Pseudo-cleft constructions in Swedish talk-in-interaction : Turn projection and discourse organization

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Abstract

In this study we present an interactional linguistic analysis of pseudoclefts in Swedish based on audio and video recordings of everyday and institutional conversations, resulting in a collection of 100 instances. There is variation in the degree to which pseudo-cleft constructions are syntactically integrated: from fully integrated biclausal constructions (cleft clause + copula verb + main clause) to non-copular variants and further to variants in which the cleft-clause is followed by an indeterminate stretch of discourse. The construction's functional properties have to do with projecting actions and generating discourse events, e.g. showing that the initial part has an important turn-projecting function by disclosing the speaker's stance towards the issue at hand. Pseudo-cleft constructions are recurrently employed for marking discourse shifts, e.g. from a positive to a negative stance. Prosodic organization brings unity to the overall construction of clefts and visual cues can be used to convey significant processing activity by the speaker during the production of a pseudocleft. Our data from institutional interaction shows that pseudoclefts are heavily used by the expert rather than lay participant, thus contributing to the creation of institutional roles and social order.
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1. INTRODUCTION

Swedish is a language with a fixed word order and limited morpho-syntactic inflection in nouns, which delimits the range of possibilities in marking aspects such as the theme or focus in a clause by just a change in word order. Clefts are one common analytic syntactic structure to deal with these delimitations, as stated in most Swedish grammars (see Teleman et al. 1999, 1:59). The variant of clefts that is usually referred to is the so called it-cleft construction, or clefts with a *medial* focus in De Cesare's (2014) terms (*Det är den som är bra* 'It is that one that is good'). In contrast, the construction that we concentrate us on here, pseudoclefts or clefts with a *final* focus, has attracted scant attention among Swedish grammarians. One probable reason is that this construction type appears to be far less frequent, to the degree that some linguists have considered it negligible in comparison to other clefts (e.g. Svenonius 1998). As will

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become evident from our present study, pseudoclefts are nonetheless an existing interactional resource in Swedish and display regular structural patterns and characteristic interactional functions. We can observe some of these features in the following example, taken from a group conversation in which the participants assess different music styles, the singer-songwriter Lisa Ekdahl's song "Vem vet" in this sequence:

(1) *Lisa Ekdahl* (GSM:01), focus group, audio.

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01 TOM:    mm (.) väldigt eh snyggt också=snyggt ljud,
           mm (.) very um nice too=nice sound,

02         många eh (.) duktiga:,
           many um (.) talented:,

03         (1.5)

04         >va heter de< musiker.
           >what's it called< musicians.

05         (0.9)

06         å vad ja inte gillar e hennes nasala röst
           and what I don't like is her nasal voice

07         som e lite: >för jobbig<.
           that is a bit too disturbing.

08 DAN:    de: håller ja inte me om.
           I don't agree about that.
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The primary speaker here, Tom, first starts to assess the song in positive terms, adding to a preceding general positive assessment made by him (not shown in the transcript), which the additive adverb *också* ('too, also') in line 1 is indicative of. His assessment in lines 1–4 concerns details of the production and instrumentation of the piece. Then there is a pause in line 5, after which Tom shifts to a critical point of view: he does not like the singer's nasal voice, which he finds 'disturbing' (*jobbig*). Not untypical of our data, this shift in Tom's stance is introduced with a pseudo-cleft construction, *vad ja inte gillar e hennes nasala röst* 'what I don't like is her nasal voice' (line 6), a standpoint that is repudiated by Dan in line 8. Defining formal features of this rather canonical realization of the pseudo-cleft construction are illustrated in Table 1 (cf. De Cesare 2014:37).

   The initial part of the construction (Part A) is a nominal relative clause introduced with the relative pronoun *vad* 'what' as a free (or headless) relative, i.e. the antecedent is fused with the relative.[1] Alternatively, the introducer can be a headed relative clause *det som* 'that which' (where the common relativizer *som* is optional in certain circumstances, e.g. *Det (som) ja inte gillar e hennes nasala röst* 'that which/the thing (that) I don't like is her nasal voice' (see also Koops & Hilpert 2009). From an information structural point of view, Part A is said to express the presupposition, something that is (presented as) given in the context, while Part B is the "new", focus-bearing element (see Søfteland, 2014 on Norwegian clefts). The copula verb *e* 'is' links Part A with the subjective complement in Part B, and this results in a biclausal unit that, in principle, expresses a single proposition, e.g. *jag gillar inte hennes nasala röst* 'I don't like her nasal voice'. In the example above, the cleft constituent (Part B) is a noun phrase, but nominal and infinitival clauses are also common in this position.

   In addition to the above, there are some other kinds of structures in the Swedish pseudo-cleft family, for example, *det enda som e bra e språkundervisningen* 'the only thing that is good is language teaching'. However, we concentrate us

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[1] The speaker's turn in the actual instance in excerpt 1 is prefaced by the coordinating conjunction *å* 'and', which we can disregard in this basic structural analysis of the pseudo-cleft construction itself. We return to the details of the organization of pseudo-cleft turns in Section 5.

Table 1
Constituent parts of a canonical Swedish pseudo-cleft construction.

Pseudo-cleft construction		
Part A Cleft clause (subject)	**Copula** (verb)	**Part B** Cleft constituent (complement)
Vad ja inte gillar 'What I don't like'	*e* 'is'	*hennes nasala röst* 'her nasal voice'

on the variant with a free or headed relative clause as Part A, as this constitutes the most generic and commonly used structural frame for pseudoclefts in our conversational data. It is also this type of construction that has attracted most attention in prior interactional studies of pseudoclefts in other languages (e.g. Günthner 2006, 2011 on German; Hopper & Thompson 2008 on English; Pekarek Doehler 2011 on French; Maschler & Fishman 2020 on Hebrew), and in the contributions to this special issue. Moreover, we have detected that these pseudoclefts display some structural micro variation in the data, which warrants a closer analysis of this construction type from the point of structural emergence.

Previous research on Swedish pseudoclefts has mostly concerned written language (but see Henricson & Lindström 2020a, 2020b) and issues like information structure and contrastive analysis (e.g. Huber 2002; Johansson 2001, 2002). The conception that pseudoclefts are a marginal phenomenon may have been caused by laying an English-language filter on Swedish and searching for constructions with a free relative of the *what*-kind, cf. the widely-used label wh-cleft (on this point, see De Cesare 2014:10, 16). Such clefts are, indeed, comparatively rare in our data, but we have found considerably more instances of pseudoclefts introduced by a headed relative clause (cf. *das was* in German, *ce que* in French and *quello che* in Italian), which in turn is not typical of the English usage.

We will in the following examine what kind of an interactional resource the pseudo-cleft construction is for speakers of Swedish. We will first give an account of structural variations that emerge in conversational, online speaking and offer an overview of the type of predicates used in the construction's framing Part A. This, then, gives us a clue of the interactional meaning, i.e. what kinds of actions are produced by the construction. We then move on to analyze conversational excerpts and how clefts are implemented to project actions and discourse events, such as the stance shift in excerpt (1). The functional analysis is followed by an overview of turn-organizational aspects of pseudo-cleft turns. This includes a discussion of recurrent turn-entry devices and turn-internal disfluencies, an account on typical prosodic trajectories associated with different sub-types of pseudoclefts, and finally, a note on certain embodied cues that co-occur with the construction. The article ends with a summary and conclusion.

The central part of our analysis is based on a collection of instances from casual face-to-face conversations, but we will also consider uses in more specialized institutional genres in a separate section. The analysis follows the principles of interactional linguistics that combines a focus on grammatical form with a sensitivity to the temporal, sequential and multimodal progression in which language and interaction unfold (Couper-Kuhlen & Selting 2018). The objects of our analysis are thus phenomena of real-time language, processed through "online syntax" (Auer 2005) and relatable to Hopper's (2012) views on emergent grammar. As also our study will show, the outcomes of emergent grammar are more fluid, subject to situational contingencies and thus more varied in formal configurations than what is usually recognized in grammar books that tend to deal with idealized examples.

2. DATA AND COLLECTION

We have worked with a collection of 100 pseudoclefts extracted from eight different conversational corpora, including casual gatherings among friends, conversations over coffee or dinner, focus group discussions, academic writing consultations, and personal training sessions (see Appendix A for short descriptions and an estimation of the amount of data that was used). The interactions have been audio- and/or video-recorded in Finland and Sweden between the 1980s and the 2010s. About half of our instances (45/100) comes from interactions in a casual mode, including everyday conversations and focus group discussions collected in the context of sociolinguistic studies. The other half (55/100) comes from institutional settings with asymmetric participant roles of the expert–non-expert kind, e.g. teacher–student.

The overall size of our data compared with the number of observed instances suggests that pseudoclefts, although a regular phenomenon, are not very frequent in spoken Swedish. The construction also seems to occur more often in certain institutional settings rather than in everyday speech (this is the reason for the somewhat uneven distribution of instances between "casual" and "institutional" in our collection). However, in order to be in line with previous interactional research, our primary focus will be on examining the subset found in casual conversations, but we also touch upon

patterns found in institutional interactions (Section 4.3) and consider in what way the interactional genre plays a role for the deployment of pseudoclefts. The conversational excerpts that are used in the functional analysis (Section 4 and onwards) are transcribed according to established conversation analytic principles (Jefferson 2004), in some cases enriched with a notation of participants' embodied conduct (Mondada 2019); transcription symbols are presented in Appendix B.

