Police interviews with child witnesses:

a conversation analysis

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door

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Acknowledgements

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1 Police interviews with child witnesses, research topic and theoretical background

Sexual violence against children is a persistent and complex problem in societies. The National Rapporteur Human Trafficking and Sexual Violence against Children reported that in 2016 around 7850 boys and 13050 girls in the Netherlands fell victim to sexual violence (Nationaal Rapporteur 2018b). Offenders can be the stereotypical stranger, the 'dirty man in the bushes', but more often the alleged offender is someone known to the child (Nationaal Rapporteur 2018a: 26). Notorious examples in the Netherlands are the case of the child care center "The Little Jester" (*Het Hofnarretje*), where employee Robert M. confessed to the abuse of 83 children, and the case of swimming instructor Benno L., who was convicted to six years imprisonment for the abuse of over 50 children[1]. Sexual violence also occurs in youth care institutions (Commissie-Samson 2012; Commissie Vooronderzoek naar Geweld in de Jeugdzorg 2016) and in religious institutions such as the Catholic church (Commissie-Deetman 2011). Sexual violence can have serious consequences for the child (e.g. Nagtegaal 2012; Vereniging tegen Seksuele Kindermishandeling binnen gezin 2012), that sometimes have long-lasting effects (Fergusson, McLeod and Horwood 2013; Vereniging tegen Seksuele Kindermishandeling binnen gezin 2012). It is therefore a pressing societal problem.

In this dissertation, I focus on one aspect of what may happen after sexual violence against children has been reported: the criminal investigation. More specifically, I zoom in on one step in the criminal investigation: the investigative interview with the child witness. This step is crucial because cases of sexual violence often involve only one piece of

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[1]   https://www.om.nl/vaste-onderdelen/zoeken/@28878/cassatie-zaak-benno/, retrieved on 2 January 2019

incriminating evidence, the testimony by the plaintiff, in this case: the child (Holmberg 2004: 1; Nationaal Rapporteur 2014: 179). Therefore, it is important that the child's testimony is reliable and usable in court. Guidelines have been developed in several jurisdictions to make this possible. Examples include the 'Achieving Best Evidence Criminal Proceedings: Guidance on Interviewing Victims and Witnesses, and Guidance on Using Special Measures' (ABE) guideline by the Ministry of Justice in England and Wales (2011), the 'Guidance on Joint Investigative Interviewing of Child Witnesses in Scotland' (Scottish Executive 2011), the 'National Institute of Child and Health Development Protocol' (NICHD) in the USA, (Lamb et al. 2008: 19) and its revised version (http://nichdprotocol.com/), the 'Video and Audiotaped Evidence' (VATE) in Australia (Heydon 2005) and the Dutch manual for interviewing child witnesses (Dekens and Van der Sleen 2013, henceforth 'Manual' for short). This dissertation reports an analysis of how the Dutch guidelines relate to actual interviews with child witnesses in the Netherlands. Before I elaborate more on the research question in section 1.5, I provide some context of police interviews with child witnesses in the Netherlands (section 1.1), indicate the type of research most guidelines for interviewing vulnerable witnesses are based on (section 1.2), introduce the conversation analytical approach (1.3) and discuss previous conversation analytical literature on police interviews with vulnerable witnesses (1.4).

1.1 Police interviews with child witnesses in the Netherlands

In the Netherlands, investigative interviews with children are primarily considered a task for the police.[2] This is not the only option. In Israel, for example, children are interviewed by youth interrogators, who generally have a background in social work (Ministry of Social Affairs and Services 2015; Morag 1992) and in the United States children can be interviewed by a police officer, a welfare worker or someone with a degree in a related field plus working experience and a compulsory training (Oregon Department of

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[2] The Dutch guidelines still allow interviews by behavioral scientists, but this happens very rarely.

Justice 2018). Similarly, Dutch investigative interviews with children were conducted by psychologists and "developmental psychologists" (*orthopedagogen*) [3] from the seventies until the end of the eighties of the previous century. This has changed for two reasons: a) behavioral scientists turned out to conduct interviews in ways more suitable for treatment, whereas the criminal procedure aims at truth-finding. The investigative interview therefore needed more focus on facts and details. b) There were not enough behavioral scientists to meet the demand for interviewers. Therefore, a pilot project started in which a small group of police officers was trained with the support of an developmental psychologist to conduct the interviews themselves. Additionally, a child-friendly interview room was equipped with toys and games and with recording equipment. The pilot was successful. From 1991 on, the training became permanent and was relocated to the national Police Academy in Apeldoorn (then called "School for Detectives" (*Rechercheschool*)) and, over the years, eleven child-friendly interview rooms have been established in the Netherlands.

The term 'child witnesses' in this dissertation has been borrowed from police terminology. It refers to both children who have witnessed alleged sexual violence and to direct victims of sexual violence. The term has been borrowed to seek a connection with guidelines and practitioners, and for reasons of clarity. Yet, it is important to acknowledge that the term conveys the police perspective on the role that children have in the interview, that is: children who are interviewed to aid the truth-finding process (rather than, for example, for therapeutic purposes). Using the term does not mean that I presume *a priori* what the child's role is. In fact, chapter 4 is largely dedicated to how children themselves make their role as a victim relevant.

The remainder of section 1.1 goes into greater detail on the child-friendly interview room (1.1.1), the training for police officers (1.1.2), the procedure of what should happen before, during and after the interview

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[3] *Orthopedagogiek* is an applied science that does not exist in Anglo-Saxon countries. The Latin word *ortho* means 'straight' and *pedagogiek* is an equivalent of 'pedagogy'. Hence, an *orthopedagoog* attempts to rectify issues in the way a child is brought up. The discipline focuses on diagnosing and treating disorders and behavioral problems in children (F.H. Beumer 11 April 2019 personal correspondence).

(1.1.3) and guidelines on how to interview children (1.1.4). This overview is largely based on fieldwork and interviews with four informants (see section 2.1 for a further description).

1.1.1 The child-friendly interview room
When children up to eleven years old are interviewed as witnesses of a severe crime or a sex crime that may be punishable with eight years' imprisonment, they must be interviewed in child-friendly interview rooms.[4] These rooms are furnished in a less basic and less businesslike manner than regular interview rooms. Child-friendly interview rooms often have windows and curtains, child-size chairs, carpet or laminate, toys and games, drawing material and a whiteboard. The rooms are decorated in a more colorful way than regular interview rooms and there are often drawings made by other children on the wall. This way of furnishing and decorating aims to make the child feel more at ease, which should benefit both the child and the outcome of the interview. The trainers at the Police Academy usually check plans for (re)decoration of child-friendly interview rooms.

The rooms must also be equipped with five cameras, at least one of which should provide an overview of the room and at least one other should be able to zoom in and out (Brancherichtlijn AVR). The cameras should cover the entire room so that both the child and the police officer are recorded, in order to ascertain whether the child was influenced by the police officer's non-verbal behavior.[5] The cameras are operated from the "control room"

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[4] Since 1 November 2018 police interviews with victims under eighteen must be audio-visually recorded. Interviews with witnesses and suspects must be audio-visually recorded until they are sixteen (College van Procureurs-Generaal 2018).

[5] This was not the case before the criminal case of the Schiedammer Park Murder and its evaluation (Posthumus 2005). In this notorious Dutch criminal case, an innocent passer-by was convicted for the murder of ten-year old Nienke Kleiss. One of the reasons for this judicial error was that the most important witness of the crime, eleven-year-old Maikel, was never taken entirely seriously. Additionally, not all the police interviews with Maikel were held in a child-friendly interview room by police officers with special training, even though, according to the evaluation committee, there was "no doubt that this case was suitable" for such interviews (Posthumus 2005: 89). The way in which Maikel had been interviewed was characterized as "disreputable" (*onfatsoenlijk*) (Posthumus 2005: 170).

(*regiekamer*) by another certified police officer, namely the director. The purpose of recording is transparency in the criminal procedure. Additionally, the equipment makes it possible to provide support to the interviewing police officer during interviews, both by other police officers and behavioral experts. Recording also supports police officers when writing the police report of the interview, enables further professionalization of police officers and generates teaching materials on interview techniques (College van Procureurs-Generaal 2013).[6]

1.1.2 Training of police officers

Not every police officer is allowed to interview children in the child-friendly interview room. Police officers must have completed the "Training Interviewing Vulnerable Witnesses in Sex Crime cases" (*Opleiding Verhoren Horen Kwetsbare Getuigen in Zedenzaken*) at the Police Academy.[7] The course lasts about eleven months and consists of two main parts.

The first two and a half months are dedicated to getting ready for working in the field. The students learn about topics like child development (including sexual development), developmental psychology, the legal framework, child abuse, the scenario model (see section 1.1.4), the role of the expert witness and questioning techniques.[8] Students study excerpts from actual interviews, practice questioning techniques in pairs and with training actors (that is, actors who specialize in acting for training purposes). In addition, students can practice with their colleagues' children while talking

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[6] The interview rooms do *not* have one-way mirrors. Some child-friendly interview rooms used to have these, but the police officers tended to forget the video, which led to useless recordings. Therefore, the police covered or removed the one-way mirrors and thereby forced themselves to follow the interview via the video screens. Another device that the Dutch police do *not* use in interviews with child witnesses are earphones through which other police officers can coach the interviewing police officer. So far, no one has found it necessary. The accepted view is that too much input could be disturbing for the interviewer.

[7] An exception are police officers who are still in training for this particular certificate: they are allowed to interview under supervision of their trainers.

[8] As the course leads to a certificate that gives interview access to people with cognitive disorders (e.g. caused by brain tumors or cerebral hemorrhage), people with Autism Spectrum Disorders, ADHD, and people with intellectual challenges, information is also included about these groups.

about a topic of the child's choice, usually a birthday party, visit to the zoo, or the like. In between sessions, the students use e-learning and make written assignments, for example commenting on recordings of their own role plays.

In the second part of the training, the students have to gain actual interview experience in the field under the trainers' supervision. Students are expected to conduct five real interviews. Students must submit written preparations for the interview, as well as reflections after the interview. The teachers from the police academy provide feedback before, during and after the interview. The various documents form the students' portfolio. Both the first and second part of the training are concluded with a role-played exam interview.

After police officers have obtained their certificate, they are encouraged to stay attentive to the quality of the interviews. The first and most permanent way of securing this attentiveness is that the director (see the previous section) and the interviewer are jointly responsible for the interview. It is the director's task to provide feedback. Newly certified interviewers are usually paired up with more experienced ones, to allow novice interviewers to benefit from the knowledge of more seasoned interviewers. All police officers I have spoken with appeared to be very motivated to deliver interviews of high quality. An additional incentive for police officers to hold each other to account in following the guidelines is that the interview must stand up in court. Judges, lawyers and expert witnesses may scrutinize the interview and if they assess the interview methods as inappropriate, this could disqualify the testimony. A second way of promoting interview quality involves follow-up meetings. The Police Academy and the consulting agency for investigative interviewing Kinterview offer such sessions to interviewers who are already certified. Police officers can bring the recording of an interview that they found particularly difficult. The interview is then discussed with a trainer and no more than two other police officers certified to conduct interviews with child witnesses.[9] The third

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[9] Although most informants were very positive about the follow-up meetings, not all child-friendly interview rooms participate in the follow-up meetings regularly,

way of staying up to date, consists of theme meetings of one or two days. The meetings can be organized by the Police Academy or Kinterview, or by the staff of a particular child-friendly interview room.

1.1.3 The procedure: before, during and after the interview

The interview does not stand on its own; it is embedded in an elaborate normative framework. The informants generally also use this framework to describe how the the police actually work. The first step that should be taken is deciding whether or not an interview is necessary. The Dutch Manual for police interviews with child witnesses mentions this decision of as a distinct step in the procedure. The Manual provides several indicators that should be taken into account. Indications that the child should not be interviewed include unwillingness of the child to testify and the difficult situation in which the child still lives with the suspect (Dekens and Van der Sleen 2013: 53-56; 108-110). Additionally, an informant emphasized that more attention should be paid to the question *when* to interview children. He said that sometimes interviews should be postponed because there is insufficient information to engage in a well-prepared interview. The informant also mentioned that careful timing helps to avoid second interviews: if a defense lawyer is allowed to submit questions straightaway, this pre-empts questions at a later stage of the criminal procedure. Limiting the number of interviews is generally considered desirable in the Netherlands, both for reasons of truth-finding[10] and the well-being of the child (Dekens and Van der Sleen 2013: 47, 105-108; Hokwerda et al. 2015: 31)[11], including the child's privacy (Hokwerda et al. 2015: 66). The task to weigh these and other indicators and to decide on interviewing or not interviewing has been assigned to three key figures: the "case detective" (*zaaksrechercheur*; the police officer responsible for the

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mostly for financial reasons. To promote the follow-up and maintenance of skills, one follow-up meeting has been included in the training program since 2014.

[10] The interview itself can influence how the child remembers the event. Therefore, a second interview thus may be less reliable (Dekens and Van der Sleen 2013: 47, 105-108).

[11] Welfare workers, however, have been reported to find the general advice to limit the number of interviews outdated; what is best for the child should be determined on a case-to-case basis (Wijers and De Boer 2010: 75).

case investigation), the "Advisor Interrogation Vulnerable Persons" (*Adviseur Verhoor Kwetsbare Personen*) and the public prosecutor.

If an interview is deemed necessary and justified, the police, the parents or legal guardians agree on a date. A compulsory part of the procedure is a preparatory visit, usually one day before the interview itself. This means that the case detective visits the child and its parents or guardians at home, and explains what the interview room looks like, with whom the child will be talking, that this police officer will not become angry or mete out punishment, that the police officer will not think that anything is strange or silly, that the child is supposed to talk and that the interview will be recorded. The visiting police officer uses a booklet that includes pictures of the police station, the interview room, and the police officers working in the child-friendly interview room. The case detective has to write a report about this visit, including information about the child, for example whether the child is very nervous. This document helps the interviewing police officer to prepare for the interview.

The interview should be prepared by two police officers: the interviewing police officer and the director. Both are responsible for collecting sufficient and reliable evidence. The director's task is to operate the equipment, to coach the interviewing police officer and to take over in case the interviewer cannot do the interview. Ideally, the interviewer and director sit down together before the interview to exchange their ideas and agree on specific points that the interviewer wants to be coached on.

On the day of the interview, it is the interviewing police officer's task to welcome the child and its parents or guardians at the police station. They receive a tour of the interview room and the control room, to make it clear that the interview will be recorded. The tour is also important because this is the first time the child and interviewer meet. The tour provides the first opportunity for the child and police officer to get to know each other. After the tour, the parents or guardians are brought to a waiting room. Parents and guardians are usually not allowed to watch or attend the interview because the content could be so disturbing that they are unable to take care of the child afterwards. Moreover, watching parents can make it more difficult for children to change their story in case they have not told their

parents the full story or if they have told their parents something else (Dekens and Van der Sleen 2013: 19). The case detective has to observe the interview from the control room to brief the parents or guardians after the interview. Interviews are therefore one-on-one encounters between the interviewing police officer and the child, with the case detective and the director monitoring the interview from the control room. Exceptions to the one-on-one interview setting are interviews with interpreters and very rare occasions in which the child is accompanied by someone it trusts. I have not encountered interviews with children who were assisted by lawyers or interpreters. One police officer also commented that they found it very difficult to interview a child with an interpreter, because she found it much more difficult to make a connection with the child.

