (P_2)_A (C_J: [(T_J) (R_K)] (C_J))] (A_J))

(BC_J: [REG (P_J)_A (P_I)_S] (BC_J))

    (A_K: [(F_I: DECL (F_I)) (P_1)_S (P_2)_A (C_K: [(R_L: (T_K) _FOC (R_L))] (C_K))] (A_K))] (M_I))

where: (R_I) = *ace*; (R_J) = *word*; (T_I) = property of being '*word*'; (R_K) = *we*; (T_J) = *used a lot*; (T_K) = property fo being '*ace*'; (R_L) = *it*

Phonological Level

(U$_I$: [(rIP$_I$: [(PP$_I$: /ˈeɪs/ (PP$_I$)) (PP$_J$: wəzðəˈwɛ:d/ (PP$_J$))] (IP$_I$))

   (rIP$_J$: [(PP$_K$: /ðəʔwiˈjuzdəlɒʔ/ (PP$_K$))] (IP$_J$))

(BC$_J$: [(rIP$_I$: /kaɪɪˈɒn/ (IP$_I$))] (BC$_J$))

   (fIP$_K$: [(PP$_L$: /ɪtsˈeɪs/ (PP$_L$))] (IP$_K$))] (U$_I$))

(64) a. Susan (PS052)   [453] (A$_I$) I left her on there! (A$_I$)

     Carl (PS051)   [454] (BC$_I$) Yeah. (sic) (BC$_I$)

     Susan (PS052)   [455] (A$_J$) And that she'll just have to take a chance tonight. (A$_J$)

BC Timestamp	Form	Function
(21:33)	generic /m:/	regulative/ supportive

(64) b. **Interpersonal Level**

(M$_I$ [(A$_I$: [(F$_I$: DECL (F$_I$)) (1 P$_1$)$_S$ (P$_2$)$_A$ (C$_I$: [(T$_I$) (R$_I$: [+S] (R$_I$)) (R$_J$: (T$_J$) (R$_J$))] (C$_I$))] (A$_I$))
(BC$_J$: [REG/ SUP (P$_J$)$_A$ (P$_I$)$_S$] (BC$_J$))

   (conj A$_J$: [(F$_I$: DECL (F$_I$)) (P$_1$)$_S$ (P$_2$)$_A$ (C$_J$: [(T$_K$) (R$_J$: (T$_J$) (R$_J$))] (C$_J$))] (A$_J$))] (M$_I$))

where: (R$_I$) = *I*; **(**T$_I$**)** = *leave on*; (R$_J$) = *her*; (T$_J$) = property of being a '*hen*'; (T$_K$) = *have to take a chance*

Phonological Level

(U$_I$: [(fIP$_I$: [(PP$_I$: /əleftəɹˈɒnðɛ:/ (PP$_I$))] (IP$_I$))

(BC$_I$: [(fIP$_I$: /m:/ (IP$_I$))] (BC$_I$))

   (rIP$_J$: [(PP$_J$: /ənˈðætʃɪ/ (PP$_J$)) (lPP$_K$: /ldʒʌsthəvtʊteɪkətˈʃɑ:nstʊnaɪt/ (PP$_K$))] (IP$_J$))] (U$_I$))
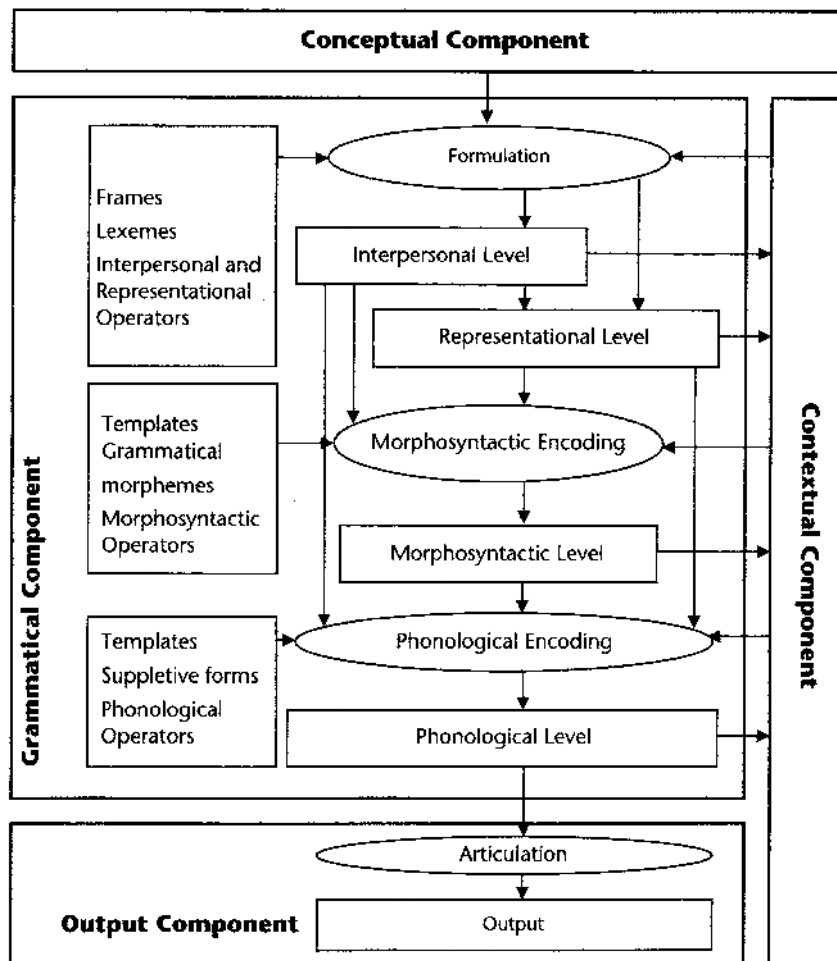
FIGURE 3: General layout of FDG (HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 13)

"The Grammatical Component is presented in the centre, the Conceptual Component at the top, the Output Component at the bottom, and the Contextual Component to the right. […] Within the various Components, circles contain operations, boxes contain the primitives used in operations, and rectangles contain the levels of representation produced by operations"

(HENGEVELD & MACKENZIE 2008: 12)

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