3. AN ORIENTATION OF CONSTRUCTIONAL AND FUNCTIONAL PROPERTIES

In the following discussion of the syntax and semantics of Swedish pseudoclefts we focus on the 45 instances that stem from our subset of casual conversations (see above). This sub-collection reveals that the basic pseudo-cleft construction, exemplified in excerpt (1), is variable to some degree. To begin with, we can identify structurally full-blown versions of pseudoclefts, which means that both parts A and B are produced as well as the copula verb as a linking element between the parts (see Table 1 above). Part A is introduced with a free or headed relative pronoun (either *vad* 'what' or *det (som)* 'that (which)') that opens a relative clause. The copula (COP) appears in present or past tense in concord with the tense in Part A and provides an overt link to Part B that houses a noun phrase, an infinitival clause or a finite nominal clause. The target construction from excerpt (1) illustrates an instantiation of this structure with a noun phrase as Part B and is reproduced below as example (2). In this example and the following ones in this section, Part A is in **boldface** and Part B is underlined; a grammatical gloss is provided in a line between the original and the translation.

(2)	***Vad ja inte gillar*** *e* <u>*hennes nasala röst*</u>.
	what I NEG like COP her nasal-DEF voice
	'**What I don't like** is <u>her nasal voice</u>.'

There is some micro variation among these full-fledged biclausal variants. Firstly, a pronoun (*det* 'it, that') that is coreferential (COR) with Part A can precede the copula, thus starting a full declarative clause that stands for Part B, which is exemplified in (3). The resulting construction leaves the initial relative clause in a left-dislocated position, because Part B, that in this case is a full predication, is preceded by a pre-clausal item (see also Koops & Hilpert 2009; cf. Gregory & Michaelis 2001):

(3)	***Det som e den stora skillnaden mellan detta å Kent***
	that REL is the big-DEF difference-DEF between this and Kent
	'**The thing that is the big difference between this one and Kent**'
	de e ju <u>*att dehär e en mycke bättre låt*</u>.
	COR COP PRT that this is a much good-COMP tune
	'it is <u>that this one is a much better song</u>.'

This construction type, then, has some similarities with French *Ce que* … *c'est* … clefts (see Maschler & Pekarek Doehler, this issue) and has counterparts in German use, *Was* … *das* … (Koops & Hilpert 2009). Another variant of the basic template is attested in cases where the copula is followed by a cataphoric (CAT) pronoun (*det* 'it, the fact') that refers forwards to a nominal clause in Part B, as shown in (4):

(4)	***Det som Kasi säjer just*** *e det* <u>*att ekonomisk utbildning lönar sej alltid*</u>.
	that REL Kasi say-PRS PRT COP CAT that economic education pay-PRS REFL always
	'**What Kasi says here** is (the fact) <u>that business education pays off always</u>.'

Table 2
Types of linking between Part A and Part B in full-blown pseudoclefts.

Type of linking		Link		Occurrences
Copular	Part A	copula	Part B	23
Co-referential	Part A	pronoun + copula	Part B	5
Cataphoric	Part A	copula + pronoun	Part B	3

Hence, the complexity, or explicitness, of the linking elements in full-blown pseudoclefts varies between simple copular (i.e. standard) and enhanced co-referential or cataphoric solutions, as summarized in Table 2.[2] The majority of our instances, 31 out of 45, represent these full-blown constructional variants, with or without the additional anaphoric or cataphoric pronouns around the copula verb.

Speakers also produce slightly reduced versions of the full pseudo-cleft construction by omitting the copula verb between the parts A and B that otherwise are tightly knit to one another. This happens in five cases in which Part B is always a nominal *att*-clause (see also Günthner 2006 for German). The canonical slot for the copula is marked with the symbol Ø in example (5):

(5)	***Det som ja också ha reagera på*** Ø <u>*att di oftast e jättetjocka*</u>.
	that REL I also have react-PTC on that they often-SUP be-PRS super-fat-PL
	'**What I also have reacted to** <u>that they most often are super fat</u>.'

Finally, there are nine cases of non-integrated pseudoclefts in which the syntactic shape of Part B and its relation to Part A is indeterminate (see Hopper & Thompson 2008; also Koops & Hilpert 2009). In five of these instances, Part A is produced in full and the rest of the grammatical construction is aborted after the copula verb, sometimes also involving the complementizer *att* (that could introduce a nominal clause as Part B); also other speech productional perturbations may occur as in (6):

(6)	***Vad vi sku kunna göra*** *.h e att .h att ehh hh här e det här (...)*
	what we AUX can.INF do-INF COP that that here is this
	'**What we could do** is that, that, um, here is this (thing) (....)'

In four further instances we find utterance structures that begin with a possible Part A, but the rest of the speaker's production does not contain any of the canonical elements of a grammatically integrated pseudo-cleft construction, like the linking copula or a syntactically fitting cleft constituent (e.g. a noun phrase, an infinitival or a nominal clause as Part B). Example (7) illustrates such cases:

(7)	***Det ja sku säga ännu*** *så på vägen hem hade ja liksom tänkt-*
	that I AUX say-INF still PRT on way-DEF home have-PST I PRT think-PTC
	'**What I was going to say anyway**, on my way home I had sort of thought-'
	fö att ja va ju bakis så ja hade tänkt sova liksom
	because I be-PST PRT hangover PRT I have-PST think-PTC sleep-INF PRT
	''cos I had a hangover, you know, so I had thought I could sleep, like'

Such non-integrated construction types seem to function as initial framing elements in an utterance that then takes a syntactically and pragmatically more independent course in the slot that conventionally would house the complement part of a pseudo-cleft construction (cf. Günthner 2006; Hopper & Thompson 2008; Pekarek Doehler 2011). Such utter-

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[2] The three instances with a cataphoric pronoun are attested in our Finland-Swedish data sets. There is a possibility that this is a language-contact phenomenon, as pseudoclefts are typically constructed with a supporting cataphoric pronoun (*se* 'that') in Finnish, e.g. ***mitä viranomaiset nyt siellä yrittävät tehdä*** *on <u>se</u> että he siirtävät potilaita eri puolille pääkaupunkia ja lähiseuduille* '**what the authorities now try to do there** is (<u>the thing</u>) that they are transporting patients to different parts of the capital and nearby regions' (journalist on the covid epidemic in France; YLE morning news, March 28, 2020).

ance frames seem to result from indeterminate online emergence in cases like (6), where the speaker still produces the copula and a complementizer after Part A (but then changes mind), whereas A-parts with no following elements of an integrated pseudo-cleft construction (7) seem to be designed as such. The latter types may in some languages have conventionalized into pragmatically specific, even discourse marker-like elements (see Maschler & Fishman 2020 on Hebrew). Example (7), with its metapragmatic Part A referring to "saying", has certainly discourse-organizing motivations as it reintroduces a narrative after a preceding digression (not shown here). Also the Part A in (6), that refers to joint action and offers a platform for a proposal ("What we could do"), seems to be a conventional format and is used two times by the same speaker in the same interaction (see further Excerpt 11). Interestingly, Koops and Hilpert (2009) observed in their diachronic study of the evolution of pseudoclefts in English that syntactically non-integrated variants were more frequent in older texts. In other words, the modern, syntactically integrated pseudo-cleft construction seems to be the product of grammaticalization and cultivation especially in writing, whereas the incomplete and non-integrated variants that we find in speaking can reflect a more original, emergent stage of language use.

To sum up the discussion on constructional variants, Table 3 lists their distinctive micro-syntactic features and quantitative distribution in our (casual) data.

Table 3
The distribution of constructional variants of pseudoclefts in the casual data.

Variant	Part A	Link	Part B	Occurrence
Full-blown:	Cleft-clause		Cleft-constituent:	
Copular		copula	*NP/inf./nominal cl.*	23
Co-referential		pron. + copula	*NP/inf./nominal cl.*	5
Cataphoric		copula + pron.	*Nominal clause*	3
Non-copular	Cleft-clause	–	Cleft-constituent:	5
			Nominal clause	
Non-integrated:	Cleft-clause		No cleft-constituent:	
Part A + link		copula	*Main clause(s)*	5
Part A		–	*Main clause(s)*	4
				45

The full-blown variants start out with a cleft-clause that is linked with varying degrees of explicitness to Part B that is a constituent in grammatical terms, i.e. a subject complement. The type of complement is restricted to nominal clauses in variants where the cleft-constituent is headed by a cataphoric pronoun (example 4). Also non-copular variants take only nominal clauses as Part B; in fact, the complementizer that heads the nominal clause may be understood as a virtual linking element (example 5). The characteristic feature of non-integrated constructional variants is that Part B is not a cleft-constituent in a conventional grammatical sense, i.e. it is not a subject complement but an independent clausal unit, and in most cases a stretch of discourse that can consist of a sequence of clauses. The larger representation of full-blown and biclausal constructions in our Swedish data as opposed to non-integrated variants seems to differ from Hopper and Thompson's (2008) findings concerning conversational English. Günthner (2006) also reports a lower amount of "canonical" instances in casual German, but she includes only B-parts consisting of a noun phrase in this category.

As an orientation to the distribution of the item(s) that launch the pseudoclefts, we can establish that a construction with a headed relative clause, i.e. *det som* 'that which, the thing that', is with 32 instances most typical; in four further cases the relativizer *som* was not produced but implied. Free relatives beginning with the pronoun *vad* 'what' occurred in nine instances. This includes four cases with *vad + som*, in which *som* must be present as a place holder when the role of the pronoun *vad* coincides with that of the subject of the clause, e.g. *vad* [*som*] *e sorgligt e* × 'what [subj] is sad is x'.