  The interview should include an introduction, a case-oriented part and a closing part. The introduction is meant for rapport building. Often, the police officer offers the child two options: doing something informal (like playing a game, chatting, or making a drawing) first, or starting to talk straightaway. The case-oriented part starts with an invitation to tell a narrative, usually phrased as "what have you come to tell me?". If the child indeed produces such a narrative, the police officer repeats or summarizes it afterwards to check if s/he has heard and understood it correctly.[12] This is followed by a questioning phase to elicit more detail. During the questioning phase, there is a break during which the police officer gets feedback from the director out of earshot of the witness; this is called the "direction deliberation" (*regieoverleg*). After the final questions about the case, there should be a closing phase that includes checking with the witness whether there is more to tell, thanking the witness and sometimes playing a game.

After the interview, the interviewing police officer writes a summary report about the interview. Some interviews are transcribed verbatim, including 'ehs', 'hms', some pauses, sometimes laughter and volume and rough

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[12] The timing of the repetition of the child's story varies between countries. For example, police officers in Australia check the child's story in the closing part of the interview (Heydon 2007).

indications of overlap.[13] [14] It is decided on a case-by-case basis, depending on the outcome of the interview, whether a verbatim transcript should be made; if the interview did not lead to much information that the police can act upon, the recordings are usually not transcribed. The summary report and – if applicable - transcript are added to the case file and serve as the evidence-in-chief if the case is brought to court. This is not exceptional within the Dutch criminal procedure because the Court decides on cases mostly based on a case file (e.g. Komter 2011). Using written reports instead of demanding physical appearance in court is efficient and offers a way to protect the witness' privacy. It also protects them from being interviewed by a defense lawyer. This is especially relevant in the case of interviews with children and other vulnerable witnesses. The video mainly serves as a source of information in case there is doubt about the transcript or reliability of the testimony. The video is also a source for expert witnesses who assess the reliability of the testimony, in case there is such doubt. The video is not shown in its entirety in court,[15] nor does the court or the public prosecutor usually watch the video to prepare the hearing. Police informants told me that judges are afraid that they may be biased by the child's emotions.

Sometimes, second interviews are called for. As stated above, police officers attempt to avoid a second interview. Yet, the suspect has the right to ask questions to witnesses and a ruling by the "Supreme Court" (*Hoge Raad*) dictates that concrete reasons must be provided if the Court rejects a request by the defense to put questions to the witness (HR 6 July 2010, NJ 2010, 509 and 2010, 510). Consequently, second interviews are sometimes permitted. If that happens, the child is generally not interviewed in a public

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[13] This is different from most interviews with adults in the Netherlands, which are usually only summarized or transformed into a question-answer-format report (e.g. Komter 2006; Komter 2011; Malsch et al. 2015; Van Charldorp 2011).

[14] If the recording is transcribed, the transcription work is generally outsourced to companies, training institutes or foundations that specialize in transcription. Some former police officers and writing interpreters (*schrijftolken*) offer such services. The latter have special keyboards with frequent combinations of letters, so that they can type speech much faster than with a normal QWERTY keyboard.

[15] This is different elsewhere, for example in England and Wales (for a discussion, see Aldridge and Luchjenbroers 2008).

hearing; rather, the second interview is delegated to investigative judges. They may conduct the interview themselves or, in turn, delegate the interview to certified police officers who interview the child in the child-friendly interview room. Prior to the second interview, the investigative judge, public prosecutor and defense lawyer provide the police with lists of questions that they would like the police to ask. The police edit these questions because they are often leading, too complicated or otherwise inappropriate for children. During the interview, the investigative judge, public prosecutor, and defense lawyer take place in a separate room where they can follow the interview on-screen. After the interview, a report is written and added to the case file by the investigative judge, who then sends the case file back to the court.

1.1.4 Interview guidelines: avoiding suggestion

The most important guideline available to Dutch police officers is the scenario model. This model is designed to avoid that the police officer puts words into the child's mouth. 'Scenario' refers to three possible ways the investigative interview may develop: scenario A, B and C. Scenario A refers to the case that the invitation to tell the story indeed leads to a free recall or free narrative, that is: a version of the story in which the police officer takes a listening role and the child does most of the talking. This happens often, but not always. In that case, scenario B becomes relevant. In this scenario, the police officer asks questions about the child's life environment to lead the interaction to the topic of interest without mentioning the suspect. For example, the police officer can mention the moment of the alleged abuse (e.g. "where do you go after school") or the moment of disclosure (e.g. "you told your mummy something happened when you went to bed last week"). If scenario B does not lead to talk about the topic of interest, the police officer can decide to switch to scenario C. Switching to scenario C means that the police officer 'gives away' some of the information. For example, a police officer could say that s/he has heard that the child has come to the police station because something happened three weeks back. Before the police officer switches to scenario C, s/he must consult the director. Whenever possible, the police officer must try to return from scenario B or C to elicit the child's talk as much as possible (scenario A). The scenario model is not

meant to be used in a linear way, in that police officers should start at the beginning and follow the steps to the end. Its application should be flexible and police officers should adapt to what happens in the interview (see also Ministry of Justice in England and Wales 2011: 68).[16] At the same time, an instructor at the Police Academy said that this flexibility is often difficult for police officers.

In any scenario, the police officer should give the child five instructions. First, children should be told that the police officer was not there and therefore does not know the answer. Second, children should be informed that they should answer "I don't know" if they do not know the answer to a question. Both of these instructions are meant to take away the possible assumption that the police officer asks test questions and that the child should provide a correct answer (different from what often happens in classroom interaction). Third, children should be told to ask for explanation if they do not understand the police officer, to avoid guessing what the police officer means. Fourth, the child should get the instruction to correct the police officer; this instruction aims to encourage the child to detect and correct the police officer's misunderstandings. Fifth, children should be informed that, when the police officer repeats a question, this is not because the child has said something wrong. This instruction aims at preventing the child from changing their answer. Police officers also should practice some of the instructions with the children (see section 3.2). Importantly, one of the informants emphasized that the instructions should not be a mere checkmark on a checklist; the interviewers must be aware of these instructions throughout the entire interview. They are encouraged to compliment the child if it answers, "I don't know" if it expresses incomprehension or if it corrects the police officer, to accept *I don't know* answers and not to repeat questions.

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[16] Another, formalized, departure from the usual scenario model is the "domestic violence model" (*huiselijk geweld model*). This model applies in situations with clearly recognizable and verifiable events. For example, the police has arrested the mother at home because of reported abuse, or the child has visible injuries. In that case, the interviewer can start with asking: "The police was at your home. Can you tell me why that is?" Or: "Can you tell me about how you got that black eye?" In the interviews collected for this research project, this model does not occur.

Police officers are also supposed to avoid suggestion and assumptions in the way they ask questions and respond to the child's answers. However, they can use things the child has said during the interview. For instance, if a child has said in the free recall that Pete (his older brother) has touched him, the police officer is allowed to presume touching in the question, e.g.: "where did Pete touch you?" The police officer should refrain from questions like "where did he stroke you?" (because stroking cannot be presumed) and "when did he touch your bum?" (because bum cannot be presumed). One of the informants pointed out that it can be difficult, especially for relatively inexperienced interviewers, to keep track of which details have just been conveyed by the child and which details they know from the file. Presuming the latter type of detail in a question means switching to scenario C. An important way of avoiding suggestive questions is by asking 'open questions': *who*, *what*, *where*, *when*, *how* and *why* questions.[17] Nevertheless, the Manual points out that what is 'open' depends on the context. The question "What did he say?" presupposes that he said something, whereas this is not the case in the question "Did he say anything/something?" (Dekens and Van der Sleen 2013: 76). Another type of question that avoids giving away information and that invites talking is cued invitations (Lamb et al. 2008: 93) or "focused free recall" (*gerichte free recall*) (Dekens and Van der Sleen 2013: 75). For example, if a child has said that it has been harassed by a man on a bike, the police officer could ask: "Can you first tell me everything about the bike?"

Finally, police officers are trained to acknowledge their own assumptions and to actively search for 'alternative scenarios' in the preparation phase. The term 'scenarios' in this context refers to the possible course of events that has led to the suspicion of abuse. In other words: is there a possible alternative explanation as to why a complaint has been filed? An informant gave the following example: if a child reports that its grandfather is naughty and that he hurt the child in its bum, the police officer should not assume that this is about sexual abuse. Instead, s/he needs to be

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[17] Police officers are supposed to be careful with how and why questions. These are considered to be difficult questions, particularly for young children. Moreover, *why*-questions can, under certain interactional circumstances, ask for an account and attribute blame (Bolden and Robinson 2011).

aware that it might be the case that the child has been sick, and that grandfather has applied a suppository. Police officers should ask questions to test which scenario is applicable.

1.2 One of the bases for the guidelines: previous research

The previous section describes the institutional normative framework that has been developed over many years. This framework is largely based on psychological research, both experimental and field studies (see also e.g. Fogarty 2010). An important line of research has been carried out by Lamb, Hershkovitz, Orbach, Esplin and colleagues (2008). They found that the amount of detail in children's testimonies as well as the reliability of these testimonies depend on several factors, including factors related to the child itself (e.g. age, memory retrieval skills and narrative skills), as well as event-related characteristics (e.g. how often an event took place and how long ago they happened) and types of questions used to prompt memory retrieval. Free recall prompts ("tell me what happened") and open ended prompts ("tell me more about that") were found to lead to more accurate (Lamb et al. 2008: 43) and to a more detailed testimony (Lamb et al. 2008: 43; see also e.g. Phillips et al. 2011). They also discovered that investigative interviewers in various countries had trouble implementing the outcomes of various scientific studies, which is why they developed the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) protocol as an aid for interviewers. This protocol prescribes in a detailed, largely scripted, way how investigative interviewers should go through the various phases of the interview. After additional research, the NICHD protocol has been revised with more emphasis put on what the researchers consider rapport building and emotional support (Hershkovitz *et al*. 2014). The researchers found that child victims of alleged abuse within the family were more likely to produce allegations when interviewers applied the revised protocol than when they applied the original protocol (Hershkowitz, Lamb and Katz 2014).

Much research attention has been paid to obtaining an 'uncontaminated' account of what happened. This strand of research thus treats talk as a window into the memory and thoughts of the child (for an overview and discussion, see Fogarty 2010) and approaches the interview as

a way to gather information. This conceptualization of talk is problematic for two reasons. From research into talk-in-interaction we know that, first, speakers design their talk for their specific recipient (Sacks 1995II: 540). This means that, in their talk, speakers orient to what their interlocutor probably already knows, what their mutual relationship is and what they want from each other (Drew 2013: 145-148). Hence, an account of 'what happened' is always designed for the particular interlocutor, be it a parent, teacher, friend or investigative interviewer. The story will differ accordingly and is already influenced in this fundamental way.

Second, both the contributions from the interviewer and from the child are always *doing* something in the interaction; they are conducting actions more specific and contingent than asking for and giving information. This can be illustrated by the phrases Hershkovitz and colleagues (2014) characterize as being supportive. For example, they consider phrases like "if it is difficult to talk about it, perhaps you could write it down" as offering help, whereas "[*child's name*], please try explaining that, I think you can" is mentioned as an example of expressing optimism (Hershkowitz, Lamb and Katz 2014: 340; for a proposal to rethink rapport, see: Fogarty, Augoustinos and Kettler 2013). However, rather than being supportive, these phrases can also have the opposite effect. For example, it is very easy to imagine a context where a remark like "perhaps you could write it down" implies that the police officer does not accept the child's silence and is pursuing a response. Thus, what is characterized as supportive may sometimes better be understood as supportive of the *institutional goal of collecting evidence*, instead of being supportive of the *child*. Although the phrases seem relatively friendly, they are pushing for an answer. Similarly, Oxburgh, Myklebust and Grant (2010) point out that little attention has been paid to the *function* of questions in police interviews. They point out that the function is generally to create a testimony for the criminal procedure. This is a very specific and institutional purpose, with potential institutional consequences, and therefore far from neutral. Thus, the question is raised what police officers are actually *doing* towards the child when they follow advice based on research into actual interviews.

1.3 Conversation analysis

This thesis adopts a perspective to study police interviews with child witnesses that puts the police officers' and witnesses' talk at the center of attention, namely the perspective of conversation analysis (henceforth: CA; e.g. Sidnell and Stivers 2013). CA's object of study is the most fundamental way in which people are social beings, that is: in and through social interaction. Specifically, CA is concerned with what interlocutors *do* when they say something, such as offering help, recruiting assistance, greeting, joking, teasing, disputing a claim, and making an appointment. Moreover, CA is focused on how interlocutors coordinate their talk and actions, and how they accomplish interactional tasks, both very local tasks (such as turn-taking and opening and closing a conversation) and more general tasks (such as giving a lecture, accomplishing decision making or having a meeting).

Conversation analysts approach social interaction in an empirical way. They record interaction, produce precise transcripts of the recordings[18] and then use both the recordings and the transcripts to study the dynamics of interaction. CA research refrains from speculation on what people really think, remember, feel, want, mean, and so forth. While conversation analysts acknowledge that interactants probably *have* such thoughts, memories and feelings, they deny that there is a one-on-one relationship between talk and what happens in the speaker's head (e.g. Edwards 1993; Koole 2015). Hence, the CA project is not to study the relationship between talk and 'what happens in people's heads'. Instead, it focuses on what interactants make available and observable in their talk, and how that contributes to the dynamic development of the conversation.

In order to study these dynamics, analyses are grounded in the interactional context and how it develops turn by turn. Each turn in talk is primarily understood as orienting to the previous turn in its design, while showing how the speaker interprets that previous turn. At the same time, the turn renews and develops the interactional context for the next speaker,

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[18] Traditionally, CA studies are centered around oral interaction, but relatively recently conversation analysts also began studying computer mediated communication (e.g. Hutchby and Tanna 2008; Stommel and Koole 2010), as well as embodied interaction (for an overview, see Heath and Luff 2013).

and projects a particular sequel (Heritage 1997; Heritage 2012; Heritage and Clayman 2010). Conversation analysts use these next turns to analyze how speakers treat the previous turn and, hence, what that previous turn accomplishes in the interaction. Consequently, conversation analysts use the same resources as those available to the interactants.

The points made so far can be illustrated with the following excerpt from Stokoe and Edwards (Heritage and Clayman 2010; 2008). It is taken from a police interview with a woman who is suspected of smashing her neighbor's window after he reportedly hit her son. The excerpt occurs towards the end of the interview. Just prior to the excerpt, the police officer has summarized the suspect's testimony as "admitting everything".

```
EXCERPT 1.1 (from Stokoe and Edwards 2008: 92-93)
1  P:   *Uh:* I've not got- (0.3) a lot more to a:sk
2       you *basically uh:,
3          (0.3)
4  P:   A few points that- I need t'cover,
5       (0.5)
6  P:   Um: (1.4) m:ay sound a bit silly bu- *uh*
7       do y'know whose window it is.
8          (0.4)
9  S:   £Yes[:£
10 P:       [Did you know whose window it is.=
11 S:   °Mm.°
12 P:   Mm.
```

The police officer announces not having "a lot more to a:sk" in line 1. "More" orients to the interview so far. Next, "a few points that- I need t'cover" (line 4) projects that the interview is not over yet and that he has more to say. This allows the police officer to pause for 0.5 seconds in line 5. The wording (especially "need t'cover") furthermore presents these points as procedural, rather than something essential or new (Stokoe and Edwards 2008: 92). The police officer also distances himself from the upcoming points by framing them as things that he "needs" (rather than "wants") to cover.

After the pause (line 5), the police officer proceeds with what Stokoe and Edwards (2008) call a "silly question" (lines 6-7): a question that has an obvious answer and that is treated as an accountable question to ask, by

phrases like "m:ay sound a bit silly" (line 6). In this case, the question about the ownership of the window (line 7) has an obvious answer, because of the background of a dispute between neighbors and because of the police officer's summary that the suspect has "admitted everything" (data not shown). This question projects that the suspect should provide an answer.