One rather striking feature of the pseudoclefts in our data is that Part A often discloses the speaker's stance towards the issue at hand. This is a tendency that also has been reported in earlier interactional studies of pseudoclefts in German and English (Kim 1995; Günthner 2006; Hopper & Thompson 2008) and in Koops and Hilpert's (2009) comparative study of English, German and Swedish. Table 4 lists the types of predicates in Part A divided in three main categories: 'verbs of the type do/happen/say', 'stance-taking predicates', and 'other' (see Maschler & Fishman 2020). The first category was identified as typical of pseudoclefts in Hopper and Thompson's (2008) study of English, while stance-taking predicates have been reported to be more typical in French and Hebrew talk-in-interaction (Pekarek Doehler 2011 on French; Maschler & Fishman 2020 on Hebrew; Maschler & Pekarek Doehler on French and Hebrew, this issue).[3] Note

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[3] Koops and Hilpert (2009) observed that "evaluative predicates" are typical of pseudoclefts in older English texts, whereas they become "more eventive" in modern use, with verbs of saying and *do* and *happen* in the uppermost ranks among the predicates. They suggest that this has to do with the conventionalization of the construction, and that German and Swedish represent a less developed stage in this respect.

Table 4

Semantic distribution of predicates in the A-parts of pseudoclefts in the data.

DO/ HAPPEN/ SAY 11 (24%)	Stance-Taking Predicate 25 (56 %)	Other 9 (20%)
göra 'do' 2	*digga* 'dig'	*vara* 'be'
hända 'happen' 2	*gilla* 'like'	*få* 'get' 2
säga 'say' 4	*tycka om* 'like'	*komma* 'come'
mena 'mean' 3	*e kiva* 'is nice'	*passa* 'suit'
	e hyvä 'is good'	*ändra* 'change'
	e världsbra 'is awesome'	*släppa* 'let go'
	e ljuvligt 'is sweet'	*köpa* 'buy'
	e sorgligt 'is sad'	*hajpa* 'hype'
	e slående 'is striking'	
	(e) orolig '(am) concerned'	
	bli störd 'get disturbed' 2	
	störa 'disturb' 2	
	reagera på 'react to'	
	märka 'notice'	
	bli jätteförvånad 'get astonished'	
	förvåna 'surprise' 2	
	tycka 'think, find'	
	tänka 'think' 2	
	tro 'think, believe'	
	värdesätta 'appreciate'	
	komma fram till 'conclude'	

that the category 'stance-taking predicates' includes single verbs like *gilla* 'like' as well as combinations of a copular verb and an adjectival item, e.g. *e ljuvligt* 'is sweet' because these are also typical in formulations of speaker stance (e.g. *He is sweet* ∼ *I like him*). More than one occurrence in the data (N = 45) is indicated with a number associated with the verb; the single verbs are represented in the infinitive but the combinations of a copula and an adjective stand in present tense to better reflect the actual use.

As Table 4 shows, more than 50% of the predicates in the A-parts of the pseudo-cleft construction fall in the stance-taking category. This suggests that pseudoclefts are recruited noticeably often in contexts where the speaker expresses an assessment (to like or not like something), a concern (being concerned or disturbed about something) or an affective reaction to something (e.g. being surprised or alerted). Hence, a central pragmatic function of pseudoclefts is "to provide a modal or stance-taking frame for the upcoming action" (Hopper & Thompson 2008: 106; see 4.1 below). Further, some of the verbs have to do with transitions of different kinds, like *göra* 'do' and *hända* 'happen' in the first category and *få* 'get', *komma* 'come', *släppa* 'let go' and *ändra* 'change' in the third – a consistency that could motivate a category of this kind in Table 4. This semantic clustering is significant as pseudoclefts generally constitute a means for marking transitions in the speaker's reasoning (Kim 1995; see 4.2 below).

4. INTERACTIONAL FUNCTION

In this section we discuss the interactional function of pseudo-cleft constructions from the perspectives of turn projection (4.1) and discourse organization (4.2). The division in these two subsections (4.1 and 4.2) reflects our aim to approach the interactional function from interconnected, but different analytic angles. The examples discussed in the subsections as such do not thus belong to two different functional categories. We conclude the section with some notes on the relevance of speech genre (4.3).

4.1. Turn projection

Conversational coordination depends on projection, i.e. the possibility for interlocutors to anticipate each other's contributions and recognize the direction of the interaction and its components (see e.g. Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson 1974; Hayashi 2004; Auer 2005). As pointed out by Auer (2005), grammar is one of the central means of signaling and foreseeing where the interaction appears to be heading and what the following constituent in a speaker's turn might be like. The possibility to project interactional trajectories works both across and within turns (Hayashi 2004:1341), and

pseudoclefts have been discussed as constructions that potentially work on both a micro and a macro syntactic level, including action as well as syntactic projection (see Hopper & Thompson 2008; Auer 2009; Günthner 2011; Pekarek Doehler 2011; Maschler & Fishman 2020). In this sub-section, we discuss a conversational excerpt with the scope of illustrating structural turn-internal projections of pseudo-cleft constructions; we will deal with aspects of prosodic projection later in Section 5.3.

Excerpt (8) is taken from an audio-recorded everyday conversation between three young women at a coffeehouse. The excerpt exhibits parts of a longer discussion on youth language, code-switching and slang, and starts with Sabina's anecdote of how she at times finds it difficult to comprehend what her younger brother is saying.

(8) *The f-word* (SVESTRA), informal interaction, audio.

```
01 SAB:   nä men ofta nä (.) min bror ha vari ute
          no but often when (.) my brother has been out


02        me någå sina vänner å sen kommer han hem
          with some of his friends and then he comes home

03        å talar om nånting fö mej så förstår ja int
          and tells me something then I don't always understand

04        va han me[nar att de e så där att,]
          what he means so it's so like,

05 LIN:            [((laughing))              ]

06        (0.9)

07 SAB:   am (.) *sku du kunna säja* på nytt
          um (.) *could you repeat* that

08        [å lite mera ] så där så att (0.3)
          and a bit more in such a way that (0.3)

09 LIN:   [((chuckles))]


10 SAB:   andra mänskor också kan förstå:
          other people also can understa:nd

11        men han [tycker] ba: de e häftit
          but he just thinks it's cool

12 JEN:           [jå:   ]
                   yeah

13 SAB:   att man int fatta: de [(så -)]
          that you don't get it (so -)

14 JEN:                         [jå    ]
                                 yeah

15        (0.7)


16 LIN:   jå de e ju int ba: de
          yeah (.) it's not just that
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17        utan han ty- (.) dom tycker
          but he thi- (.) they think

18        de e hä- jättehäftit att både (0.4)
          it's co- really cool to both (.)

19        tala slang (0.2) å *sen liksom* (0.4)
          talk slang (0.2) and *then like* (0.4)

20        de som ja kanske mest *blir störd på* (0.2)
          the thing that I perhaps get most *annoyed* (0.2)

21        *me (.) såndäna högstadieelever*
          *about (.) such secondary school students*

22        att dom sätter liksom (0.6)
          that they sort of put in (0.6)

23        v-orde in i typ (0.3) alla meninga:
          the f-word in like (0.3) all sentences

24        (0.6)

25        ((Jenny & Sabina are laughing))
```

Linda and Jenny affiliate with Sabina's point of view and show appreciation of her anecdote by laughter and the acknowledgment token *jå:* 'yeah' (lines 5, 9, 12, 14). After Sabina has finished her anecdotal story, Linda elaborates on the topic (lines 16–23), moving on from the particular case of Sabina's brother to a general point concerning youth language. This shift is signaled by the repair of the pronoun *han* 'he' with *dom* 'they' in line 17. The target of Linda's commentary is further specified in the ensuing pseudo-cleft construction with the label *högstadieelever* 'secondary school students' (line 21).

The pseudo-cleft construction is introduced in line 20 at a point where the three friends have established a common – negative – stance towards the slangy conversational style of young teenagers. With the pseudo-cleft construction Linda underscores her negative stance and shifts away from the more general argument of comprehensibility to a detail that frustrates her most of all, i.e. swearing and the overuse of a particular swear word ('the f-word', line 23). Part A of the pseudocleft, *de som ja kanske mest blir störd på me såndäna högstadieelever* 'the thing that I perhaps get most annoyed about such secondary school students' (lines 20–21), is partly produced with a creaky voice and frames the pseudocleft with a negative stance towards a certain category of teenagers. It also projects a B-part that clarifies the source of her annoyance. In this pseudo-cleft construction, the copula is omitted (or at least not audible in the recording), and hence Part B is attached to Part A without an overt linking element.

Example (8) illustrates pseudoclefts as bipartite constructions with a strong internal projective force. Part A of the construction reserves the turn until Part B is produced. Part A thus constructs a pragmatic platform for the upcoming Part B that specifies the object of the initial attitudinal framing ('I get annoyed about a thing → it's the f-word') and completes the construction syntactically and pragmatically.

4.2. Discourse organization

The analysis above has already suggested that the pragmatic scope of pseudoclefts works not only within a turn but also across turns on the level of discourse (see also Kim 1995; Günthner 2006; cf. Hayashi 2004:1341). In example (1) we could see that the pseudo-cleft construction appears in a sequential context that marks a polarity shift, from the speaker's positive assessment of a song to a negative one. Example (8), again, offers an instance where the speaker shifts from talking about slangy language in general to making a point about a specific aspect of teenager slang. To further illustrate this function of marking discursive shifts, we turn to example (9) that comes from a focus group conversation in which the participants are assessing works of visual art. There are five participants, none of them an expert on art, and they are sitting around a table on which there are laminated pictures of a variety of artworks. In this particular episode it is a painting of a mother and a baby by the Finnish 19th century artist Elin Danielson-Gambogi that is under scrutiny. Roy has explained that the painting is similar to the style of the Swedish artist Carl Larsson and that it is something you can see a lot in Sweden (lines 1–2). Then Jill takes the floor and asserts that the painting resembles classical portraits in the Finnish national gallery Ateneum (lines 4–6, 8, 12).