The suspect's answer "yes" (line 9) orients to the police officer's turn in various ways. She provides the projected response and more in particular, she gives a *yes*-answer and treats the question as comprehensible. She also treats the question as seeking confirmation, rather than asking for more information (Stokoe and Edwards 2008: 93).[19] Furthermore, the answer is produced with a smiley voice, indicated by the £ signs[20]; this way she aligns with the stated silliness of the question and makes her answer affiliative.

In line 10, the police officer asks a question very similar to the one in line 7; only the verb changes from present time ("do") to the past ("did"). The confirmation of the suspect's current knowledge (line 9) apparently does not suffice; the police officer does interactional work to establish that the suspect knew *at the time* that she was smashing someone else's property. The suspect confirms this minimally in line 11. The sequence as a whole therefore establishes, in addition to *what* the suspect has done, that she did it with *criminal intention* or *mens rea* necessary to constitute a crime.

Stokoe and Edwards (2008) thus show that the silly questions simultaneously work at the local, turn-by-turn level and at the same time clearly serve institutional goals. At the turn-by-turn level, the silly questions establish affiliation and elicit answers that align with the police officer's agenda set by the questions. At the same time, the silly questions are one way of fulfilling the police officer's task of evidence gathering in such a way that they make the suspect's criminal intent explicit and thus elicit a confession that is usable as evidence in court. Conversation analysis thus offers a way of looking at talk in a detailed way that also offers the possibility

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[19] This is in line with the yes/no format of the question, but not necessarily with preferred responses to *do you know* questions (Koole 2010).
[20] In my own transcripts, I have used the @ sign to indicate a smiley voice quality because that is easier with Dutch keyboards. See appendix A for an overview of the transcription conventions that have been used.

to make connections to the larger tasks that participants observably accomplish.

A final important point to make about CA research is that it attempts to discover and describe the implicit norms that govern interaction. Conversation analysts assume that talk must be systematic in order for speakers to *produce* recognizable actions in talk as well as for the hearer to *recognize* the actions. Conversation analysts attempt to discover and describe these systematic ways of doing things with talk. For example, a question generally creates the normative obligation for the addressee to provide an answer, like the police officer's question in lines 3-4 makes relevant an answer. In this case, the suspect provides an answer, but this does not mean that this is the only way she could have responded. People also resist the moral obligations set up by their interlocutors, but orient to the fact that they are diverging from the agenda that was just set, for example by giving accounts. This can be illustrated by the following excerpt from a police interview with a child witness. P is the police officer, K is the child.

EXCERPT 1.2 adapted from Jol (2011: 46)
```
11   P:   =wat deed je dan met de computer?
          =what did you then do with the computer?
12   K:   nou:: >spelletje<;
          well:: >little game<;
13   P:   ja?=
          yes?=
14        =e ↑wat voor spelletje?
          =eh what ↑kind of game?
15   K: → mm.
          mm.
16      → weet ↓nie.
          dunno.
```

The police officer asks a follow-up question in line 14. The child does not give an answer to this question, but provides an account for the absent answer by stating he does not know (line 16). Moreover, he delays his answer with "mm" (line 15). As research has shown (e.g. Pomerantz 1984a), this is a characteristic way of producing a dispreferred action. Delays may consist of

pauses, 'hms' and 'ehms', self-repairs and self-interruptions. As a consequence of this regularity, interactants may already treat a delay as a sign of upcoming trouble.

This section so far has outlined some basic principles of CA. However, there are different lines of research that can be distinguished: 'basic', 'pure' or 'fundamental' CA on the one hand and institutional CA on the other (Heritage 2005; Ten Have 2007). The former is dedicated to fundamental organization of talk, in mundane settings as well as institutional settings (Ten Have 2007). The latter focuses on institutional settings and how institutional talk relates to its institutional setting. The next section gives an introduction to this latter form of research.

1.3.1 Institutional conversation analysis

Over the years, there have been many CA studies into institutional interaction. These include various studies of encounters in the legal domain, such as courtroom interaction in criminal cases (e.g. Atkinson and Drew 1979; Cicourel 1968; D'Hondt 2009; Drew and Heritage 1992; Komter 1995; 1998; 1994; Metzger and Beach 1996; Sneijder 2011; Van der Houwen and Jol 2017; Komter 2019) and civil cases (Van der Houwen 2009); police interviews (e.g. Carter 2011; Edwards 2008; Kidwell 2009; Sliedrecht 2013; Stokoe 2009; Stokoe and Edwards 2008; Van Charldorp 2011; Komter 2019); police crisis negotiation (Sikveland, Kevoe-Feldman and Stokoe 2019) and mediation (Garcia 1991; Garcia 2000). Compared to mundane interaction, institutional interaction generally shows having a more defined goal, related to the institutional identities such as police officer and witness. Moreover, participants orient to restrictions in what is relevant and allowable, given the goal of the interaction. Finally, there are often inferential frameworks in play that are specific to the institution (Drew and Heritage 1992).

CA research does not approach the differences between mundane talk and institutional talk as existing prior to the talk. Rather, interlocutors construct talk as institutional, applying restrictions and orienting to inferential frames in their talk. Hence, they develop the institutional nature of the talk, turn by turn. This also means that participants can refrain from orienting to these goals, restrictions and inferential frameworks. In that case,

they develop mundane talk in a setting that could be expected to be very institutional. For instance, Heritage and Clayman discuss an excerpt of doctor-patient interaction in which the participants discuss the hike the patient did a few weeks earlier and then observably switch to 'doing business' (2010). Consequently, an encounter does not have to be either institutional or mundane. Participants can switch between mundane activities to institutionally relevant activities and back. Therefore, Heritage (2005) describes three main questions to answer in institutional CA: 1) what is institutional about institutional talk? 2) What kinds of institutional practices are enacted in talk and to what ends? and 3) how are practices in talk relevant for issues beyond talk?.

The answer to these questions can be found in five dimensions of talk, as Heritage (1997; 2005) describes.[21] First, some institutional interaction is governed by special turn-taking systems. Interactants can hold each other accountable for not following the turn-taking system. For example, a commissioner in a public inquiry might say to a lawyer "I think that perhaps was (.) an unnecessary comment. You just should ask questions, please." (Sidnell 2010b: 38). This correction by the commissioner marks that there was a transgression and therefore provides evidence that there is such a thing as a normative turn-taking system according to which the lawyer is supposed to ask questions and not make comments. Interactants apparently are sometimes bound to produce a particular *type* of turn. Similarly, there are normative systems in which the interactants are restricted as to *when* they speak. For example, a mediator might say: "Excuse me for interrupting for just a minute. I forgot to (0.1) mention the GROUNDrules, (0.2) and that is when (0.2) you're telling your story, (0.7) you say nothing" (Garcia 1991: 824). The mediator points out that there is a rule that when one party is

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[21] Heritage (1997) also mentions a sixth dimension: interactional asymmetries. This refers to asymmetries of participation, asymmetries of interactional and institutional 'knowhow' and epistemological caution and asymmetries of knowledge. This asymmetry dimension is not included as a separate dimension in Heritage's paper in 2005, nor is it in the textbook by Heritage and Clayman (2010). I suspect that the reason is that the various asymmetries are covered by the other dimensions. For example, participatory asymmetries will show in specific turn-taking systems. Therefore, I do not discuss this sixth dimension further in this section.

telling a story, the other should not talk. The mediator in this example makes this rule very explicit and even calls it a ground rule. A system that both restricts the turn type and when participants may speak is also possible (Heritage 2005: 116).

The second dimension concerns the overall structural organization. Whereas in mundane talk only the opening and closing are usually fixed, in institutional interaction it is often possible to distinguish various phases and activities, related to various institutional tasks. For instance, visits to the general practitioner that concern new medical problems usually include problem presentation and establishing the reason for the visit, followed by collecting more information, then followed by delivering diagnoses and finally treatment recommendation (Robinson 2003; see also section 3.1). Robinson shows that these phases do not only happen to follow each other in this order; participants orient to one phase being in the service of the next. That is, the problem presentation is produced ultimately in service of treatment recommendation.

The third dimension that can be employed by participants in interaction is sequence organization. This concept refers to the fact that one action makes relevant a next action from the interlocutor and that particular actions are the vehicle for participants to assume a particular institutional role. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the actions produced in institutional interaction often differ from mundane interaction. For example, Heritage (1984a) has shown that question-answer sequences in mundane interaction are often followed by the change of state-marker 'oh':

1 A: question
2 B: answer
3 A: oh

The *oh*-uptake in line 3 treats the answer by B as changing A's state of knowledge and therefore treats the answer as informative. This also shows retrospectively that A did not know the answer to the question asked in line 1. By contrast, speakers in institutional interaction often produce something different than 'oh' after the answer. For example, news interviewers have

been found to produce no uptake and therefore do not take the role of a recipient (Clayman and Heritage 2002). Clayman and Heritage (2002) show that this lack of uptake positions by news interviewers as eliciting the answer for the overhearing audience, and, hence, contributes to their role as news interviewer.

The fourth dimension that can contribute to the institutional nature of talk is turn design. Institutional representatives often design their turns in ways that are optimized (Heritage 2005: 128-132). That is, they are formulated in a way that works towards no-problem responses and in ways that probably anticipate and reduce resistance. A rather effective way of designing a turn to convert resistance into cooperation can be found in an intake call to mediation services. It occurs after the caller (C) has explained about her noisy neighbor and the mediator (M) has explained the mediation process. The target turn is in lines 7 and 8.

EXCERPT 1.3 taken from Stokoe, Hepburn and Antaki (2012: 489) (see also Sikveland and Stokoe 2016: 240)

```
1   M:    [.hhh ((cough)) does that sound .hhh like it
          might be
2         helpful to you?
3         (0.7)
4   C:    I- uh- (0.2) it might be but um:: (0.3) I'm not
          too sure at
5         this stage about (0.6) you know, how long- i-
          seein' this:
6         gi:rl, [at all,
7   M: →         [W'yeah.=↓yeh,but you'd be willin' t'see
          two of
8      → our media[tors jus' t'talk about it all .hhh  ]
9   C:             [Oh of course. Yeah. Yeah definitely.]
10  M:    Yeah.=all right my love, .hh um:: (0.5) .pt
          ↑WHen's the best
11        t(h)i(h)me for you t'be in.
```

The mediator asks for an evaluation of the mediation process as explained prior to this excerpt (lines 1-2). This leads to delay, self-interruption and self-repair (lines 3-5). As previously discussed in this section, this is recognizable as a dispreferred response. The caller shows to be less than enthusiastic

about mediation and it is likely that she is going to say 'no' to mediation. However, the mediator proposes that the caller would be "willing" to cooperate (line 7-8). This proposal shifts the attention from the nature of mediation to the caller's willingness to solve this problem. It is therefore appealing to her moral identity, which makes it more difficult to turn down (Sikveland and Stokoe 2016). Moreover, the mediator presents the investment that would be needed by the caller as minimal with "just t'talk" (line 8), that is, without further obligations. By designing her turn this way, the mediator elicits an enthusiastic response (line 9) and she can move on to setting up an appointment (lines 10-11).

The fifth dimension of talk that can be oriented to the institutional character of talk, is lexical choice. The next excerpt from my data provides an example. It is taken from the tour through the interview room with Felix, before the interview-proper starts. The police officer (P) explains what the child and his parents see:

```
EXCERPT 1.4 'we', 'little kids'
1   P:   dus we hebben wat knuffeltjes liggen,
         so we have some little cuddly toys here,
2        we hebben KUSSENS,
         we have PILLOWS,
3        en we hebben- je kan hier tekenen?
         and we have- you can make drawings here?
4        (..)
5   P:   en (de) kindjes komen hier om te praten;
         and (the) little kids come here to talk;
6        (..)
7        ·hh en dan gaan we ut opnemen,
         ·hh and then we are going to record it,
```

The police officer uses "we" rather than "I" in lines 1, 2 3 and 7. This reference makes relevant that the police officer is not just here for herself, she is representing the police organization (cf. Heritage 2005: 132). Moreover, she uses a plural "little kids" (*kindjes*) in line 5. This introduces the talking and

recording mentioned in lines 5 and 7 as a procedure, that is: as something that happens more often in the interview room. In this thesis, I will draw on these dimensions to analyze police interviews with child witnesses.

1.3.2 Professional Stocks of Interactional Knowledge (SIKs)

The previous section discusses the CA approach to institutional interaction. However, professionals often hold their own ideas, theories and idealizations of how interaction should be conducted. Peräkylä and Vehviläinen (2003) call such ideas, theories and idealizations professional 'Stocks of Interactional Knowledge' or 'SIKs'. Peräkylä and Vehviläinen (2003) argue that connecting CA findings to SIKs in systematic ways may help to interest professionals in the results of CA studies. Additionally, knowledge of the SIKs provides the CA researcher with a fuller understanding of how these theories influence actual talk.

SIKs vary in how detailed and extensive they are. Some SIKs are quite vague. Peräkylä and Vehviläinen mention the idea of learner-centeredness in educational counselling and careers training as examples. Similarly, Sliedrecht (2013) considers advice on summarizing in police interviews, job interviews and news interviews. She finds that the advice on summarizing is not tailored to the specific institutional goals. Other SIKs are quite extensively described and are based on research, such as the recommendation to ask open-ended questions in investigative interviews with children. SIKs also vary in how much they are integrated in communicative practice and, hence, how much they influence the interaction. For example, Peräkylä and Vehviläinen point out that theoretical ideas of free association and interpretation are constitutive of psychotherapy sessions, whereas ideas of learner-centeredness may or may not be relevant in a particular training encounter (2003: 730-731). What the SIKs have in common is that they are based on common sense or research other than interactional research. Therefore, conversation analytical research can offer a valuable additional approach.

As noted before, non-adherence to SIKs in police interviews with child witnesses is institutionally sanctioned (section 1.1.2). Not only do police officers check each other, public prosecutors, lawyers, expert witnesses and judges may also scrutinize the interviews for departures from the guidelines later in the procedure. This underlines the importance of the SIKs, as well as

the importance of the relationship between SIKs and actual interaction in this setting.

Peräkylä and Vehviläinen (2003) propose four ways in which findings from CA studies can be related to the SIKs once the analyses are in place. First, CA research sometimes shows that assumptions SIKs are incorrect and consequently falsifies (elements of) SIKs. Second, CA research can provide a more detailed picture of the practices described in the SIKs. This category refers to practices that fit the SIK and show in more detail how the SIK takes shape in ongoing interaction. The third relationship between SIKs and CA results is that CA results can add new dimensions to the SIKs. In these cases, CA discovers uses of a particular practice that are not yet described in the SIK. Fourth and finally, CA studies can expand the description of SIKs and describe missing links between the SIK and the actual practice. This form of relating CA findings to SIKs reveals inexplicit theories, ideals and other things that intervene with explicit SIKs. In summary, CA can contribute and relate to professional beliefs and ideals about their communication in various ways. This is a recurrent theme in this dissertation and in the analyses. In the conclusion and discussion chapter, I will address the question of how my analyses relate to the SIKs of police interviews with child witnesses.

1.4 Previous CA research into police interviews with vulnerable witnesses

Previous CA research into police interviews with vulnerable witnesses underlines the institutional nature of the interaction. Both police officers and child witnesses orient to their relevant institutional identities by respectively eliciting information and providing information (Fogarty 2010). Fogarty studied, among other things, the transition from the introduction phase to case-relevant talk by inviting a free recall (see section 1.1.3) (2010: 97-101). Even though this transition is sometimes accomplished by questions that are grammatically formatted as yes/no questions ('can you tell me why you have come to see me today'), some children treat it as an invitation to talk and thus orient to the action rather than the question format (Fogarty 2010: 88-94; this is also an example of CA research that falsifies a SIK, see section

1.3.2). In addition, child witnesses orient to the need to provide precise accounts of what happened (Fogarty 2010: 187-277).