(9) *Neck hair* (EGS:L1:01), focus group, video.

```
01  ROY:    m:m (0.4) men i alla fall de e ba nånting som man
             m:m (0.4) but anyway it's just something that you

02          kunde se mycke i Sverige i alla f[all men?]
             could see much in Sweden anyway but?

03  JIL:                                     [.h       ]

04          h (.) ja tycker allmänt att +denhär, (0.3)
             h (.) I think in general that this one, (0.3)
    jil                                 +points to picture-->

05          liksom liknar ju alla konstverk som finns där
             sort of resembles all artworks that are there
    jil     -->

06          i Ateneum[s lik]som: (.) klassiska=
             in Ateneum's like classical=
    jil     -->

07  ADA:             [mm,  ]

08  JIL:    =(0.4) *eh* (0.4) finska?
             =(0.4) um (0.4) Finnish?
     jil    -->

09          (.)

10  ROY:    mm,=
    jil     -->

11  KIA:    =m[m,
    jil     -->

12  JIL:      [porträtt liksom+ .h
               portraits sort of .h
    jil     -->              +

13          +de som ja digga: me +denhä: (0.4) e dehä, (0.4)
             what I dig in this one (0.4) is this, (0.4)
    jil     +hand up in the air  +points to picture

14          +när i nacken kommer dehä ljuse så att
             when this light falls on her neck so that
    jil     +circular pointing over picture-->

15          man ser +domhä, (0.4) nack:+ fju:nen.=
             you can see this, (0.4) thin neck hair
    jil           -->+points to her own neck hair+

16  ADA:    =m:[m,]

17  ROY:       [m:]m,
```

In line 13, Jill introduces a shift of focus by pointing out what she finds particularly appealing in the painting: how the light falls on the neck hair of the portrayed mother. The shift from establishing general similarity to other classical portraits to picking out a specific quality of the painting at hand is achieved with the pseudo-cleft construction *de som ja digga: me den hä: e dehä* 'what I dig in this one is this'. Part B consists of a demonstrative pronoun, the physical reference of which the speaker specifies by pointing at an area of the laminated picture on the table (just before, during Part A, the speaker

has lifted up her hand). A causal clause is added in the continuation of the turn that explicates the conceptual reference of the demonstrative *dehä* 'this': *när i nacken kommer dehä ljuse* 'when this light falls on her neck' (lines 14–15).

As illustrated in the three longer conversational excerpts discussed so far (1, 8, 9), pseudoclefts often appear in the context of interactional turning points. They constitute platforms or rotating axes from which the speaker moves on to a new angle within a larger, overarching topic (see Günthner 2006). In Excerpt (1), this shift involves a turn from a positive assessment of several features, i.e. the sound and musicians in the recording, to criticism about one specific aspect of the recording, the singer's voice. The pseudocleft in Excerpt (8) appears in the junction between two levels of stance-taking, as the speaker turns from affiliating with another participant's anecdotal criticism about a specific individual's language to an emphasized and specified criticism about the entire age group's language. In Excerpt (9), the pseudo-cleft construction occurs in a transition from a general description of an object, the painting's similarity to other classical portraits, to a positive assessment of an appealing detail in the object, the impression of light on the portrayed person's neck. Hence, a central discourse-organizing feature of pseudo-cleft constructions appears to be their use as platforms for thematic and interactional shifts (see also Kim 1995). These shifts could be paralleled to what Goffman (1981:128, 152) calls *change in footing* and *narrative frame breaks*, or what Maschler (1997:199) calls *frame shifts*. In a similar vein as Maschler (1997) describes the use of discourse markers in the creation of frame shifts, pseudo-cleft constructions could be seen as conventionalized resources for marking an interactional turning point, e.g. from praise to criticism (Excerpt 1) or from a categorization to an assessment (Excerpt 9).

4.3. Expert talk

We conclude this section with observations of pseudo-cleft constructions in institutional discourse and highlight the specifics of how pseudoclefts are used in asymmetric interaction, with clearly defined roles as expert and non-expert, e.g. counsellor and student, supervisor and student or personal trainer and client. One general feature of such speech genres is that the expert is the one who typically produces pseudo-cleft constructions, which reflects the observations made by Hopper & Thompson (2008:107) for English. In our collection, this holds for 26 out of totally 31 cases from institutional interactions where the roles as expert and non-expert are prominent. Another feature, which echoes the functional analysis in Sections 4.1 and 4.2, is that pseudoclefts tend to appear in interactional turning points. We can observe this in Excerpt (10) from a discussion between a personal trainer (PTR) and his client (CLI). The participants are sitting at a table and discussing the results from a physical test while the trainer is examining a printed result sheet.

(10) *Lactate treshold* (IVIP:HEL:PTR:03), personal training, video.

```
01  PTR:   så då kom- kan du ganska säkert ren då (.)
            and then kom- you can probably already at that point (.)

02         .h dra slutsatsen själv
            .h draw the conclusion

03         förrän du ser resultaten
            before you see the results

04         att du kommer att få bättre *resultat*
            that you will get better *results*

05         å [klart] å tydlit.
            and plainly and clearly so.

06  CLI:     [ mm ]

07  CLI:   mm
     cli

08         (1.9)

09  PTR:   pt .h +e:hm ((clears his throat)) h
     ptr       +turns page -->

10         (8.9)+
     prt     -->+

11  PTR:   +här så,
            here then,
     ptr   +points at result sheet-->

12         (0.7)+
     ptr     -->+
```

```
13  PTR:    de som (.) int va (0.5) ^liksom
            what (.) wasn't (0.5) like
    ptr                               ^smiles-->

14          de bästa §[i världen§ i £teste så,]^£
            the best in the world in the test,
    ptr                                   -->^
    ptr           §gaze-CLI  §
    cli                          £ gaze-PRT  £

15  CLI:            [((chuckles))           ]

16  PTR:    så va ju de att dehär aeroba €tröskeln
            was that the lactate threshold
    cli                               €nods-->

17          kommä: ganska [snabbt emot]
            arrives quite quickly
    cli     -->

18  CLI:                      [    mm    ]

19  PTR:    >[ellä din] puls i överlag<
            or your pulse in general
    cli     -->

20  CLI:     [precis.]€
             right
    cli           -->€

21  PTR:    den §stigä: sna§bbt.=
            it rises quickly
    prt        § gaze-CLI §

22  CLI:    €=jå.€
            yeah
    cli     €nods€
```

The example starts with a positive assessment of the client's development (lines 1–5). The client responds to this assessment with short acknowledgment tokens (lines 6–7). Then there is a longer pause and the trainer turns to the next page of the result sheet, while clearing his throat (lines 8–10). At line 11 the trainer opens up a new thread and highlights a specific part of the result sheet with the use of a locative deictic adverb, *här* 'here', and a deictic gesture, as he points at the part in focus with his right index finger. After a pause he initiates a transition to a weaker result in the test with Part A of a pseudo-cleft construction, *de som (.) int va (0.5) liksom de bästa i världen i teste* 'what (.) wasn't (0.5) like the best in the world in the test' (lines 13–14). The trainer smiles while saying this and quickly lifts his gaze from the result sheet to the client. The client acknowledges the introduction of the upcoming negative assessment and the trainer's hesitating path towards it as she chuckles in overlap with Part A (line 15) and lifts her gaze towards the trainer, who however at this point has already returned his gaze towards the result sheet. The pseudo-cleft construction is completed by Part B (lines 16–17), in which the trainer specifies the weaker result in the test.

This example resonates with the pattern discussed above, as the pseudocleft is used as a resource in a discursive shift, in this case from a positive assessment to a negative assessment of the client's performance. The pseudocleft accomplishing this shift is delivered with some hesitation and mitigation marked by pauses, a smile and a gaze at the recipient, the planning particle *liksom* 'like' and the euphemistic description *int de bästa i världen* 'not the best in the world'. In addition, the pseudo-cleft construction offers a means to further delay the edge of the critique, as it is not specified before Part B. Taken together, the hesitation markers, pauses, mitigators, embodied conduct, and the information structure offered by the pseudocleft signal the dispreferred nature of taking a critical stance (cf. Pomerantz 1984). The use in (10) then reflects a more general practice in which the expert in evaluative talk creates

a segment of discourse that at first lifts up some positive aspects before turning to more problematic issues that the recipient needs to work on.

Our institutional data suggests a relatively strong link between the use of pseudoclefts and certain speech genres, and particularly certain participant roles (see also Henricson and Lindström 2020b). Pseudoclefts are typically used by the expert, for example, to move from a positive assessment to a negative assessment when giving feedback, enabling the expert to give a tip or a suggestion, or to move from one level of advice to another. Hence, also in institutional interactions the pseudo-cleft construction offers a platform for constructing interactional shifts. Further, Part A constitutes a halting point that draws the interlocutors' attention to the point to be expressed in Part B, which is thus framed as particularly noteworthy in the general flow of advice-giving. As illustrated in Excerpt (10), the informational structure of pseudoclefts also offers a means to delay the upcoming (negative) assessment, building a stepwise entrance into critique. In these kinds of examples, pseudoclefts appear to contribute to how expertise is created or even claimed in interaction. In other words, a recurring use of these constructions in a certain situation is part of constituting and re-constituting a social structure (see e.g. Mayes 2003). This concerns asymmetrical interactions where the roles as expert and non-expert are given, such as in (10), but can also be observed in symmetrical interactions where one participant might deploy a pseudo-cleft construction in order to mark the significance of an opinion and thus use it as a resource for temporarily assuming the position of a "connoisseur", for example, concerning music in (1) and visual art in (9).

5. ON THE ORGANIZATION OF PSEUDO-CLEFT TURNS

We presented the basic syntactic patterns associated with pseudoclefts in our data in Section 3 above. In this section we discuss some further turn-organizational aspects that play a part in the online construction of clefts: turn-entry devices (5.1), manifestations of turn planning (5.2), regularities of prosodic segmenting (5.3) and the speaker's visual behavior (5.4).

5.1. Turn-entry devices

Pseudoclefts have been described as responsive constructions (e.g. Linell 2011:8), and this is also reflected in the turn-organizational verbal devices that lead into pseudoclefts. Most of our examples in the subset from casual conversations, 33 of 45, are preceded by lexical material that signals a connection to preceding talk. The relation between the pseudo-cleft turn and previous talk is often expressed by a simple conjunction (20 cases), typically *men* 'but', *å* 'and', or *så* 'so'. In the remaining 13 cases, these text-connecting conjunctions appear in combination with other discourse marking elements, e.g. *ja ja men* 'yes yes but', *men asså mm* 'but I mean mm', and *å just dedä att att att att att* 'and just like that that that that that'. As the last example that involves repetition illustrates, some of these turn entries are also indicative of an on-going planning activity.

As already noted in previous sections and examples, pseudoclefts are often employed at interactional turning points. This tendency is further illustrated by the fact that 18 out of the 33 conjunctions preceding Part A are adversative, mostly *men* 'but', signaling a contrastive relation to previous talk by the same or another speaker. There are also two cases, *annars* 'otherwise' and *eller* 'or', that are disjunctive in nature and signal an upcoming alternative. Besides such shift-marking turn-entry devices, the collection includes 13 instances of the coordinating conjunctions *å* 'and' and *så* 'so'. The additive *å* suggests generally that an elaboration will follow, but a sense of contrast is foregrounded by the pseudo-cleft construction, as illustrated in Example (1). The conjunction *så*, on the other hand, signals a conclusion and reflects uses in which the speaker returns to the point or highlight in a reasoning, which transpires in excerpt (11) below. All the longer examples discussed in this article, except for Excerpt (9), include pseudoclefts preceded by a variety of these conjunctional and discourse-marking turn-entry devices.

5.2. Turn planning

The informational structure of pseudoclefts places the focus element in last position, which is traditionally noted as a means to emphasize this element (Lambrecht 2001). As such complex syntactic structures with a final focus also delay the production of the key element, pseudoclefts have further been discussed as constructions adapted for word search and turn planning (Wilkinson 2009). In our collection of pseudo-cleft constructions, we do indeed find several instances where pauses, perturbations or other signs of hesitation occur in the junction between Part A and Part B. Disfluencies of this kind are included in 20 of the 45 examples from our casual conversations. These disfluencies appear both before and after the linking element, the copula verb.

Disfluencies that occur prior to the copula are often quite minimal, mostly consisting of shorter pauses, audible inhalations or the conjunction *så* 'so'. This *så* is frequently deployed as a "dummy" boundary marker following a complex

first clausal constituent (often a complex adverbial) in Swedish casual style; Part A also counts as such a complex first constituent in the pseudo-cleft construction. Disfluencies are more clearly indicative of hesitation when occurring before or at the beginning of Part B. These phenomena include repetitions of function words such as the complementizer *att* 'that', hesitation sounds such as *uh* or *mm*, discourse markers for "vagueness" such as *typ* 'like', and sometimes even explicit formulations of a word search, for example, *va heter de* 'what is it called'. In the cases where hesitation occurs in (at least) a post-copula position, with one exception, Part B is launched with a combination of such signs of a "hitch". Table 5 illustrates how these planning devices can be placed and combined as the pseudo-cleft construction unfolds.

Table 5
Pseudoclefts produced with a variety of signs of speech planning.

Part A	Hitch	Copula	Part B	
			Hitch	Propositional core
va som också hände 'what also happened'	*(0.2)*	*va* 'was'		*att du faktiskt tog ifrån Ingrid tre poäng* 'that you actually took away three points from Ingrid'
de som ja tycker e helt ljuvligt 'what I find really wonderful'	–	*e* 'is'	*just nå: (.) jå (.)* *va heter de nu* 'just some (.) yeah (.) what's it called again'	*ba: att gå omkring liksom i stan* 'just to stroll around like in the city'
de som han liksom kan såhä fashionhajpa 'what he like can like fashion hype about'	*(0.5)*	*e* 'is'	*typ såhä* 'like sort of'	*Lidls pikeskjortor* 'Lidl's polo shirts'
de som (.) Finland (0.5) mt har släppt 'what (.) Finland (0.5) mt has let go'	*(0.6) mt* *(0.4) mt*	*e* 'is'	*just de här att att att de int finns di här (0.3) mt va kallas de (0.3) mt ö:h (0.3)* 'just this that that that there are not those (0.3) mt what are they called (0.3) mt u:h (0.3)'	*ammattisopimus* 'professional contract'

The first example in Table 5 illustrates a very minimal disfluency, whereas the second and the third example contain hesitation markers both between the copula and Part B. In the third example, there are smaller signs of hesitation also within Part A. In the last example, the entire pseudo-cleft construction is delivered with perturbations and hesitation, and the signs of an on-going word search increase as the speaker proceeds towards Part B. When finally uttering Part B, the speaker code-switches from Swedish to Finnish, with the noun *ammattisopimus* 'professional contract', although the context suggests that the target word is rather *oppisopimus* 'apprenticeship agreement' – apparently, the bilingual speaker has problems in targeting the appropriate concept in Swedish and resorts to trying out a term in Finnish instead.

That pseudoclefts are adapted for turn planning on the fly is particularly noticeable in one of the conversations we have studied, i.e. an informal discussion with two participants, Ida and Leo (Excerpt 11). During the conversation they start planning a collaborative artistic project together, a project that includes a filmed dance performance. Ida and Leo are sitting on a couch, Leo is holding a sketchbook in his lap and suggests that he could draw up their plans, while Ida is busy fixing her nails. At a certain point, Ida asks for Leo's ideas, and he then starts sketching and describing his plans for the project. As he describes his ideas for the production, he produces five pseudo-cleft constructions in the course of roughly two–three minutes.[4] Out of these five pseudoclefts, three are non-integrated, with a grammatically independent multi-clausal Part B (see Section 3 above, also 5.3 below). Excerpt (11) includes an instance that syntactically breaks off when the speaker enters Part B in line 11.

---

[4] In our collection, there are also other occasions where two or more pseudoclefts are uttered within the course of a few minutes. Earlier studies on it-clefts (e.g. Søfteland 2014:192–195) have observed that clefts often come in clusters.

(11) *Dance video* (EGS:EC:2P:02), informal interaction, video[5].

```
01  IDA:        att de e såhä (.)
                so it's sort of (.)

02              man kan int ba komma där såhä yhen linssin kautta⁵
                you can't just come in there sort of through one lens

03  IDA:        [(vaan pitää)] (0.5) [^ka-] (.) kahen linssin kautta^=
                (but you need to) (0.5) t- (.) through two lenses
    ida                              ^  three hand step gestures   ^

04  LEO:        [ja          ]        [ja ]
                yes                     yes

05  IDA:        =[tavallaan.]
                kind of

06  LEO:         [ja exakt, ]
                yes precisely,

07              (2.0)

08  IDA:        °jå°
                °yeah°

09              (1.4)
```

fig.1   fig.2

```
10  IDA:        #+tai oikeestaan kolmen .h=#+
                or actually three .h=
    leo          +starts moving hand away from forehead+
    fig         #fig.1                      #fig.2
```

fig.3   fig.4

```
11  LEO:       +=.h så (.) så# (.) dehä vad (.) vad vi sku kunna göra+#
               =.h so (.) so (.) um what (.) what we could do
    leo        +    left hand to sketchbook, grabs sketchbook       +
    fig                     #fig.3                              #fig.4
```


fig.5

```
12             +.h e# att+ .h att eh: hh här e dehä, (1.3) .hh
               .h is that .h that uh: hh: here is this, (1.3) .hh
    leo        +right hand to ready-to-draw position+
    fig            #fig.5

13             plhh +dehä *mm* (0.5) pt .hh+ +'kej v' väljer en biisi?+
               plhh this *mm* (0.5) pt .hh okay we choose a song?
    leo             + moves pen in hand    + + raises and lowers pen  +

14             +(0.6)
    leo        +starts drawing -->
```

```
15  IDA:      ja:
                  yeah
         leo       -->

16            (0.7)
         leo       -->

17  LEO:      som (0.6) e såhä lång?
                  that (0.6) is this long?
         leo       -->

18            (0.6) å:, (0.7) sen har den olika delar i sej
                  (0.6) a:nd, (0.7) then it has different parts
         leo       -->

19            den kanske har en solo eller nånting+ +.h=
                  maybe it has a solo or something .h=
         leo                            -->+ +lifts pen->>

20  IDA:      =mm,
```

---

[5] Ida code-switches to Finnish (marked with italics in the transcript of the original language) in lines 2, 5 and 10 when talking about camera lenses; this may reflect the speakers' professional jargon.

Leo initiates the pseudo-cleft construction with some hesitation (line 11), after which he utters Part A *vad vi sku kunna göra* 'what we could do', followed by an inhalation. He then produces the copula *e* and the complementizer *att* 'that' in one prosodic unit. Part B is thus launched by *att* 'that', which in light of Part A projects a nominal clause[5]; however, this clause is never produced in a syntactically smooth manner and the rest of Leo's turn is rather "an indeterminate stretch of discourse" (Hopper & Thompson 2008:110).[6] While Leo produces the initial parts of this (indeterminate) pseudo-cleft construction in lines 11–12, he appears to be planning his idea – or how to verbalize it. This planning is evidenced by repetitions, hesitation sounds, breathy sounds, and pauses (lines 12–13). The planning activity reflected in the unfolding of the pseudocleft is emphasized by Leo's embodied behavior. As he hesitantly initiates the pseudocleft, he choppily moves his left hand from his forehead towards the sketchbook in his lap, and by the end of Part A, he has grabbed the sketchbook with his left hand (Fig. 4). While he then produces the copula and the complementizer initiating Part B, his right hand holding a pen moves from a home position to an upright, ready-to-draw, position. The actual drawing is however preceded by further planning, evidenced by hesitation sounds and pauses and by the way he moves the pen in his hand (line 13). In this example, the pseudocleft thus appears to be used as a syntactic resource for online planning and turn construction – as well as a platform for launching a proposal – and the hesitant vocal and visual cues accompany this planning activity.