Vulnerable witnesses also orient to their institutional identities as believable victims and legal witness (Deckert 2010). They do not only orient to the facts that must be produced as mentioned above, but also to their moral agency. Fogarty (2010) analyses accounts by children and notes that children are attentive to the moral implications of questions and make their own moral agency relevant through their talk. Similarly, MacLeod's study of police interviews with female victims of alleged rape (2016) shows that these victims provide accounts that pre-empt blame attributions. These studies show that although the investigative interview might be viewed as truth-finding from the institutional perspective, the lay participants orient to moral issues as well. Similarly, Iversen's (2014) study of interviews with children who have been exposed to domestic violence shows that children both orient to their own credibility, and distance themselves from the immoral father.

The institutional nature of the talk is tightly connected to the guidelines that have been developed for investigative interviews with vulnerable witnesses. Interviewers have been found to orient to various guidelines in their talk, thus contributing to the interaction in a way that is decidedly institutional (e.g. Antaki et al. 2015b; Iversen 2018). At the same time, research shows that adherence to guidelines is problematic in various ways.

First, police officers do not always follow the guidelines. For example, Antaki and colleagues (2015c) note that the ABE guidelines applicable in England and Wales state that police officers are allowed to confront vulnerable witnesses with inconsistencies, but they should not question their conduct. However, Antaki and colleagues show that police officers often question the witnesses' conduct in interviews with people with an intellectual disability (Antaki et al. 2015c). This is problematic because, in another study, the same authors show that vulnerable witnesses are not always able to effectively disarm such damaging implications (Antaki et al. 2015a). Another example comes from Richardson and colleagues (2018). They show how police officers bring up the discussion of truth and lies in interviews with vulnerable witnesses. According to the guidelines, police officers should attempt to elicit demonstrations from the witness that show

that the witness understands the difference. Police officers can do so by asking for examples or through questions about the difference between truth and lies. Richardson and colleagues show that some police officers indeed try to elicit demonstrations, but many others only ask for a confirmation of understanding or a confirmation that the issue has been discussed. They suggest that this may have implications for the perceived reliability of the testimony. Moreover, vulnerable witnesses are sometimes asked to provide multiple demonstrations or confirmations of understanding about truth and lies, and in some cases police officers go against the guidelines when they re-introduce the talk about truth and lies after the introduction phase. With the latter two, the police officer risks communicating that s/he does not believe the interviewee. Richardson and colleagues (2018) thus point out that diverging from the guidelines leads to the exact opposite of the safe interactional environment that interviewers are encouraged to create (2018).

Second, inspection of ongoing interaction reveals tension between some of the guidelines. A tension recurrently described in the existing literature is the tension between the guidelines to gather evidence that is usable in court and the guidelines to be supportive and build rapport. Antaki and colleagues (2015b) demonstrate that police officers usually do not acknowledge vulnerable witnesses' displays of distress, nor do they affiliate with the witnesses' stance regarding emotional trouble. They suggest that this lack of acknowledgement can be attributed to another guideline, namely, to produce evidence that is admissible in court, that is: a testimony that can be seen as being "solicited impartially and unjudgementally" (Antaki et al. 2015b: 429). Another study that highlights the tension between information gathering and maintaining rapport comes from Childs and Walsh (2017). They study police officers' self-deprecating remarks (like "I'm going deaf, that's all") to warrant their requests for repair. With the self-deprecating remarks, police officers claim responsibility for the trouble leading to the repair request and thus avoid attributing blame to the witness. Consequently, police officer can be seen to do extra interactional work to elicit more detail whilst maintaining rapport. Yet another example of research that underlines the difficulty of maintaining rapport versus

collecting information comes from a study by Iversen (2018). She notes that investigative interviewing often includes detailed questions about issues that should go without explanation. That is, competent members are supposed to know and understand these issues without questioning, such as why it feels safe to be with one's mom or that a dad hitting and pushing a mom is frightening (Iversen 2018: 15). Investigative interviewers presumably ask about such issues nevertheless to avoid assumptions and thus adhere to guidelines of evidence gathering without suggesting versions of what happened. This is, however, problematic for children, who orient to police officers as not understanding them. Thus, there is a tension between the requirements of building rapport and being supportive on one hand, and requirements of evidence gathering on the other. One way interviewers address this tension is by claiming that they understand (Iversen 2018).

Adherence to guidelines sometimes also leads to difficulties because the practices that are recommended by guidelines do very different things in actual interaction. A striking example comes from Childs and Walsh (2018). They study the recommended practice of asking the child witness at the end of the interview if there is something else they would like to say. This recommendation aims to solicit more information from the child, and thus should be taken literally as an invitation. Yet, the fact that it is produced in the closing phase of the interview makes it hearable as a formulaic step in pre-closing that makes a *no*-answer relevant, especially when police officers frame it as 'before we can finish off then' and physically orient to the end of the interview by closing their notebook (Childs and Walsh 2018). The discrepancy between what particular contributions are expected to do and what they actually do, can probably be attributed to the conceptualization of language as an exchange of information (Fogarty 2010). Fogarty (2010) shows that much research concerning investigative interviewing with vulnerable witnesses treats language as an exchange of information, rather than as social action.

A different kind of relation between guidelines and CA results is offered by Fogarty, Augoustinos and Kettler (2013). They study excerpts in police interviews with child witnesses where children show discomfort when being asked details about the alleged sexual abuse. This often includes children displaying difficulty in continuing the conversation and provide the

answers that are requested. The progress of evidence elicitation is thus problematic in these sequences. They also show how police officers and children sometimes manage to restore the progressivity and further co-construct the narrative by attending to each other's moves and body diagrams that are meant for the child to point out where exactly the abuser has touched them. Their proposal is, hence, to include the CA concept of progressivity in conceptualizing rapport. This notion is helpful first because it directs the researcher to observable features of interaction, i.e. observable problems of progress, and second because it allows the study of rapport as coming and going within an encounter. This is in line with police officers' own reflections on rapport (Collins, Doherty-Sneddon and Doherty 2014)[22].

The existing research, even though limited, thus shows that translation of guidelines into actual interaction is difficult and that the relationship between guidelines and actual interaction is problematic. Especially the study by Childs and Walsh (2018) shows that, even when police officers adhere to the guidelines, they sometimes reach the opposite of what they attempt to do. Another gap in the literature is that there is virtually no interactional study of Dutch police interviews with vulnerable witnesses. It is possible that interviews with child witnesses in the Dutch context differ from their Anglo-Saxon counterparts given the different use of the interviews (transcripts that are added to a case file versus showing the tape as evidence in chief). Additionally, differences in language offer participants in interaction different resources do draw on. This thesis addresses both the need for interactional study of police interviews with vulnerable witnesses as well as the lack of such studies in a Dutch context.

1.5 This dissertation

This introductory chapter makes clear that there are elaborate guidelines for investigative interviews with child witnesses, many of which are based on psychological research. The emphasis is on an uncontaminated version of the truth, both in guidelines and research. This view is problematic from an interactional perspective, as has been shown in previous research (e.g. Childs

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[22] An instructor at the Police Academy also said that rapport is apparently present if the child is telling his or her story.

and Walsh 2018; Fogarty 2010). It is also clear that the relation between guidelines or SIKs and actual interaction is important to study. Research has shown that investigative interviewers do not always adhere to the guidelines provided to them (Antaki et al. 2015c; Richardson, Stokoe and Antaki 2018). Moreover, conversation analytical research can, in various ways, add to the SIKs that professionals hold about interaction in their field.

Central to this thesis, is the relationship between guidelines on the one hand and actual interaction on the other. The focus is on what happens when police officers interview children: how does the interaction unfold, in what ways is this conduct related to the guidelines and how can we consequently evaluate the guidelines? This thesis builds on and expands the body of interactional research into police interviews with vulnerable witnesses and studies of police interviews in general. It also builds on and expands the body of research about the relationship between guidelines and actual interaction.

From the onset, this project has had a secondary aim. It has been my objective to contribute to the knowledge about interviews with child witnesses to share that with practitioners and further improve the quality of these interviews. In that sense, this project can be seen partly as applied CA in the sense of "interventionist CA" (Antaki 2011: 2-9). This term refers to the situation in which CA researchers analyze interaction using CA and, at some point, offer advice to practitioners based on their research. This goal has influenced this thesis in the sense that potential applications of the analyses were in my thoughts when choosing the particular phenomena for analysis (see section 2.3.2). I will return to the practical implications in the final chapter.

In the analytical chapters, I first turn to the instructions that police officers have to give at the beginning of the police interview and look at how they are embedded in the interview. It will be shown that SIKs on how to inject and practice the instructions do not always function in a way that is assumed in the SIK. Moreover, the analysis will show some expected and unexpected ways to conclude these instructions (chapter 3). Next, the attention shifts to children who volunteer accounts of their own behavior in the event. This in turn relates to the SIK stipulating that police officers should be neutral in

interviews. I will argue that this advice can be counterproductive and that children sometimes show that (chapter 4). The third and final analytical chapter reports the analysis of how children respond to questions about sources of knowledge. The SIKs prescribe that police officers ask such questions, but they can cause various difficulties for children and are therefore not as straightforward as the guideline suggests (chapter 5). Finally, the concluding chapter will draw the findings together, reflect on the theoretical implications and provide suggestions for further research. Additionally, implications for practitioners will be discussed (chapter 6). Before turning to the analyses, the next chapter gives an account of how the data were collected, how phenomena were chosen, how they were analyzed and how we dealt with ethical issues (chapter 2).

2 Data, method and ethical issues

This dissertation is about the relationship between advice and rules for police officers on how to interview children, also known as the professional Stocks of Interactional Knowledge (SIKs; see section 1.3.2), and actual interviews. The current chapter describes the conversational materials that I was able to use for the analysis, how I gained insight into the SIKs and the analytical choices that I made. The chapter is organized in four sections. Section 2.1 discusses how I determined the SIKs. An important source for my research was the "The child as a witness manual" (*Handleiding Het kind als getuige*) (Dekens and Van der Sleen 2013). Additionally, I conducted field work. Section 2.2 concerns the police interviews. It describes the process of obtaining access, as well as the recorded interviews. Section 2.3 explains the choice for detailed analysis of particular recurring phenomena in the interviews and how the interviews were analyzed. Finally, section 2.4 is devoted to the sensitivity and pre-recorded nature of the interviews and related ethical concerns.

2.1 Examining the guidelines on how to interview children

Most of the SIKs on Dutch police interviews with child witnesses have been codified in "The child as a witness manual" (*Handleiding Het kind als getuige*) (Dekens and Van der Sleen 1997; 2010; 2013), henceforth the Manual. The first edition appeared in 1997. The authors were teachers at the police academy at the time of writing[23]. They reified practices that had been developed by the police academy, based on the authors' own experience and on research. Their goal was to make their knowledge available to police officers, lawyers and other participants in the legal procedure. The Manual is now used in police officer training and serves as a reference book.

The most important component of the Manual was, and is, the scenario model (see section 1.1.4). The model includes the various steps that interviewers should take in order to get as much information as possible, to

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[23] Karina Dekens is still a teacher at the police academy; Janny van der Sleen started her own agency, Kinterview, and is still involved in the training.

get reliable information and to make the manner of interviewing as suitable for the child as possible. One of the Manual's authors explained that the Manual, and the first edition in particular, has been written as the clearest possible guideline for police officers. As a result, some nuances were sacrificed. She also pointed out that the basis of the scenario model remains the same to date despite minor changes due to new jurisprudence and research that was included in the later 2010 and 2013 editions.[24] The headlines from the Manual have been discussed in section 1.1.4. Additionally, analytical chapters 3, 4 and 5 provide a more elaborate and detailed discussion of the SIKs relevant for the respective analyses.

In order to acquire a more comprehensive understanding of the organizational context (cf. Koole 1997), some field work was conducted. I interviewed four key informants: one of the authors of the Manual, a trainer from the police academy, an experienced coordinator of a child friendly interview room, and a police officer who just finished the training. Furthermore, I attended a follow-up meeting (see section 1.1.2) and I spent two weeks at a police station at the beginning of the project. I watched the video data and made notes to familiarize myself with the data, but I also spent coffee breaks and lunches with police officers and informally talking about their work. I transcribed the interviews verbatim and made notes during the follow-up meeting and during my stay at the police station. The findings were grouped according to several topics and written up together in one document. This was offered for comments to the four informants.

I have used these fieldwork-based findings to describe the context of police interviews in the introduction chapter (section 1.1), describe the data in the current chapter (section 2.2.2), to support my choice for selecting particular interactional phenomena (section 2.3.2) from the interviews for analysis (section 2.3.2) and to support my analysis in the analytical chapters.

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[24] For example, there used to be 'anatomically correct' drawings of a boy and a girl. These were used to invite children to point out where they had been touched. These drawings were banned because research pointed out that the drawings sometimes invite children to claim that they have been touched at places on their bodies where they have not been touched (Rassin 2012).

2.2 Data: pre-recorded police interviews with child witnesses

The data used for the analysis consist of video recordings made by the police. The recordings are a compulsory part of the criminal procedure if children are interviewed in the child-friendly interview room, in line with a guideline by the Public Prosecutors' office (2013; see also section 1.1.1).

The interviews studied in this dissertation were recorded by the police before I started my research. An important methodological advantage of using pre-recorded data is that they were made without researcher interference. The data do not give reason to suggest that the presence of the researcher or a camera may have influenced the authenticity and naturalness of the data. In other words, the observer's paradox (Labov 1972) is avoided and discussion about the ecological validity of the materials (Heydon 2005: 42; Mondada 2013: 34; Speer 2002a; Speer 2002b) is dispensable. However, there are also some drawbacks to working with pre-recorded data. The police interviews that are the topic of analysis in this thesis are very sensitive in nature. Therefore, various measures were needed to protect the recordings. Moreover, it was not self-evident that I would obtain access to these recordings. Section 2.1.1 gives insight into the procedure of requesting access as well as the protective measures taken; section 2.2.2 offers a description of the data set.

2.2.1 Obtaining access to the data

In the process of obtaining permission to work with real interview data, I met several gatekeepers. First, my supervisors and I wrote a request for copies of video recorded interviews of child witnesses to the "Board of Procurators General" (*College van Procureurs-Generaal*, the head office of the public prosecutor's office). We pointed out how the practical implications of the project matched the goals of recording the interviews and especially expert advice, professionalization and education. We also proposed protective measures to safeguard the data and we stressed that I had had access to this type of data previously, when preparing my Bachelor's and Master's theses through my previous employer, the public prosecutor's office. We also

proposed that we could do the transcription work at the police station, should the request for copies be rejected.

The Board of Procurators General consulted a second gatekeeper: the "Scientific Research and Documentation Centre" (*Wetenschappelijk Onderzoeks- en Documentatie Centrum*, hereafter: WODC) for assessment of the research proposal in regard to scientific standards. This government-funded research institute positively assessed my research proposal on the basis of scientific standards. After the WODC had approved the research proposal, the Board of Procurators General also approved our request, including the request for copies. This meant a great methodological advantage over working at the police station, as we could watch and re-watch the primary data throughout the entire project (different from Fogarty 2010). The last gatekeeper was the police. The "National Police" (*Nationale Politie*) first conducted a background screening to ensure that I did not have a criminal record. Next, the local police stations were involved in the final step before I could start working with the actual interviews: physically obtaining the interviews. For that, I approached the police contacts with whom I had worked before for my Bachelor's and Master's theses. One of them explicitly stated that she trusted me with the interviews because we had worked together before and she knew that I would take good care of the data. Having a good professional relationship thus was crucial for gaining access to the data (cf. Van Charldorp 2010). It also emphasized the importance of honoring that trust.