Naturally, a speaker conduct that looks like hesitation does not always indicate a problem with the recollection of a specific wording or planning the informationally more substantive Part B of a pseudocleft. Hesitating before Part B can also be a more socially motivated means to delay the delivery of delicate content, like that of giving critique, as previously illustrated in Excerpt (10) where verbal and embodied cues signal the dispreferred nature of the upcoming Part B.

5.3. Prosodic features of turn construction

It is a general pattern in our data that pseudoclefts are produced with a coherent intonational contour along the constructional trajectory from the beginning of Part A to the end of Part B. We exemplify this pattern here with three instances that emerge structurally somewhat differently in the actual speaker turns. Our analysis of prosodic features is inspired by Barth-Weingarten's (2016) parametric approach to prosodic-phonetic features that is sensitive to how various breaks, or *cesuras*, are signaled. We also build on previous interactional phonetic studies on turn-finality, as

---

[5] In another turn-context, *att* could also launch an infinitive, in that case translated as 'to'.

[6] A point could be made that Leo, if we abstract away the disfluencies in his turn, ends up producing a pseudocleft of the components *vad vi sku kunna göra e att (…) vi väljer en biisi* 'what we could do is that (…) we choose a song'. From the point of real-time emergence, however, Part B stands in a syntactically independent relation to the initial parts of the pseudocleft, which is also reflected in the prosodic trajectory of the contribution.

referred to below. The auditory analysis was complemented by an acoustic analysis with the software Praat (Boersma & Weenink 2020). To visualize the prosodic design of the turns, we present figures drawn in Praat as well as tables that illustrate break signals in the various stretches of speaker turns.

We start out by analyzing the target construction in Excerpt (1) in which the pseudocleft is produced in one smooth package without any obvious pauses or other perturbations.

---

(12) The pseudocleft picked out from Excerpt 1.

å vad ja i̱nte gillar e hennes nas̱ala rö̱st som e lite: >för jobbig<.

and what I don't like is her nasal voice that is a bit disturbing
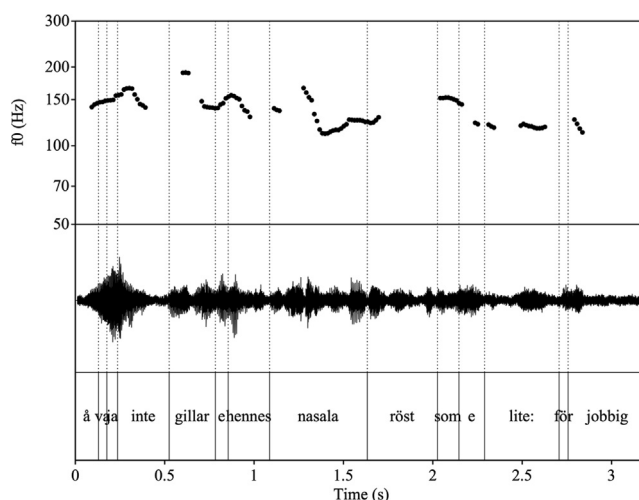

Fig. 6. Pitch trace and waveform of lines 6–7 of (1). (The limits of 50 and 300 Hz help to visualize the placement of the pitch trace in the generic range of a male speaker.)

This pseudocleft includes two weaker prosodic breaks and one prosodic endpoint, which coincide with the major syntactic units building up the construction (Fig. 6). The weaker breaks include fewer prosodic signals of finality than the turn-end (Table 6; cf. Barth-Weingarten 2016:122 on American English; Huhtamäki 2012; Huhtamäki 2015a:67 on Finland Swedish). The first break comes after *å va ja i̱nte gillar* 'and what I don't like', which is Part A of the pseudo-cleft construction. On *gillar*, there is a step-down in pitch that ends around the mid of the speaker's voice range. Furthermore, the end of Part A is characterized by diminished loudness (cf. Wells & Peppé 1996 on English). However, the speaker speeds up and continues the turn without any pause, producing *e hennes nas̱ala rö̱st* 'is her nasal voice', after which there is another weak break. This prosodic unit contains the copula and Part B of the pseudocleft. The speech-rate and loudness decrease towards the end of the unit. The speaker then continues with the account-giving relative clause *som e lite: för jobbig* 'that is a bit too disturbing' that is produced with an initial pitch reset, which further strengthens the previous break (cf. Selting 2005:37). This gives the impression that the relative clause is a turn-extension (that also extends Part B) made on the fly. At the end of the turn, the pitch falls to low in the speaker's range (cf. Selting 2000), and the loudness diminishes considerably so that the turn ends in a whisper (cf. Ogden 2004). Overall, the pseudocleft is produced as a coherent prosodic whole, that is, there is a continuous downdrift in the intonational contour towards the end of the construction and speaker turn, although the speaker makes two weaker breaks in between the three major grammatical parts that constitute the pseudocleft (Part A, the noun phrase constituting Part B, and the relative clause extending the NP in Part B).

Table 6
Break signals in the pseudo-cleft construction in Excerpt (1).

	Part A	Copula	Part B	
Prosodic feature	*å vad ja inte gillar*	*e*	*hennes nasala röst*	*som e lite: >för jobbig < .*
Pitch	Step-down to mid			Initial reset Final fall to low
Speech-rate			Slower speech-rate towards end	
Loudness	Diminished loudness towards end		Diminished loudness towards end	Considerably diminished loudness towards end
Voice-quality				Whisper towards end

Our next case is the pseudocleft from Excerpt (9) in which there is a pause after Part A and later in the construction.

---

(13) The pseudocleft picked out from Excerpt 9.

.h de som ja digga: me denhä: (0.4) e dehä, (0.4) när i nacken kommer dehä ljuse så att man ser domhä, (0.4) nack: fju:nen.

.h what I dig in this one (0.4) is this, (0.4) when in the neck comes this light so that you can see this, (0.4) neck: hair.

This pseudo-cleft turn houses five weaker breaks before the end (Fig. 7, Table 7). The first break occurs after Part A *de som ja digga: me denhä:* 'what I dig in this one'. The syllable *-hä:* of the demonstrative is uttered with a rising-falling pitch peak ending low in the speaker's voice range (cf. Wells & Macfarlane 1998). A pause of 0.4 seconds ensues and then the speaker continues with the copula *e* and another demonstrative pronoun, *dehä* 'this', that constitutes a minimal Part B. The tempo is higher, and the pitch starts at the same level where Part A was left off, which signals continuation of the previous part. Another pause of 0.4 seconds follows, and then the speaker continues with an account-giving adverbial clause, *när i nacken kommer dehä ljuse* 'when in the neck comes this light' that is a pragmatically necessary extension of Part B.[7] There is a reset of pitch in the beginning to indicate a break. This stretch of speech coinciding with the adverbial clause is relatively quiet throughout and the latter half is creaky. Furthermore, the speech rate slows down at the end. The turn could be prosodically and pragmatically finished here, but the speaker continues with a further account-giving subordinate clause, *så att man ser domhä* 'so that you can see these'. The pitch level is lower than in the previous unit, which presents this new element as being dependent on that. This clausal unit is also relatively quiet and the latter part of it is creaky, but it is faster than the causal part *när i nacken*.... The speaker makes a pause and then produces the last item that fits in the projection of the consecutive *så att*-clause, *nack: fju:nen* 'neck hair', with a reset of pitch in the beginning and lengthening of sounds, which both give prominence to this, also in other respects clearly articulated item. The pitch falls to low, the loudness diminishes considerably and the voice is creaky at the end of the turn.

To sum up, the talk that constitutes Part B emerges in an incremental fashion, which is reflected in several weaker breaks that could mark finality. The first break is after the very first lexical item, the demonstrative *dehä* that is the nominal Part B in a strict sense. It is followed by pitch reset and two account-giving subordinate clauses that make the reference of the demonstrative pragmatically richer. These clausal units continue with diminishing loudness and creaky voice quality until the last focused word *nackfjunen*, which is accompanied with more articulate turn-final features and is, consequently, followed by speaker change (see excerpt 9 above).

---

[7] As commented on in the context of excerpt (9), the word order in the adverbial clause is unconventional, probably reflecting the order in which the speaker visualizes aspects of the painting; a more standard order could be *när dehä ljuset kommer i nacken* 'when this light falls on the neck'.
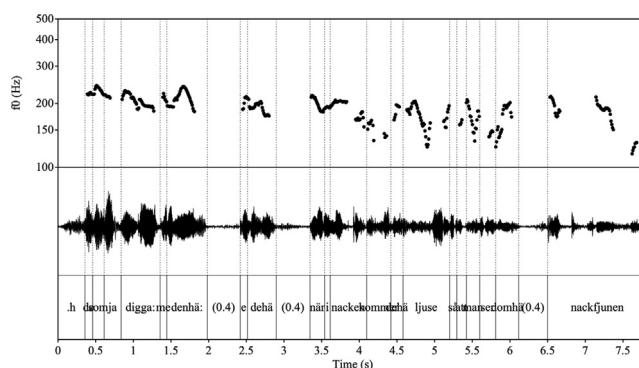
Fig. 7. Pitch trace and waveform of lines 13–15 of (9). (The limits of 100 and 500 Hz help to visualize the placement of the pitch trace in the generic range of a female speaker.)