In line with our own request, the letter of permission included a range of conditions that aimed at protecting the privacy of those involved in the interactions. To name a few: a) special permission was needed for sharing audiovisual data with people other than my supervisors, b) the recordings could not leave the university building, c) the privacy of the people in the video recordings should be protected by careful storage and anonymization of transcripts, d) full transcripts may not be published, e) the data can only be used for this project and f) I was not allowed to directly contact the participants in the recorded interaction. The latter condition is prescribed by the "Police Data Regulation" (*Besluit politiegegevens* 2007) and presumably aims to protect people from interference in their lives. Additionally, the permission only applied to the research project described in the application

letter, as well as to myself and my supervisors. Additional researchers or a new research objective would require additional permission. Furthermore, draft articles and chapters that include data based on the recordings must be submitted to the Board of Procurators General before publication so that they can screen them for information that could lead to identification of individuals. In section 2.4, I outline some ethical issues related to working with the police recordings.

2.2.2 Description of the data set

The data were obtained from two child-friendly interview rooms (see section 1.1.1), which I called A and B for reasons of anonymity. Using the data from two interview rooms enhances the generalizability of the findings. I targeted twenty interviews from both interview rooms. The total data set involves 43 audio-visually recorded police interviews with child witnesses, 22 from interview room A and 21 from interview room B. I excluded two interviews with children with learning disabilities (interview room A) to create a corpus that would be as homogeneous as possible in the sense that they were all interviews with 'normally developing' children. I also excluded three interviews (interview room B) because of technical errors in the DVDs. The data set that I used therefore consists of 38 interviews.

The selection of interviews was slightly different for interview room A compared to interview room B. The interviews from interview room A were selected by a police officer and I. I sat with her and went through the police overviews in search of suitable data. The data from interview room B were selected by the coordinator after I had given her a list of search criteria. The set of search criteria for both police stations included the following. I asked for data recorded *after* the issue of the Manual in October 2010, to increase chances that the interviewer was trained according to the 2010 Manual. Additionally, I requested interviews that were recorded as long ago as possible to avoid any interference with ongoing criminal cases. The final dataset consists of interviews recorded in 2011 and 2012. Furthermore, I specified some features of the participants in the interview. The interviews should be conducted by different police officers to ensure that I could check for individual interview styles, and to include both male and female police officers. I asked for children between the ages of 6 (primary school age) to

11 (maximum age when children are required to be interviewed in the child-friendly interview room)[25], both boys and girls. The data set was limited to interviews that were conducted in Dutch without an interpreter because an interpreter creates a different interactional setting and dynamics (cf. Van De Mieroop and Mazeland 2009).

Finally, there were some characteristics I was looking for in terms of the nature of the alleged offence. I focused on cases of sexual violence, because this is the most frequent topic in these interviews.[26] Sexual violence is not a legal term in the Netherlands. I use it to refer to the offences in the Dutch Criminal Code title XIV: "felonies against morals" (*misdrijven tegen de zeden*)[27]. This has led to a varied collection, from interviews about 'the dirty man in the bushes' to indecent proposals in online communication, and from long lasting sexual violence within the family to babysitters showing their genitals. I also asked for cases that were not high profile or 'spectacular', to avoid interference with such publicized cases and to demonstrate that I was not sensation seeking. Finally, I asked for *first* interviews on the alleged abuse (see section 1.1.3 about second interviews). The police delivered data according to these criteria. Appendix B contains an overview of the data.

The interviews vary in length. Some last about half an hour, the longest is about two hours. Most recordings, however, take about 50 to 90 minutes (Appendix B includes the length of the recordings). This usually also includes a 'tour' for the child in which the interviewing police officer shows the interview room and control room (see section 1.1). The interviewing police officer also points out where the cameras are and explains what happens in the control room. The introduction, a break and the closing phase are also included in the recording.

The first two analyses (chapters 4 and 5) are based on thirty interviews instead of the full data set due to initial technical problems with the recordings of interview room B. This led to the decision to start working

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[25] For a discussion of this maximum age, see the report by Defence for Children (Hokwerda et al. 2015: 83-84).
[26] Child witnesses of severe violence are also interviewed in the same interview rooms, but the approach and especially the introduction phase are slightly different.
[27] For critical remarks about the term sexual assault, see Coates, Bavelas and Gibson (1994).

with the recordings from interview room A. Once the technical problems were overcome, the data from interview room A were complemented by ten interviews from interview room B. I chose to work on only ten interviews from interview room B because of time restrictions on the project and because preliminary findings indicated that thirty interviews would provide sufficient data to work with for the analysis in chapter 5.

Given that I had now familiarized myself with the dataset of 30 interviews for the first analysis (reported in chapter 5), I continued working with this subset for the next analysis (reported in chapter 4). The last analysis, reported in chapter 3, focused on a phenomenon that is relatively easy to locate: the instructions provided to children at the beginning of the interview. Therefore, I looked at all 38 interviews and collected all the instances of instructions and practicing and transcribed these in detail. Table 2.1 provides a summary.

Table 2.1: Summary of the interviews used in this dissertation

	Number of interviews	Number of interviews used for chapters 4 & 5	Number of interviews used for chapter 3	Recorded in 2011	Recorded in 2012
Interview room A	20	20	20	10	10
Interview room B	18	10	18	18	0
Total	38	30	38	28	10

2.3 Analyzing the interviews

Conversation analysis (see section 1.3) is the approach taken in this thesis. This is an inductive method that advocates an approach of 'unmotivated looking'. This means that the researcher should look at a piece of interaction without specific expectations about what could be found (Sacks 1984a). Although there have been some commentary on this principle (for a summary, see Ten Have 2007-122), it still holds as a guideline for CA.

Therefore, I first familiarized myself with the data by listening and transcribing while taking notes of things that struck me as potentially interesting. Moreover, throughout the project, I continuously moved between data, transcription, collection, analysis, writing and literature. Furthermore, I used data sessions and presentations at conferences to decide, specify and further analyze the phenomena I was interested in. A limit to the data sessions was that I could not provide the participants with the original video due to measures to protect the anonymity of the interactants. This was thus a compromise between ethics and methodology. This process led to three analytical chapters. I will briefly introduce the analytical phenomena in section 2.2.2, but first section 2.2.1 discusses various issues involved in transcription.

2.3.1 Transcribing the interviews

It is difficult to analyze talk based on recordings alone (Pomerantz and Fehr 1997: 70-71), which is why the interviews were transcribed. To represent the details of interaction, the transcription conventions as developed by Jefferson (e.g. Jefferson 2004) were employed with some small adaptations for Dutch keyboards. The transcription was supported by Transana transcription software (Fassnacht and Woods 2005). Embodied behavior, such as hand and head movement, gaze and body posture, is included in the transcript if relevant for the analysis and when the verbal cues indicate embodied behavior (e.g. "here" in the sequence Police officer: "and what is your tail bone?", child: "that is somewhere here", interview 14, with Suzanna). I used the transcription conventions for embodied behavior developed by Mondada (2014). An overview of all transcription conventions that I used can be found in Appendix A.

Ideally, transcriptions should be peer-reviewed in order to avoid tunnel vision about what is being said and heard (Jenks 2011: 91). Data sessions (for an explanation, see Ten Have 2007) normally offer an occasion to do so. However, given the sensitive nature of the data, I could not share the original data with anyone unrelated to the project without special permission. I tried to compensate for this in two ways. First, I transcribed in phases in order to allow self-correction (cf. Fogarty 2010). I made basic verbatim transcripts while anonymizing all details that could lead to

identification, followed by a re-transcription of two full interviews using the Jeffersonian conventions. During further analysis, the process of re-listening, re-checking and refining continued. Secondly, I used other resources strategically. A number of verbatim transcripts (see section 1.1.3) provided by interview room A were used as a basis (fourteen of twenty interviews). Moreover, a student assistant who had obtained special permission from the Public Prosecutor's office to work with the data made four basic transcripts of some recordings that had *not* been transcribed by the police. The verbatim transcripts by the police and student assistant served as a basis for transcripts using Jeffersonian transcription conventions. As a result, the transcripts of eighteen interviews were created by two transcribers.

There were also some representational choices to make for transcripts. The first choice was how to represent child and police officer. Obviously, the transcripts had to be anonymized, but this can be done in different ways. Using Christian names would ensure that no particular (institutional) role would be associated with the interlocutors prior to the analysis (Hutchby 2007: xi), but it could also be confusing. Therefore, the speakers are indicated with K (child) and P (police officer) at the onset of each turn. In the transcription of ongoing speech and in the analysis, however, names (and other identifiable data) have been replaced by pseudonyms. The second representational choice concerns how to represent alternative hearings of what is said. In these cases, I represented the ambiguity as an uncertain hearing: (option1/option2).

The third and final representational issue to be discussed here relates to translation. I chose to provide the original Dutch data, followed by an English translation in italics. The translations represent compromises between literal translations and maintaining the flow of the talk. When such compromise is impossible, for example due to differences in grammar between Dutch and English, the second line provides a relatively verbatim translation and the third line an idiomatic translation. The question was also how much prosodic detail the translation should contain. For example, where in the translation should the rising intonation be when the original intonation is rising at the end of a turn, but grammar dictates that the words that 'carry' that intonation go elsewhere in the translation? Does the intonation 'belong' to the end of the TCU or should it stay with the words? I

decided to provide prosodic detail in the translation as much as I felt confident that it represented how a native speaker of English would have done it. When I could not decide, I omitted the prosodic information in the translation. Finally, children often use linguistic forms that would not be considered correct Dutch. I have tried to reflect such 'errors' in the translation and clarified them in footnotes.

2.3.2 Determining phenomena and building collections[28]

Following the procedures described in the introduction of this section (2.3), I chose three phenomena for further analysis. This sub-section further introduces the phenomena, and explains why I have chosen these particular phenomena.

Chapter 3 reports the analysis of the instructions that police officers give at the beginning of the interview, with a focus on the instructions to answer 'I don't know' when the child does not have the answer, to indicate problems of understanding and to correct the police officer when s/he makes a mistake (section 1.1.4), henceforth the *I don't know*-instruction, *I don't understand*-construction and correction-instruction. Such instructions are clearly related to the guidelines and thus fit into the overall purpose of this thesis to study the relation between guidelines and actual interaction. Additionally, an initial exploration of the data revealed that the introduction of the instruction sometimes is accomplished in an abrupt way that demonstrated how injecting the instructions in the interaction is sometimes difficult. Furthermore, the activity of *practicing* interaction seems to be unusual and very specific to this institutional context. Another reason for my interest was that both instructing and practicing are meta-linguistic activities, that are fairly abstract and potentially difficult for children. Finally, the fieldwork suggested that the instructions would be interesting to look at. Informants presented the instructions as important, but at the same time, inserting the instructions was sometimes mentioned as an issue. Hence, an

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[28] This thesis roughly follows the order of most of the interviews. The instructions usually occur at the beginning of the interview; accounts of the child's role generally occur starting from the free recall phase; questions about sources of knowledge generally are asked in the questioning phase. The analysis was conducted in the reverse order.

analysis of the instructions and practicing the instructions probably would open up possibilities for recommendations. Thus, the first analytical question discussed in this dissertation is when and how these instructions are embedded, as well as how the practicing is embedded in the interview.

Chapter 4 presents an analysis of unsolicited reports that children give of their own role in the event, such as "I was really struggling" and "I didn't want that". Given that the criminal offence is what the *suspect* did, rather than the *child witness*, it struck me as interesting that children provide such accounts. My question had to do with what children establish when they provide such accounts, why this might happen and how police officers respond to such unsolicited reports. The police officers' responses are then connected to the SIK that police officers are supposed to be neutral, including in their responses. In turn, the analysis also looks at how children respond to the police officers' uptakes and sometimes do not treat these uptakes as adequate.

Finally, chapter 5 discusses questions about sources of knowledge, which often take the form of the question: 'how do you know X'. These questions are remarkably frequent in the interaction and my intuition was that they can be challenging. These questions also matched an instruction in the Manual. Police officers are supposed to ask these questions to enable assessment of the truthfulness of the assertions (see section 5.2 for further explanation). This phenomenon therefore fits in the overall question of the project to compare instructions for the police officer with practices in the actual interaction. While collecting instances of questions about sources of knowledge, my interest shifted to how children respond to such questions because this is where children show how they understand the questions. Therefore, the responses show how the questions function in interaction. Additionally, children are not aware of the instruction the police officer must abide by and therefore the responses are a location where knowledge asymmetry with regard to what is required in this setting may surface.

Building the collections: embedding instructions and practicing instructions
For the analysis presented in chapter 3, I looked at 38 interviews. I collected all instances of the *I don't know*-instruction, the *I don't understand*-instruction and the correction-instruction at the beginning of the interview

from all 38 interviews. It turned out that instructions were sometimes lacking, that practicing was lacking relatively often (compared to missing instructions) and that police officers sometimes produced reminders of instructions that they had given earlier. I did not focus on the mere reminders, specifically, the reminders that only lead to the next instruction and that do not include practicing. Chapter 3 includes a schematic overview of when the instructions are inserted. It also reports how many instructions are given and how often they are practiced.

Building the collections: unsolicited reports of children's' roles in the event
In order to collect accounts, I went through the rough transcripts and identified accounts of the child's own behavior that were not solicited by the police officer. I also included unsolicited reports of failed attempts ("I wanted to leave but then that boy started pulling my hood"; simplified from interview 23 with Harmen). Reports of the child's behavior were considered as unsolicited when they were in one of the following sequential positions:

a) In narratives, for example in the free narrative phase. These turns can be invited by the police officer with questions like "what is it that you have come to tell me?" The invitation often presumes that there is something relevant to tell (Kidwell 2009), but the question does not elicit an account of the child's behavior.
b) When the child answers more than the question (cf. Stivers and Heritage 2001). That is, when the child provides an answer, but elaborates that answer more than what was necessary given the question.
c) After the answer-uptake. In these cases, the police officer has asked a question, the child has answered, and the police officer has projected a new sequence with, for example "okay". At that point the child starts an account of his or her own role.

The accounts that met these criteria often contain extreme case formulations (Pomerantz 1986), i.e. intensified expressions such as 'very hard', 'running', 'screaming', 'shouting', 'kicking', 'tear loose', 'really'. Another recurrent feature was laughter or a smiley voice.

My collection of accounts was limited to accounts of the child's behavior related to the alleged crime. For example, Adrienne (interview 13) talks a lot about what she did in response to unfriendly behavior by her father. However, this seems to concern their deranged relationship in general, rather than potential criminal behavior. These reports were not included. Accounts for other people's behavior were also not included. For example, Dorien (interview 25) mentions that she told a friend in confidence what happened but that her friend then reported it to someone else. She then provides a justification for her friend, namely that her friend found it so horrible what happened. These were not included in the collection. In total, this led to a collection of 95 instances of unsolicited reports of the child's role in the incident. Chapter 4 includes further numbers in the ongoing text to indicate how widespread the various types of accounts are.

Building the collections: Responses to questions about sources of knowledge
In thirty interviews, 210 instances of questions about sources of knowledge regarding case-relevant statements by the child were identified. Most of them occurred in the interrogation phase (see the guidelines on how the interviews are organized in sections 1.3 and 1.4). The most canonical form is "how do you know that?" (*hoe weet je dat?*), followed by "how did you know that?" (*hoe wist je dat?*) by quite a considerable margin. Other less frequent utterances include: "why do you think that?" (*waarom denk je dat?*), and "how can you see that?" (*hoe kun je dat zien?*). The questions about sources of knowledge generally occur both in present and past tense.