Table 7
Break signals in the pseudo-cleft construction in Excerpt (9).

	Part A	Hitch			Copula	Part B	
Prosodic feature	*.h de som ja digga: me denhä:*	*(0.4)*	*e*	*dehä, (0.4)*	*när i nacken kommer dehä ljuse*	*så att man ser domhä, (0.4)*	*nack: fju:nen.*
Pitch	Rise-fall to low				Initial reset		Initial reset Fall to low
Speech-rate					Slower speech-rate towards end		Slower speech-rate throughout
Loudness					Quiet throughout	Quiet throughout	Considerably diminished loudness towards end
Pause		Yes		Yes		Yes	
Voice-quality	Final creak			Final creak	Latter half creaky	Latter half creaky	Final creak

Let us finally consider the pseudocleft produced in Excerpt (11) that houses several perturbations and in which there is a syntactic break between Part A and Part B (see Section 3 above).

---

(14) The pseudocleft picked out from Excerpt 11.
.h så (.) så (.) dehä vad (.) vad vi sku kunna gö̱ra.h e att .h att eh: hh:
här e dehä:, (1.3) .hh plhh dehä *mm:* (0.5) pt .hh ˈkej vˈ väljer en biisi?
.h so (.) so (.) um what (.) what we could do .h is that .h that eh: hh::
here is this, (1.3) .hh plhh this *mm:* (0.5) pt .hh okay we choose a song?

In this pseudo-cleft construction, there are several weaker breaks that seem to be the result of hitches in speech production (see Section 5.2) and it is the prosodically least straightforward example of the three cases discussed in this sub-section (Fig. 8, Table 8). After the halting turn entry *.h så (.) så (.) dehä vad* '.h so (.) so (.) um what', the speaker produces Part A, *vad vi sku kunna gö̱ra* 'what we could do', that begins with a pitch reset. The syllable *gö-* of the verb *göra* 'do' is slightly prominent with a pitch that rises and falls to low, and the last syllable is lengthened, which are features of a turn-ending. Then the speaker continues on with something that could lead in to Part B by producing several fragments that are about the same pitch level and become more and more quiet: the copula + complementizer *e att .h* 'is that .h' followed by *att eh: hh:* 'that ah: hh:' and a new syntactic beginning, *här e dehä:* 'here is this'. The speaker then produces yet another fragment consisting of lexical and non-lexical vocalizations, *.hh plhh dehä *mm:** '.hh plhh this *mm:*' but now with a pitch reset that marks a new segment of talk.
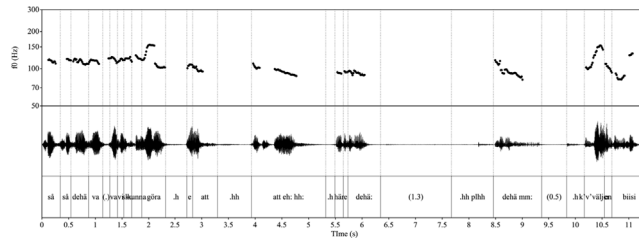
Fig. 8. Pitch trace and waveform of lines 11–13 of (11). (Male speaker).

Table 8
Break signals in the pseudo-cleft construction in Excerpt (11).

	Part A		Hitch		Copula	Part B	
Prosodic feature	*.h så (.) så (.) dehä vad (.)*	*vad vi sku kunna göra*	*.h*	*e*	*att .h att eh: hh här e dehä, (1.3)*	*.hh plhh dehä *mm* (0.5)*	*pt .hh 'kej v' väljer en biisi?*
Pitch		Initial reset Final rise-fall ending low				Initial reset	Step-up to mid
Speech-rate		Slower speech-rate towards end					Slower speech-rate towards end
Loudness					Diminished loudness towards end	Quieter than previous speech-stretch	Diminished loudness towards end
Pause	Yes				Yes	Yes	
Voice-quality	Latter half creaky	Creaky throughout					

After a pause, the speaker says, beginning with a click: *pt .hh 'kej vi väljer en biisi* 'pt .hh okay we choose a song'. This segment starts at a lower level than the previous fragmented turn-part started. In fact, the pitch starts at 102 Hz, which is the pitch level where Part A *va vi sku kunna göra* 'what we could do' was left off. That is, it seems that the speaker connects to Part A. Furthermore, this syntactically loose "candidate Part B" begins with a fast tempo as the speaker pronounces only some of the sounds of the initial words ('*kej* '[o]kay', *v'* 'w[e]'), which can be a way to redo what he has said or to repair it (cf. Plug & Carter 2014). Towards the end, this stretch of talk slows down somewhat and the loudness diminishes, but on the word *biisi* 'song, piece', there is a pitch step-up to mid, signaling that the speaker intends to continue, which is also the case after a continuer by the other participant (cf. Routarinne 2003; Huhtamäki 2015b; Barth-Weingarten 2016:187ff.; for more context, see excerpt 11). This example, then, is prosodically less coherent as is the syntactic production of the pseudo-cleft construction. The syntactic and prosodic unity is greatest from Part A to the linking elements, the copula *e* and the complementizer *att* (*vad vi sku kunna göra e att* 'what we could do is that'). Indeed, the prosody of Part A suggests that it could stand as a turn-frame of its own, i.e. as a convention-alized segment that is used to launch a proposal (see Section 3). The continuation is characterized by fragmented units that are partly signaled as new starts and partly glued on to fit in the global prosodic trajectory of the speaker's turn (see Table 8).

In sum, there is an overall coherence but also various weaker prosodic breaks during all of the pseudo-cleft con-structions we have studied here. Prosodic delivery shows that speakers have a tendency to "portion up" the major constituent parts of a pseudocleft by using weak prosodic breaks between Part A and Part B. Constructional unity is

typically created by a consistent intonational downdrift throughout a pseudocleft, as long as there is other (syntactic) consistency in the production of the construction. Stronger prosodic breaks are reserved to positions that are potentially turn-final.

5.4. A note on visual behavior

Our collection of pseudoclefts stems from various kinds of interactional settings, of which some are video recorded while others are audio only. The diversity of activities and physical environments, from training sessions at gyms to in-home gatherings among friends, prevents us from making generalizable observations of the embodied features connected to the production of the constructions. However, we do have examples where gestures and gaze play an important part, most notably when the speaker who produces the construction is visibly occupied with his or her own interactional "project", looking away from other participants during the production of Part A. We will illustrate this tendency with Excerpt (15), taken from an evening get-together with three friends gathered at the home of one of them. In this sequence, Jonna (sitting in the middle in Figs. 9–11) is telling about an incident she witnessed in a grocery store, while mainly orienting towards Kia (to whom the story is in a responsive relation) on the left.

(15) *Ready meals* (EGS:EC:MP:005), informal interaction, video.

```
01 JON:   +men u: men ja+ +så: till exempel
          but uh but I saw for example
   jon    +gaze-KIA     + +gaze up-->

02        här om dan i butiken så: ja en sånhän,
          the other day in the grocery store I sa:w such a,
   jon    -->

03        (0.7) eh su++persuperfet kvinna (.)+
          (0.7) uh super super fat woman (.)
   jon            ->++gaze down            +

04        +som hade (.) me sej (.) fyra små barn?+
          who had (.) with her (.) four small children?
   jon    +gaze forward                      -->+

05        +(.) eh kanske (.) eller fem (.)
          (.) uh maybe (.) or five (.)
   jon    +gaze-KIA-->

06        de va liksom många barn+ +[de va som att h]on:=
          it was kinda many children it was as if she:=
   jon                         -->+ +gaze up-->

07 KIA:                          [mm            ]

08 JON:   =de va som att de int ens va hennes egna barn alla
          =it was as if they weren't even her own children all
   jon    -->

09        utan (.)+ +hon to eh va en sånhän *m* vetdu
          but (.) she took uh was such a *m* you know
   jon         -->+ +gaze-KIA-->
```

fig.9

```
10        som# to hand om (.) [barn (.) hela dagen?]+
          who took care of (.) children (.) all day long?
   jon                                          -->+
   fig       #fig.9

11 KIA:                      [ mm ^jå  ^           ]
                               mm yeah
   kia                         ^nods^
```


fig.10

```
12 JON:    +§.h eh (0.4)+  +å §  §de som# hon köpte va liksom
            .h uh (0.4) and what she bought was kinda
   jon     +gaze forward+  +gaze up, rolls eyes-->
   jon      §lifts hand to head§ §plays with hair-->
   fig                          #fig.10

13        (0.6) bara sån++häna+      +(0.4) någå sånhä§ (.)+
          (0.6) only these (0.4) some of these (.)
   jon             -->++glance-Kia+  +gaze-forward       +
   jon                                  -->§
```


fig.11

```
14        +färdimat + +som#va liksom (0.5) eh+ +(0.7) nå
          ready meals that was like (0.5) uh (0.7) some
   jon    +gaze down+ +gaze-Kia          +  +lifts gaze, rolls eyes-->
   fig                 #fig.11

15        li- så- dedä nasty++gaste man kan hitta på
          li- so- um the nastiest you can imagine
   jon                   -->++gaze-KIA-->

16        nå såndä friterade ostfiléer eller ^nån såndän vetdu,+
          some kind of fried cheese steaks or that sort you know,
   jon                                                    -->+
   kia                                      ^disgusted face-->

17        +(0.4) jätte^jä++ttenastyt (.) liksom=
          (0.4) really really nasty (.) like=
   jon    +gaze down     ++gaze-KIA-->
   kia            -->^

18 KIA:   =°okej° jå jå [sånt ],
          =°okay° yeah yeah such,
   jon    -->

19 JON:              [å sen] bara en massa marshmallows+
                     and then just a bunch of marshmallows
   jon                                        -->+

20        +å liksom ba: sådä att (.) [att en+ +korg full me lik++som],+
          and kinda just like that (.) a basket full of like,
   jon    +gaze forward               +  +gaze-KIA-->    ++gaze forward+

21 KIA:                              [jå jå sånt              ]
                                     yeah yeah such

22        +sånt fattar jag att man så här vill
          such things I understand that one sort of wants to
   jon    +gaze-KIA-->

23        såhär vill stoppa.
          sort of wants to stop.
   jon    -->>>
```

Jonna's narrative is initiated as she describes the scene, a grocery store, and the main character, "a super super fat woman" (lines 1–6, 8–10). Jonna then uses a pseudocleft in the creation of a turning point in the narrative (see Section 4.2), as she announces the main point with Part A, *de som hon köpte* 'what she bought' (line 12).

While initiating the pseudocleft at line 12, Jonna shifts her gaze away from Kia, and lifts her left hand up to her head. After the copula *va* 'was', which is in the narrative's past tense, and during the production of Part B, the turn continues with some disfluencies, indicating that Jonna is searching for a relevant way to verbalize the moral point of her story. The planning process is signaled by pauses, cut-offs and hesitation sounds (see Schegloff et al., 1977:367), as well as typical verbal signs of a word search, e.g. the discourse markers *liksom* 'like' and *dedä* 'that (thing)', and the pronouns *någo sånhä* 'some of these' and *nå* 'some' (see Lindström, 2008). This search process is visible also in Jonna's embodied behavior. She lifts gaze and moves her eyes from side to side, while stroking her hair and making a 'thinking face' (cf. Goodwin & Goodwin 1986; lines 12–13, Fig. 10). Jonna's embodied behavior as well as the other participant's lack of contributions indicate that the planning process is treated as her individual project. Shortly after Jonna has uttered the head of the noun phrase constituting Part B, i.e. *färdimat* 'ready meal' (line 14), Jonna turns her gaze to Kia. She then gazes up again and moves her eyes from side to side for another search process (lines 14–15), and returns her gaze to Kia once she arrives at the negative description of the ready meals as "really nasty". Jonna finishes her story with examples of the kind of ready meals the woman bought (lines 16–17, 19–20), and only at this point, Kia takes the turn in a partial overlap with Jonna, verbally and visually displaying affiliation with the moral stance of Jonna's story (lines 16–18, 21–23, see Stivers 2008:35).

The pseudocleft is a bipartite construction with a strong syntactic and pragmatic projecting force in Part A, and it thus constitutes a compound syntactic unit that reaches a possible turn transition relevance place only after Part B has been

produced (cf. Lerner 1996; see also Günthner 2006). As illustrated by Excerpt (15), participants may also visually orient to the different parts of the pseudo-cleft construction: turn transition is blocked by a visual orientation away from the other participants during Part A – for example, with embodied cues showing that the speaker is engaged with cognitive work – while turn transition is made relevant through directing gaze and posture towards a co-participant at the completion of Part B.

6. CONCLUSION

This study of Swedish pseudoclefts shows that they are a functionally multifaceted interactional resource in spoken interaction. According to our collection of instances, the majority of pseudoclefts represent "full-blown", biclausal constructions consisting of Part A + copula + Part B. There are also structurally non-integrated variants in which Part B is not a grammatical complement in a traditional sense but is indeterminate in its syntactic relation to Part A. The relatively strong orientation to producing full, syntactically integrated pseudoclefts in Swedish differs from what Hopper and Thompson (2008) state about English and Günthner (2006, 2011) about German. However, the clefts in our data clearly emerge under process-syntactic, online contingencies, which shows in various hitches in the flow of turn construction, such as pauses, repetitions and word searches. These recur at places that constitute the major parts of a pseudocleft – following Part A or preceding Part B – and witness about the speakers' overall orientation to a basic constructional schema for pseudoclefts, i.e. what kind of building blocks can be used to "fill out" the constituent slots of the construction.

As has been pointed out in previous studies, pseudoclefts have strong projecting features (see Hopper & Thompson 2008; Auer 2009; Günthner 2011; Pekarek Doehler 2011; Maschler & Fishman 2020). As their basic constructional schema is biclausal, Part A – a subordinate clause – strongly foresees Part B that through the linking copula verb completes the syntactic gestalt. This projection is also pragmatic, i.e. involving what the utterance is about, because Part A provides an introductory frame for some more pregnant content that is to come in Part B. This projecting force effectively reserves the turn for the speaker when a recognizable Part A is produced until the delivery of a (syntactically or pragmatically) fitting Part B. Prosodic cues enhance the projection and an impression of constructional unity. A typical pseudocleft develops through a coherent intonational contour with a constant downdrift; its major constructional parts may be marked with weak prosodic breaks, but strong breaks occur at the completion of pseudoclefts. Further, embodied cues – e.g. the speaker turning away and "towards themselves" during the production of the pseudocleft – can indicate that the turn space is reserved.

Another side of this projection is discursive: Part A of a pseudocleft prepares the recipient for some specifically framed content. Remarkably often, this framing involves stance-taking: what the speaker likes or dislikes or how they have reacted to the subject at hand. The significance of such a framing technique may be related to its delaying function, for example, when some delicate content and thus a socially dispreferred action is underway, like that of giving critical feedback. But what may be even more compelling in the light of our data is that Part A with its pragmatically framing function is used to signal – indeed, to attract *focus* to – a shift in the flow of discourse, in its thematic progression and the speaker's orientation (see also Kim 1995; cf. Goffman 1981:128, 152 on change in footing). That is, the speaker shifts, for example, from a positive assessment to a negative one, from a general description to a detail that makes difference or from some preparatory talk to launching a proposal about a future course of action (see Fig. 12). A routinized
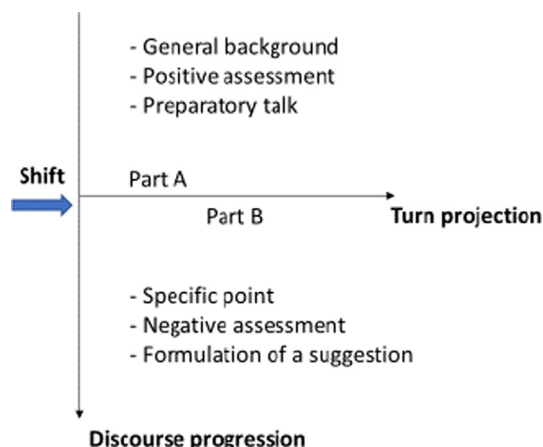

Fig. 12. The organizing function of pseudoclefts with reference to turn projection and discourse progression.

use of pseudoclefts in such discourse shifts is manifest in certain recurrent metapragmatic expressions that constitute Part A, for example, "what I was going to say", "what happened", "what we could do".

Such conventional, juncture-marking discursive functions of pseudoclefts are very much present in the institutional interactions we have studied and found especially in expert talk, like among trainers and counsellors of different sorts. It seems that the construction is well-suited for developmental talk in which the expert can start out with an encouraging position (identifying strengths) but then turns to concerns about the recipient's situation (pointing out weaknesses). Such shifts to problems and concerns are announced with Part A of the pseudo-cleft construction and their consequences are more clearly articulated in Part B and ensuing talk. The link to expert talk is so strong that we can argue that pseudoclefts are one central ingredient in the creation of certain institutional speech genres, a resource through which expertise and a certain kind of social order linked to expert–layman constellations is talked into being. This "institutional" ring of the construction may have "colored" in some uses that we find in more mundane contexts: in the talk of a person who at the moment has the agenda or claims a relatively strong epistemic position in a certain subject matter.

Declaration of Competing Interest

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

APPENDIX A. CONVERSATIONAL CORPORA

- DYLAN, focus group conversations collected by the University of Helsinki in 2007; one recording analyzed.
- EGS, everyday conversations collected by the University of Helsinki in 2016; 10 hrs.
- GRIS, everyday and institutional conversations collected by the universities of Gothenburg, Helsinki, Linköping, and Uppsala in the 1980s–2000s; one recording analyzed.
- GSM, group discussions collected by the University of Gothenburg in 1997–1999; 20 hrs.
- HUSA, interviews collected by the University of Helsinki and the Research Institute for the languages of Finland in 1994–1995; 12 hrs.
- IVIP, academic interactions, e.g. thesis seminars and writing consultations, collected by the University of Turku in 2014–2015, 10 hrs; consultations and sessions with personal trainers collected by the University of Helsinki in 2016, 6 hrs.
- SAM, everyday conversations and radio interviews collected by the University of Helsinki in 1989–1993; 6 hrs.
- SPÖK, youth conversations collected by the University of Helsinki and the Society of Swedish Literature in Finland in the 2000s–2010s; two recordings analyzed.
- SVESTRA, everyday and institutional conversations collected by the University of Helsinki in 1999–2001; 10 hrs.

APPENDIX B. TRANSCRIPTION (ADAPTED FROM JEFFERSON 2004; MONDADA 2019)

TOM	Identifies speaker by name (pseudonym)
tom	Identifies participant doing embodied action
(.)	Micro pause
(0.3)	Pause in seconds
[	Overlap onset
]	Overlap end
mm	Creaky voice
°mm°	Lower volume
wha:t	Prolonged sound
wh<u>a</u>t	Emphasis
wh-	Cut-off
>what<	Increased tempo
=	Latching of words or turns
.h/.hh	Audible inbreath
h/hh	Audible outbreath
(what)	Uncertain transcription
(-)	Unhearable word
((laughs))	Comment
,	Level intonation
.	Falling intonation
?	Rising intonation
+nods+	Embodied action synchronized with transcription (symbols: +/^/§/£/€)
-->+	Indicates where embodied action ends
-->	Embodied action continues across lines
->>	Embodied action continues after the transcription ends
#	Position of figure in transcription
fig.1	Identifies figure in transcription

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