An initial inventory indicated that most responses to questions about sources of knowledge lead to some kind of trouble. A mere pause was not treated as a problem indicator because children up to the age of at least 8 generally take more time to respond to questions and have more difficulty timing their turns (Stivers, Sidnell and Bergen 2018). Table 2.2 provides an overview:

Table 2.2: Problematic responses and straightforward responses to questions about sources of knowledge

Sequences with questions about sources of knowledge	Frequency
Questions about sources of knowledge	210
Responses showing some kind of trouble	183
Straightforward, unmarked responses	27

As the table shows, the answer was straightforward only in 27 cases and the question was treated as an unproblematically answerable question. In 183 cases, the answer showed some sort of trouble. It therefore seemed an interesting object of further study.

2.4 Ethical issues

Working with actual police interviews with children about sexual abuse was accompanied by ethical issues. First, the data are sensitive because they concern children having experienced sexual violence and they are part of criminal investigations. Children are largely dependent on adults and therefore vulnerable. Sexual violence is generally a sensitive topic and police officers regularly ask children to go into intimate detail about this potentially traumatic event. The fact that the data are part of the criminal investigation means that they may contain information about suspects that also have a right to privacy. This especially applies because (alleged) sex offenders tend to be harassed. (A notorious example in the Netherlands is convicted sex criminal Benno L. After serving his time, it was nearly impossible to find housing for him.)

Second, the use of pre-recorded audiovisual data has methodological advantages, but at the same time it makes it possible to recognize children, their parents/guardians and police officers. Thus, privacy and portrait rights are at stake. This puts additional demands on how the data are treated. To safeguard the interests of these people and institutions, I took several measures to protect the anonymity of everyone involved (see section 2.2.1). This also had methodological consequences, such as limited checks on the transcripts (section 2.3.1) and data sessions based on transcripts alone. It was also a reason not to choose embodied behavior as the main focus of the

analysis as it would rely heavily on video data, which are difficult to anonymize.

The remainder of this section discusses the two major ethical issues: the lack of informed consent for research purposes (2.4.1; cf. Jol and Stommel 2016a) and data storage for later use and transparency (2.4.2).

2.4.1 Informed consent and archival data[29]

Police officers, parents, legal guardians and children know that the interviews are recorded. This is ensured by the tour through the interview room and control room that is part of the interview procedure (section 1.1.3). Police officers also informally ask parents and legal guardians whether they agree with the interview and recording, even though this is not legally required. Yet, the data were pre-recorded (section 2.2) and the participants therefore did not give permission at the time of the interview. Therefore, police officers, parents, legal guardians and children had not given informed consent for research purposes.

After I had collected the data, our faculty established an Ethical Review Committee (ETC). I submitted my research plan to request ethical approval for secondary use of data without informed consent. In the end, the committee approved the project while adding that both the video data and a 'key' containing the real identities of the interactants could not be stored on a network. The initial response of the ETC was, however, that informed consent needed to be obtained. I report how I dealt with the difficulties that I encountered below.

One of the problems was that it was not legally possible for me to contact the parents or children to ask retrospectively, or *post hoc*, for informed consent within the conditions for using the data. The letter of permission from the Public Prosecutor's office prohibited contacting people who occur in the data. This provision is based on the "Regulation Police Data" (*Besluit politiegegevens* 2007). Another problem was that it can be confronting and painful to approach the parents and children about what probably has been a painful affair. This was also one of the reasons why the police were not willing to contact the children nor their parents. I also

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[29] This section is a summarized version of Jol and Stommel (2016a).

explored the possibility of returning the data and asking for informed consent in new interviews. This option also came with ethical questions and other problems (Jol and Stommel 2016a).

The problems led to a reconsideration of the roots of informed consent. This notion is based on an ethical framework that is not the most appropriate for pre-recorded data as I had already obtained. The notion of informed consent has been developed in the context of research with human subjects, that is, studies that actively intervene in the lives of human subjects. An example is human subjects participating in experiments, filling out questionnaires or allowing observations. They need to be protected from harm caused by such intrusions or at least it should be avoided that they are unknowingly exposed to risk.

By contrast, the data set of pre-recorded interviews can be characterized as archival or bureaucratic data (Belmont report, The national commission for the protection of human subjects of biomedical and behavioral research 1979: 12-3). These are data that have been collected for purposes other than research. A general advantage of using such existing material is that it is less intrusive than collecting new data, precisely because participants do not have to perform specific activities or allow testing or observation (Social Research Association 2003: 26). The only harm or risk that the research could cause, would occur in the stage of dissemination, by unveiling identifying information (Stefánsson, Atladóttir and Guðbjörnsson 2008) or in the process of asking for informed consent: by causing distress or emotional harm. Therefore, several ethical documents, such as the American Psychological Association's Code of Conduct (2002/2010) and the Belmont Report (1979: 12-16), allow exceptions to the usual informed consent rule in case of archival research[30], often with the condition that the data originally have been collected with informed consent. Other conditions are that the

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[30] Another reason for exceptions to the informed consent rule is that it can involve a disproportionate amount of effort to obtain informed consent long after data were recorded. Sometimes it is even unfeasible, for example because people have moved (Nederlandse biomedische onderzoeksgemeenschap/Federatie van Medisch Wetenschappelijke Verenigingen (FMWV) 2003/2004: 16-18, 30-33; The national commission for the protection of human subjects of biomedical and behavioral research 1979, Belmont Report: 12-16).

purposes of re-use should not be incompatible with the original use (The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union 2016: article 5 under b) and that extra care should be taken to conceal the identities of the people in the data.

Our data set and method fulfill these requirements. The data have been recorded and obtained legally, with permission from the participants. Furthermore, the scientific study of the interviews is compatible with some of the additional purposes of recording the data: obtaining advice from experts from behavioral sciences during or after the interview, enabling further professionalization of police officers and creating teaching materials on interview techniques. Finally, we took great care to safeguard the anonymity by abiding by the various protective measures described in section 2.2.1. In addition to these measures, I always explicitly asked the conference presentation audience not to record the presentation and I chose not to use excerpts as an example because they were too specific and therefore potentially recognizable. In sum, I argue that the use of these data set in these specific circumstances is ethically sound, despite the lack of informed consent for scientific purposes.

2.4.2 Data storage for later use and transparency

Over the last years, a range of initiatives has been developed to store data in data archives, such as the Data Archiving and Networked Services (henceforth: DANS) in the Netherlands. This storage has two goals. First, the availability of the raw data enables peers to check the data for their authenticity. The importance of this possibility is highlighted by, for instance, the Stapel case in which data were fabricated (Levelt Committee 2012). The second goal is data reuse. The rationale behind this is that it is a waste of public money to use data sets only once.

As much as I agree with these ideas, it was problematic to store the police interviews in such an archive, for reasons of data authorship, anonymity, because data archives require informed consent for research purposes and because the Public Prosecutor's office only gave myself and my supervisors permission to work with the recordings. The data are not ours to store. The audiovisual data set will therefore be returned to the police after

the project, unless another arrangement is agreed on. If necessary, reviewers can ask the Public Prosecutor's office for permission to check the data.

I also proposed to the Public Prosecutor's Office that a reference could be made in the DANS that the data set exists, where it is stored and where and how access can be requested. The reference would be complemented with some meta-data such as the nature, length of the recordings, language of the recordings and transcripts, year of recording, etc. The Public Prosecutor's Office however, postponed decisions on further use and storage until concrete proposals for further use would be received. Hence, ethical considerations played an important role throughout the project.

3 "What is your domicile": embedding instructions in the interview

Police officers usually give and practice several instructions during interviews with child witnesses. This chapter looks into how these instructions are embedded in the ongoing interaction. The next excerpt from an interview with Lisa (6) introduces this topic further. Lines 1-5 are the end of the free recall phase of the interview. Key lines are indicated with arrows.

```
EXCERPT 3.1 I'm going to do it differently
1   P:    °zijn er nog andere dingen gebeurd°;
          °did other things happen°.
2         (0.7)
3   K:    °nee,
          °no,
4         da' <was alles>;°
          that <was all>;°
5   P:    °°dat was alles°°;
          °°that was all°°;
6    →    •hhh jij komt hier vertellen,=
          •hhh you have here come to tell,=
7    →    =ik ga (0.4) nog een keertje zeggen wat
          jij gezegd heb,
          =I am going (0.4) to say again what you
          have said,
8         ↑ °en als ik ut n:ie g↑oed zeg°?
          ↑ °and if I don't say it correctly°?
9         (0.8)
10        ↓°dan mag je dat zeggen.°
          ↓°then you may say so.°
           just tell me then
11        (0.2)
12        dan zeg je <Anna>,
          then you say <Anna>,
13        (0.5)
14        da's nie goed.
          that's not good.
```

```
15        *(0.8)          *
     k:   *minimal nod1x*
16   P:   bijvoorbeeld dan zeg ik van;
          for example then I say like;
17        <wij saten #e:h#> in het pretparruk;
          <we were sitting #e:h#> in the amusement park;
18        *          (     2.          *%4)
     k:   *eyes on P,slight headshake
              gaze to right on table*
     p:                              %shakes head-->
19   P:   je schudt @nEE:@,      %
          you are shaking @nO:@,%
          -------------------->%
20        (0.4)
21   K:   °°ja,°°
          °°yes,°°
22   P:   @das nie goed hè,@
          @that's not good is it,@
23        *   (0.2)              *
     k:   *shakes head slightly*
24   K:   °°nee°°.
          °°no°°.
25   P:   ↓°nee°.
          ↓°no°.
26        want jij vertelde,
          because you told //me//,
27        wij zaten bij een (.) <speel#tuin#>;
          we were sitting near a (.) <play#ground#>;
28        * (1.*1)
     k:   *nods*
29   P:   en jij zegt Guus had een ↑plekje ↑gevonden?
          and you say Guus had found a little spot?
30        (1.2)
31        en toen >wilde die< met z'n <↑piemel>,
          and then >he wanted< with his willy,
32        bij jouw billen steken.
          stick near your bottom.
33        *(0.9)*
     k:   *nods *
34   P:   ja?
          yes?
```

```
35          (0.4)
36   P:     •pt•hh ↑hee,
            •pt•hh ↑hey,
37     →    wie is G-
            who is G-
38     →    •h
            •h
39     →    nee.
            no.
40     →    'kga't anders doen.
            I'm going to do it differently.
41          •hhhh
42          (0.3)
43          ↑ e::hm,
            ↑ e::hm,
44          (1.6)
45          ↓ ik ga je daar wat (.) dingetjes over vra:gen;
            ↓ I am going to ask you a few (.) little things
            about that;
46          (0.5)
47          want ik >benner< niet bij gew↑eest,
            because I wasn't there,
48          (0.6)
49          en ik wil <h↑eel graag> heel precies weten van
            and I really want to know very precisely like
50          wat er gebeurd is;
            what happened;
51          •hhh °ehm°;
            •hhh °ehm°;
52          ((kucht)) en >dan wil ik< afspraakjes met je
             maken;
            ((coughs)) and then I want to make minor
            agreements with you;
53          •pt•hh >en dan wil ik met je< (.) ↑afspreken,
            •pt•hh and then I want to (.) agree with you,
54          (0.5)
55          dat als je (0.5) ut ↑nie ↑weet?
            that if you (0.5) it ↑not ↑know?
            that if you (0.5) don't know?
56          (0.8)
```

```
57  P:    ↓ >dat je dat gewoon ↑zegt<,
          ↓ >that you just say so<,
58        *(0.6)*
    k:    *nods *
59  P:    >wan' je kan nie alles< weten;
          >cos you can't know everything;
60        *•pt•h* als ik jou bijvoorbeeld <vraag van>;
          *•pt•h* if I <ask> you for example like;
    k:    *nods  *
61        wat voor kleur auto hebbik;
          what is the color of my car;
62     →  *(3.9)                                    *
          *gaze on P; then right/up 'doing thinking'*
63  K:  → °blauw;°
          °blue;°
```

The excerpt includes an example of the correction-instruction and the *I don't know*-instruction respectively (see section 1.1.4). This activity of instructing and practicing is interesting for several reasons. First, the police officer makes the instructions key in this excerpt. She begins other activities twice, but puts these activities on hold in favor of instructing the child. This happens in line 6 for the first time. The police officer begins by repeating the child's story with "•hhh you have here come to tell,". This projects a continuation with "that X", but the police officer stops this repetition to insert the correction-instruction (lines 7-28). The police officer then repeats the child's brief story in lines 29-32 and the child's confirms it (line 33). The second time around, the police officer begins by eliciting details from the child's story by claiming the child's attention (line 36) and asking a question in line 37. She stops herself again, explicitly states that she is going to alter her course of action (lines 39-40), announces that she wants to make minor agreements i.e. the instructions (line 52) and starts giving the *I don't know*-instruction (lines 53-59). The police officer treats the instruction as something important and something to do *now* by beginning with something else but then changing trajectory in favor of the instruction.

Second, the institutional setting highlights the instructions in various ways. The Manual pays a substantial amount of attention to the instructions and advises to practice some of them (cf. Mulder and Vrij 1996). Police

officers themselves also mention collegial discussions about how and when to give these instructions to children. For example, during my stay at the police station, a police officer explained to me how he consciously tried to spread the instructions over the course of the interview. Also, in a follow-up meeting (see section (1.1.2), a police officer brought the recording of an interview in which she had not given all instructions, because the interview was different from other interviews. She only noticed this retrospectively. The trainer from the police academy acknowledged that "things sometimes happen" when interviews take unexpected turns, but emphasized the importance of giving the instructions anyway and stressed that the police officers are creative enough to find a moment to give the instructions.

Third, although there is no legal obligation to follow the guideline to instruct, instructing and practicing is consequential for the further procedure. Expert witnesses who assess the reliability of the report may also check whether police officers have instructed the child[31] and judges take this into consideration when assessing the evidence (Court Amsterdam 18 January 2012, case number 13/650843-11). The instructions are therefore not only required within the police internally, police officers can also be held accountable for giving the instructions within the criminal procedure.

Fourth and finally, instructing the child what to do in the interview and practicing that seems difficult for both the police officer and the child, given its abstract and meta-linguistic nature. Possible difficulties are also illustrated by excerpt 3.1. As said, the police officer observably works to insert the instruction. Moreover, she is faced with the child's apparent difficulty to produce a verbal correction in lines 18-28 and by answering "blue" (line 63) instead of "I don't know", the child displays not having understood the *I don't know*-instruction. Although such displays of not-understanding are uncommon, the example shows that police officers will

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[31] The expert witness that I interviewed also mentioned that she checks whether the instructions have been given when she writes a report to inform the court on the reliability of a particular police interview. However, she also argued that it is more important that police officers actually abide by these instructions in the interview-proper. According to her, things do not go wrong because police officers forget an instruction but because a police officer presses for an answer after an *I don't know*-response.

have to deal with difficulties displayed by the child. The difficulty of inserting instructions and practicing is supported by a count in the data set. In principle, all instructions should occur in each interview at least once and practicing the *I don't know-*, *I don't understand-,* and correction-instructions should occur in all interviews. However, I found that the *I don't know-*instruction was missing twice, the *I don't understand-*instruction once and the instruction about repeated questions was missing in five interviews. Although police officers provide the instructions in the vast majority of the interviews, the fact that some instructions are missing still shows that providing instructions is an accomplishment by the participants, and the police officer in particular. This is even clearer when we look at practicing. In about half of the interviews, practicing is lacking for the correction-instruction, and in about a quarter of the interviews, the *I don't know-*instruction is not practiced (see also Krähenbühl, Blades and Cherryman 2015).

Given both the importance attributed to instructing the child and the possible difficulties for both the participants, the question is raised how police officers and children embed these activities in the ongoing interaction and how such sequences develop. These questions will be addressed in sections 3.3-3.5. These sections go through the findings from the beginning to the end of an instruction. Section 3.3 looks at how participants move from other activities into the instruction activity. Section 3.4 zooms in on the practicing activity within the instruction sequence. Section 3.5 studies how participants move out of the instruction sequence. Section 3.6 draws the analyses together and discusses the answers to the questions mentioned above.

Before we turn to the analysis, section 3.1 will discuss some key concepts, and section 3.2 will provide a more elaborate account of what is said about the instructions and practicing in the Manual and identify related professional Stocks of Interactional Knowledge (SIKs; Peräkylä and Vehviläinen 2003).

3.1 Key concepts: overall structural organization, project, activity in interaction and discourse units

The introduction chapter mentions that police interviews with children should include several phases, including the free recall phase, delivering instructions, repeating the child's story and the questioning phase (see sections 1.1.3 and 1.1.4). An empirical counterpart of prescribed phases is the conversation analytic concept of overall structural organization. This concept was briefly introduced in section 1.3.1 and refers to structures that participants themselves make relevant in and through their talk (Heritage 2005: 122). Overall structural organization is therefore not about structures or phases that exist prior to the talk or structures that are prescribed, but about if and how participants work up phases as they proceed in their encounter. Excerpt 3.1 illustrates how interactants do that. The police officer does observable interactional work to insert the instructions and the child implicitly ratifies this by letting the police officer continue, which shows that it is an achievement of the participants rather than a pre-existing structure. This also means that boundaries of phases need to be negotiated between participants, tacitly or explicitly, which in turn implies that boundaries are not always clear (Heritage 1997: 168).

A common conceptualization of overall structural organization in conversation analysis is that of phases within an encounter (but for a somewhat different conceptualization, see Robinson 2013: 259-260; Schegloff 2007). The idea of overall structural organization acknowledges that encounters in talk are not merely composed of turns and sequences, but that there are larger chunks of talk that are somehow coherent. These chunks can be quite general, such as opening, topics in between and closing in ordinary talk (Heritage 2005: 120; Schegloff 1979; Schegloff and Sacks 1973). Some types of institutional talk, on the other hand, have a more specific "internal shape" (Heritage 2005: 120). For example, calls to emergency services typically include phases such as opening, a request for help, interrogative series, response (decision on the request) and closing in emergency service calls (Zimmerman 1992). The several phases can often be analyzed as being dedicated to particular institutional tasks (Heritage 1997: 166-168) that show what it is that the participants attempt to achieve.

Related to the concept of overall structural organization are the concepts of project (Robinson 2003) and activity (Heritage and Sorjonen 1994; Robinson 2003). The concept of "project" as Robinson (2003) proposes relates to the overall goal of the talk that can be identified when looking at the data. For example, the goal in doctor-patient encounters about a new medical problem is treatment (Robinson 2003). In order to complete this project, participants develop several activities or phases throughout the encounter (Robinson 2003: 1) problem presentation and establishing the reason for the visit, 2) collecting more information, 3) delivering diagnoses and 4) treatment recommendation (Robinson 2003). Elsewhere, Robinson notes that the concept of activities is not clearly defined in conversation analysis (Robinson 2013: 259-260).[32] However, he goes on to note that there seems to be some consensus that activities "are achieved across more than one sequence of action" (2013: 259) and that they are somehow treated as coherent by participants (Heritage and Sorjonen 1994: 4). The relation between actions, sequences, activities and projects can therefore be visualized as follows (figure 3.1):

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[32] Robinson proposes that activities derive their coherence from an internal overall structural organization within the sequence and that activities thus exist by merit of that organization. He suggests that this is why a precise understanding of activity is lacking: the overall structural organization probably differs per activity (Robinson 2013: 260).

figure 3.1 action – sequence – activity – project
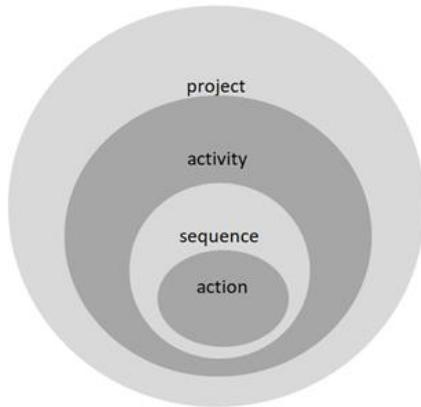
The concepts of action, sequence, activity and project are not only ordered in terms of each concept being a component of the next, they are also normatively related. Robinson (2003) shows that participants may hold each other accountable for finishing the project once the initial activity has been launched, and that each activity builds on, or is contingent on, the previous activity. In his data, the patient and physician treat the activity of problem presentation as being in the service of collecting more information, the collection of additional information in the service of the diagnosis, and the diagnoses in the service of the treatment recommendation (Robinson 2003). Importantly, the patient and physician hold each other accountable for progressing towards the treatment recommendation through the several phases. For instance, physicians regularly provide "online commentary" (Heritage and Stivers 1999) during the physical examination. The absence of online commentary can be heard as an indication of having found something seriously wrong and thus projecting a troublesome diagnosis. Patients sometimes hold the physician accountable for progressing towards the diagnosis by explicitly asking for a physician's evaluation (Robinson 2003: 40).

The police interviews with child witnesses are different from Robinson's acute care visits in that most patients in the medical encounter have some prior exposure to this interaction type, while the police interview is the first encounter of this type for most children. There is thus asymmetric access to at least some of the activities that need to be developed in order

to finish the project (Robinson 2013: 260). In this chapter, I look at how police officers introduce and end instructions and practicing so that the child understands clearly what they are doing.

Finally, a concept related to activity, is the concept of Discourse Unit (Houtkoop and Mazeland 1985). This concept refers to larger stretches of talk that are mainly produced by one participant. Usual turn-taking procedures (Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson 1974) must be temporarily suspended in order to produce such a unit. Participants achieve this by projecting that more talk is coming up. The beginning of the DU also usually incorporates clues of the type of unit that will follow, and therefore what is needed to produce a recognizable end. Such units can coincide with activities such as storytelling (Jefferson 1978) and explaining (Herijgers 2018). However, DUs are mostly produced by one interlocutor, whereas the concept of activities does not necessarily involve issues of turn-taking. In other words, DUs are usually activities, but activities are not necessarily DUs.

In this chapter, the term 'instruction' or 'instructing' refers to 'telling the child what to do' or the instruction-proper. The term 'practicing' refers to the exercises that aim to practice what has just been instructed, see excerpts 3.1 (lines 16-26, 59-60). To avoid confusion with the conversation analytical term 'practices of speaking' (Sidnell 2010a: 61)[33], I will use 'practicing' as a noun as well. 'Instruction sequence' refers to the whole sequence of instructing and practicing of a particular instruction together, also if practicing does not happen. The term 'instruction activity' indicates the ongoing activity, also if that goes beyond a particular instruction sequence. For example, if the *I don't know*-instruction has been given and practiced, and the police officer continues with the *I don't understand*-instruction, the instruction sequence has finished, but the instruction activity continues.

3.2 Instructions and practicing instructions in the Manual

This section provides a review of the normative framework and SIKs concerning the instructions that police officers are expected to give to

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[33] The term 'practices of speaking' concerns "relatively stable [design] features which recur across a wide range of utterance types and actions" (Sidnell 2010a: 61).

children. The Manual prescribes that police officers provide certain rules to the child to maximize the reliability of the testimony. The aim is to avoid compliance on the part of the child. That is, the instructions are meant to discount ideas children may have that they should please the police officer or that the police officer already knows the answers (Dekens and Van der Sleen 2013: 41, 98). One informant described the instructions as meant to create a relationship that is equal enough for the child to intervene when necessary.

The rules are referred to by police officers as "the instructions" and involve five issues that should be explained to child witnesses (Dekens and Van der Sleen 2013: 73; the order has been changed):

a. Permission to correct the police officer's mistakes in summaries and the permission to complete summaries.
b. Permission to say that the witness does not know the answer to a question.
c. Permission to ask for clarification when the police officer asks an unclear question or uses difficult words.
d. Explanation that the police officer was not 'there', and does not know the answers to the questions.
e. Explanation that when the police officer repeats a question, he [sic] does not do so because the witness has said something wrong, but because the police officer has not remembered or understood the answer. And that the witness should just give an answer again in that case.[34]

34

a Toestemming om door de verhoorder gemaakte fouten in samenvattingen te corrigeren en om de samenvatting aan te vullen.
b Toestemming om te mogen zeggen dat de getuige een antwoord niet weet.
c Toestemming te vragen om uitleg als de verhoorder een onduidelijke vraag stelt of moeilijke woorden gebruikt.
d Uitleg dat de verhoorder er niet bij is geweest en de antwoorden op de vraag niet weet.
e Uitleg dat als de verhoorder een vraag herhaalt, hij [sic] dat niet doet omdat de getuige het fout heeft gezegd, maar omdat de verhoorder het antwoord niet goed heeft onthouden of begrepen. En dat de getuige vervolgens nog een keer antwoord kan geven.

The terminology is somewhat confusing. While this set of five items is referred to as "instructions", the first three items are called "permission" and the last two are called "explanation". However, the fifth item also includes something for the child to do (i.e. an instruction), namely repeating the answer.[35] The issue of characterizing what they are doing is also problematic for police officers. Police informants told me that they debate about what is the best way to formulate these instructions: with "may" (*mag*: "you may correct me if I say something wrong") or "must" (*moet*: "you must correct me if I say something wrong"). They referred to the first version as friendlier and to the second version as clearer, thus indicating that both friendliness and clarity are important in these interviews.

The Manual is quite clear in that communicating these five issues is obligatory: "To stimulate acquiring reliable information, the police officer gives the witness five instructions"[36] (Dekens and Van der Sleen 2013: 73). Elsewhere in the Manual, the authors state that the police officer "must" (*moet*) tell the child to say something if it doesn't understand what the police officer says (2013: 38) and when the police officer says something incorrect (2013: 38-39). The guidebook also provides example phrases of how to explain this to children (2013: 74). In the analysis, I focus on instruction sequences of the correction, *I don't know* and *I don't understand*-instructions (i.e. items a, b and c from the list mentioned previously).

Dekens and Van der Sleen also give advice concerning the timing of the instructions: the instructions should be delivered before the police officer starts asking specific questions. Yet, they recommend to not provide all the instructions at once, to decrease the chance that the child will forget an instruction. They suggest that some of the instructions may be given during the introduction phase (2013: 73, 98), preferably when they can be related to something that actually happens in the interview (2013: 98). The authors provide the example "Do you remember my name? No, well that's no

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[35] One police informant argued that it would be better tell the child to give a true answer, rather than a repeated answer.
[36] *Om het verkrijgen van betrouwbare informatie te stimuleren, geeft de verhoorder de getuige een vijftal instructies.*

problem, because if you don't know, you can just tell me"[37] (2013: 98). The SIK that is put forward here is that it is preferable to spread the instructions throughout the interview, and if possible, to connect them to something else in the interaction.

Furthermore, the Manual suggests that police officers should refer to the instructions later in the interview, if relevant. For example, if a witness is very hesitant, the police officer could repeat that if the witness "really doesn't know the answer" s/he may say so (2013: 74). Police officers are also encouraged to praise the child when they demonstrate the instructions' application, for example by asking for an explanation (2013: 38-39, 98). Noticeably, the Manual pays ample attention to the issue of how and when to insert the instruction, although it does not give guidance as to how to 'get out' of the activity of instructing and practicing and move on to the interview-proper.

Practicing the instructions
The Manual elaborates practicing in relation to the correction-instruction, the *I don't understand*-instruction and *I don't know*-instruction (Dekens and Van der Sleen 2013: 37-39)[38]. In the actual interviews, these three are the instructions that are actually practiced. In case of the *I wasn't there*-instruction, it makes sense that no practice is mentioned. Neither the instruction nor the example phrase include a specific thing to do for the child. However, the repeated questions-instruction does include a 'to do' for the child. It is not clear why the instruction regarding repeated questions is not elaborated on as an instruction that can or should be practiced.

The Manual mentions two purposes of practicing. First, it enables the police officer to check whether the child has understood the instruction: "The police officer practices [the instructions] with examples so he [sic] can check

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[37] *Weet jij nog hoe ik heet? Nee, nou dat geeft niets hoor, want als je het niet weet dan mag je dat gewoon zeggen.*
[38] The Manual *mentions* practicing in relation to the instructions in general (Dekens and Van der Sleen 2013: 73), but the explanation only concerns the correction, *I don't know*- and *I don't understand*-instructions.

if the witness has understood the instruction"[39] (2013: 73). As such, practicing functions as a test: it is up to the child to demonstrate that s/he knows what to do. Police officers told me that when it turns out that the child does not understand the instruction, they balance the gain from giving another explanation or practicing again against the loss of time and energy. Sometimes they take a 'failed' test as a sign that they should be extra careful about asking suggestive questions. The second purpose of practicing is training: "When children are trained at the beginning of the interview to say 'I don't know' if they don't know the answer to a question, this leads to less incorrect information in their testimony"[40] (2013: 39). The idea is that responding "I don't know" – and probably by extension also "I don't understand" and "that's not correct" – at the beginning of the interview, teaches the children to use such responses practiced in the instruction during the interview-proper.

3.3 Embedding the instruction sequence: how police officers insert instructions in the interaction

Police officers need to find or create a slot to inject the instructions and their practicing. This section focuses on how police officers do this. Three main ways to insert the instruction emerged from the data: a) explicitly announcing the next phase of the interview (e.g. "I'm going to repeat what you have just told me" and connecting the instruction to that; see excerpt 3.1 line 7) (3.3.1), b) announcing the instructions themselves or giving pre-instructions (e.g. "I always have some minor agreements")(3.3.2), and c) connecting the instruction to the child's response (3.3.3).[41] The different ways of injecting the instruction are not mutually exclusive as is already illustrated by excerpt 3.1 (lines 45-52).

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[39] *De verhoorder oefent ze met voorbeelden zodat hij kan nagaan of de getuige de instructie begrepen heeft.*
[40] *Wanneer kinderen bij het begin van een verhoor getraind worden om 'ik weet het niet' te zeggen als zij het antwoord op de vraag niet weten, dan leidt dit tot minder fouten in hun verklaring.'*
[41] Only three instructions were not introduced at all.

3.3.1 Announcing the next phase of the interview

The first way of launching an instruction, announcing the next phase of the interview, is also the most common one. Excerpt 3.2 provides an example of this. It is taken from an interview with Wencke (8). Just prior to the excerpt, the police officer invites Wencke to continue her narrative with 'and then'. Wencke responds that the story is finished in line 1:

```
EXCERPT 3.2 I am going to repeat now what you have
said/correction-instruction
1   K:   toen was't *(.) klaar,*=
         then that was (.) all,*=
                     *smiles      *
2           [•hh
            [•hh
3   P:   =[@toen was 't klaar.
          [@then that was all.
4        okee@,
         okay@,
5        %(4.2)
         %writes--->
6        •pt•hh (0.2) °goe:d°,
         •pt•hh (0.2) °goo:d°,
7        (1.8)
8        •hhh% (0.5)%(0.5)      %
         •hhh% (0.5)%(0.5)      %
         --->%,,,,,,%cap on pen%
9        °nou je heb (0.9) al heel veel vert↑eld°,
         °well you have (0.9) already told a lot°,
10       %*(1.6)                *%
    p:   % looks at notes       %
    k:    *nods2x+smiles a bit*
11       (1)
12  P: → •pt•h nou ga'k herhalen;
         •pt•h now I'm going to repeat;
13       (1)
14     → >nog een keer seggen< wat jij gesegd heb,
         >say again< what you said,
```

```
15  P:    om te kijken of ik wel goed naar je geluisterd
          heb,
          to see if I've listened to you carefully,
16        (0.*9)
    k:        *nods 1x--->
17  P:    •HH*H (.) ennemh;
          •HH*H (.) andemh;
    k:    -->*
18        (0.8)
19  P:    as ik n#ou: °e:h#° ;
          if I l#ike °e:h#° ;
20        (0.9)
21        *°iets fout zeg°;      *
          *°say something wrong°;*
    k:    *starts smiling      *
```

The participants jointly establish that the story is over (lines 1-6). Both "okay" and "good" project transition to a new activity or sequence (lines 4 and 6). The police officer finishes writing in line 8 and accompanies that with a hearable inhale. The police officer also puts the cap back on the pen, displaying that the writing stage is now complete. This projects that she is going to switch from taking notes to talking. First, the police officer acknowledges the child's story thus far (line 9). Then she announces the next stage of the interview, namely repeating Wencke's story (lines 12-13). The announcement proposes a change of roles. During the free recall, it was the child who did most of the talking. The police officer's announcement communicates that it is the police officer's turn to talk and it is the child's role to listen. The police officer also provides an account for why she is going to repeat the child's story (line 15), namely, to check whether she (the police officer) has listened carefully. This, in turn, functions as a starting point for the correction-instruction (lines 19-23). The child aligns with the announcement by nodding (lines 16-17).

The police officer thus works stepwise from closing and acknowledging the previous phase (in this case the free recall phase), to announcing the next activity, to accounting for that next activity to instructing. In this case, the transition from activity to activity is also

conveyed with the police officer's embodied behavior (cf. Robinson and Stivers 2001).

Similarly, the *I don't know* and *I don't understand*-instructions can be preceded by an announcement that the police officer has (a lot of) questions, thus announcing the questioning phase (see excerpt 3.1 line 45). This functions as an introduction for stating that some questions may be incomprehensible, and the child should say "I don't understand". It also functions as a stepping stone towards saying that the police officer may sometimes ask things that the child does not know and that it is okay to answer "I don't know".

Announcing the next phase of the interview thus allows the police officer to work step-by-step towards the instruction and thus establish a relatively fluent and unproblematic transition. The instructions are designed as logically relevant to the announced next phase in the interview and therefore not as a separate activity within the overall project of the encounter. That is different in the next section.

3.3.2 Announcing instructions

Another way to move from a previous activity to instructing is illustrated by excerpt 3.3 from an interview with an 8-year-old girl named Vera. The police officer has just offered her the choice to talk first or to play first. After a long pause and hesitation markers, Vera responds in line 1.

EXCERPT 3.3 I always have some minor agreements
```
1   K:   eerst praten
         talking first
2   P:   •hh gaan we eerst prahten,
         •hh we're going to talk first,
3        okee;=
         okay;=
4   P:   =•hh nou al-(.)
         =•hh well al-(.)⁴²
```

---

[42] This self-interrupted utterance may have been going for "Well I always make minor agreements" (see line 8).

```
5    P:    da- 'tis een praatkamer ↑he,=
           tha- it is a talking room right,=
6    K:    =*(hm)   *
            *laughs*
7    P:    •hh en e:::hm: ;
           •hh and e:::hm: ;
8          >dan hebbik < Altijd  wat   afspraakjes;
           >then I < Always have some minor agreements;
           then I Always have some minor agreements;
9          die ik ga maken;=
           that I'm going to make;=
10         =met ie-%iedereen doe'k dat;        %
           =I do that with everyone
                       %shakes head+Lshoulder shrug%
11         (0.3)
12         •h bevoorbeeld;
           •h for example;
((P continues with I don't know-instruction))
```

The police officer announces that he is going to make "some minor agreements" (*wat afspraakjes*) with the child (lines 8-9). This announcement is similar to announcing the next phase of the activity as discussed in section 3.3.1, in the sense that it projects a new activity; it is different in that this new activity is instructing the child. The instructing-sequence is thus introduced as the main activity for now and as an independent activity, rather than something that logically follows from another activity such as summarizing. By announcing the instruction activity, the activity is presented explicitly and emphatically.

Announcing the making of agreements is also different in that this announcement *describes* and *characterizes* the instruction sequence in so many words as such, rather than directly *giving* the instruction, as happened in the previous section (cf. Sidnell 2017). This allows the police officer to portray the instructions in a certain way. The most common lexical choices to describe the instructions in the ongoing interviews are "making minor agreements" (*afspraakjes maken*; see excerpt 3.3) and "to agree"

(*afspreken*).[43] On one hand the lexical choice for agreements suggests that both participants should agree on this matter. Additionally, the diminutive "minor agreements" (*afspraakjes*) mitigates the instruction sequence by suggesting that the content of the upcoming agreements is not difficult and not overly important and by minimizing the disruptive effect on other activities in the interview.[44] On the other hand, the police officer frames the agreements with "I always have" (line 8), as something "I'm going to make" (line 9), which he does with "everyone" (line 10). This emphasizes the one-sided-ness of the agreements as well as their institutional and routinized nature. Moreover, the explicit description as "minor agreements" indexes the asymmetrical relationship between the police officer and the child. This point becomes clear if one imagines that the child would have said that she wanted to make agreements, which intuitively would have been very marked. Therefore, although the police officer does some work to diminish the inequality, the explicit description of the interactional arrangement establishes asymmetry.

The police officer also presents making the agreements as a routine. He accomplishes this by using two extreme case formulations: "always" (line 7) and "everyone" (line 9) (Pomerantz 1986). The extreme case formulations emphasize that he always does so in this particular setting (cf. Edwards 2000), invoke procedure in the interaction (Nielsen et al. 2012) and emphasize the institutional character of the setting and his role as institutional representative. Simultaneously, the police officer conveys that the child is not receiving a special treatment or something the child has given rise to.

---

[43] Naturally, there is variation. Police officers may explicitly refer to the instructions by saying that they are going to give instructions. Other variants include "to tell you something" (*iets aan je zeggen*), "talk you through some things" (*wat met jou doorpraten*), and "to give you some suggestions"/"to carefully consider something" (*wat aan je meegeven*).

[44] The diminutive can also be heard as avoiding potential negative connotations. A parent who says to a child "we are going to make an agreement" (*We gaan wat afspreken*) can be understood as correcting the child if the child has displayed potentially inappropriate behavior. The diminutive reduces that possible interpretation.

The use of the plural "agreements" is a cue that will help to produce a recognizable end of the instruction activity (cf. Houtkoop and Mazeland 1985: 600). It projects that there will be more instruction sequences. This makes it predictable for the child that making agreements will continue at least for two instruction sequences and that a listening role is expected from her for some time.

In sum, announcing instructions emphasizes the instructing activity as a distinct activity that thus postpones other activities. At the same time, it enables the police officer to manage expectations about what it may take to finish the activity of making agreements. It also works up an asymmetric relationship, although the police officers sometimes make lexical choices that diminish the asymmetrical nature, the difficulty of the task later in the interview and the weight of the activity of making agreements.

3.3.3 Connecting the instruction to something the child says

The third way of launching the instruction is by connecting it to something the child says. This can be a correction of the police officer, an *I don't know-*answer, or a display of not understanding. Excerpt 3.4 illustrates that. It is taken from the introduction phase of an interview with 10 or 11-year old Siri.

```
EXCERPT 3.4 it's good that you mention that
1    P:    •h en nou zie ik dat ik je leuke knuffel Olaf
           heb meegenomen?
           •h and now I see that you have brought a nice
           cuddly toy Olaf?
2          (0.6)
3          en hoe lang >h↑eb je die al<?
           and how long >have you h↑ad it<?
4          (0.8)
5    K:    e::h;
6          (2.5)
7          °°#weet ik niet#°°=
           °°#I don't know#°°=
8    P:    =weet je niet;
           =you don't know;
9          nou;
           well/so;
```

```
10  P:   dat is g↑oed dat je dat z↑e:↑:gt,
         it's g↑ood that you s↑a:y/mention that,
11       •HH want als e-wij straks met mekaar gaan
         ↓<praten>;
         •HH because when e-we are going to ↓<talk> with
         each other later on;
12       (0.5)
13       en je weet iets niet.
         and you don't know something.
14       (0.4)
15       ↓ dan zeg je dat gewoon tegen me.=
         ↓ then you just tell me that.=
```

The police officer initiates small talk with the child about the cuddly toy (lines 1-4), but this attempt leads to an *I don't know*-answer (line 7). The answer is substantially delayed (lines 4-6) and sounds hesitant due to the low volume. The child thus produces the *I don't know*-answer as a problematic answer.

The police officer does not address the difficulty by reassuring the child with something like "that's fine" (as also occurs in the data set). Instead, she repeats the answer (line 8) and thus emphasizes the content. The discourse marker "well" or "so" (*nou*; line 9) projects the transition to another activity (Mazeland 2012) and presents that new activity as somehow connected to the previous one. The police officer also evaluates the child's response with "it's good that you sa:y/mention that" (line 10). This evaluation may do reassuring work to the extent that it treats the child's *I don't know*-answer as something positive. However, the phrase is also a formulaic way of presenting upcoming talk as being remembered, that is: as something the police officer should say anyway. The *I don't know*-response by Siri thus is observably treated as an opportunity to insert something that was on the police officer's agenda.

Police officers sometimes exploit knowledge asymmetries to create a starting point for the instruction. This applies particularly to the *I don't know*-instruction. Excerpt 3.5 illustrates this. The excerpt is taken from the introduction phase of an interview with 8 or 9 year-old Alexander. The relatively high volume indicated by the capitals (lines 3, 4 and 12) follows Alexander's displayed distraction (lines 1-2) and ensures the floor for the police officer who then introduces the instruction (line 12).

EXCERPT 3.5 do you remember my name

```
1   K:   *hha tekene:hh;=
         *hey drawi:ng;=
2        *walks to the whiteboard--->
3   P:   %=↑HEE ALEXANDER?%
         %=↑HEY ALEXANDER?%
         %sits down        %
4        WEET JIJ MIJN**↑NAAM NOG,                    *
         DO YOU REMEMBER MY NAME,
    k:   ----------->**stands still at whiteboard,
                                    back to P*
5   K:   *e::h Cass::andr↑a?*
         *e::h Cass::andr↑a?*
         *picks up marker   *
6   P:   *n::↑ee?              *
         *n::↑o?               *
    k:   *takes cap from marker*
7        (.)
8   P:   *•hh CARMEN;
    k:   *starts writing drawing--->>
9        (.)
10  K:   oh ja;
         oh yes;
         of course;45
11       Car[men
12  P:      [↑ >ZUL'WE DAT GELIJK< %↑AFSPREKE::
                                    [Alexander,
            [↑ >SHALL WE AGREE ON THAT STRAIGHTAWAY
                                    [Alexander,
                            %gets up+walks to
                                    whiteboard
```

---

45 *oh ja* is 'doing remembering'. It treats the previously offered information as something that the speaker already knew, but had temporarily forgotten.

```
13  K:                                              [↑hm↑hm?
                                                    [↑hm↑hm?
14  P:    •HH ↑ dat as je mijn n↑AAM ↑NIET—
          •HH ↑ that if you don't know my n↑AME–
15        ↓ >of- as je mijn naam nie weet;=
          ↓ >or- if you don't know my name;=
16        %=moe je mij nou horen;<
          %=must you me now hear;<
          %listen to me;<
          %sits down on couch--->
17        •HH as% je nou NIET WEET,
          •HH if% you //nou// DON'T KNOW,
18        ----->%
19        (0.6)
20        E:::h ut antwoord op de vraa:g;
          E:::h the answer to the questio:n;
21        dat je dan gewoon mag zeggen,
          that you can just say so then,
```

The police officer verifies whether the child remembers the police officer's name in lines 1-2. The child attempts to provide an answer to this question (line 3), but presents it as uncertain with "eh" and try-marking (Sacks and Schegloff 1979). The police officer dismisses the answer with "no" (line 4) and corrects the child (line 5). The child treats this as something he now remembers and that he actually knew with "of course" (line 7). The police officer takes the child's display of not knowing as an opportunity to launch the *I don't know*-instruction sequence. She announces the upcoming instruction (line 12; see section 3.3.2) to change activities, from doing introductory talk to instructing. The adverb "straightaway" presents making an agreement on *I don't know*-answers as addressable at this particular moment in the interaction.

There are two reasons to assume that the question "do you remember my name?" works towards an opportunity to launch the *I don't know*-instruction. First, police officers told me that they choose this particular question because children regularly forget the police officer's

name. This gives them the opportunity to insert the *I don't know*-instruction sequence and to spread the instructions, as recommended. The question about the police officer's name also occurs in the Manual as an example of how to connect an instruction to what happens in the ongoing interaction (Dekens and Van der Sleen 2013: 98, see section 3.2). Second, verifying whether the child remembers the police officer's name opens up the option that the child does not know and asks the child to either display knowledge or admit that it does not know. If the police officer's aim was to make sure that the child knows her name, she could have repeated her name ('So my name is X and your name is Y'). Thus, verifying whether the child knows the police officer's name opens up the possibility for a *no*-answer that can be employed as a starting point for the *I don't know*-instruction.

This strategy creates interactional difficulty for the child. First, asking a question in general proposes that the addressee is able to provide this information (Heritage 2012: 6) and questions like 'do you know X' prefer a display of knowledge (Koole 2010). This makes 'I don't know' a response that is interactionally dispreferred. Indeed, in all examples where the police officer asks whether the child knows the police officer's name and the child responds with an *I don't know*-answer, they do so with markers of dispreferredness and delicacy, such as delay, laughter, and low volume.[46] Second, the question whether the child "remembers" the police officer's name highlights that the police officer and child were just introduced to each other. The question thus implies that the child has heard the police officer's name and therefore is accountable for knowing the name. This adds to the problematic nature of an *I don't know*-answer. Finally, the question clearly has a right answer that is known to the police officer, rendering it a test question in an environment that is not intended for testing the child's knowledge.

The problematic character becomes extra salient by the method used by one of the police officers in the data set (three interviews). In case the child does remember the police officer's name, the police officers asks

---

[46] One police officer formulates the question as "what is my name?" in some of the interviews. This presumes even stronger that the child knows the answer and makes an *I don't know*-response even more difficult.

whether the child knows the police officer's surname. This then leads to an *I don't know*-answer. This police officer evaluates the *I don't know*-response as "very good". This retrospectively treats *I don't know* as the right answer. The evaluation shows that he was asking for information that he knew the child could not give and thus retrospectively displays having pursued an *I don't know*-answer. This gives an impression of trying to catch the child on having forgotten something. The police officer has thus not tried to avoid an interactionally difficult situation for the child, but displays having actively constructed such a situation. Moreover, it is only communicated to the child in retrospect that s/he has given the targeted or 'right' response.

In conclusion, connecting instruction sequences to something that happens in ongoing talk is not as straightforward as the Manual suggests. First, it establishes an abrupt transition from doing something else to the very institutional activity of instructing. This contrast is especially salient when moving from small talk to instructing right at the beginning of the interview. Second, the trick of steering towards an *I don't know*-answer by asking for the police officer's name comes with an interactionally difficult situation for the child. This seems to be in conflict with what police officers attempt to achieve in interviews.

3.4 Practicing the instructions

Once police officers have launched the instruction sequence and delivered the instruction, they need to initiate practicing of the instruction with the child. Excerpt 3.6 from the interview with 6-year-old Lisa (see also excerpt 3.1) provides an example of practicing the *I don't understand*-instruction. The police officer instructs the child what to do in lines 1-7 and the child claims understanding of this instruction by nodding in line 8. The practicing begins in line 9.

EXCERPT 3.6 what do you say then?

```
1    P:    •hhhh e:n (.) als ik een m::oeilijke vr↑aag
            st↑el?
            •hhhh a:nd (.) if I pose a d::ifficult
            q↑uestion?
2            (1.3)
```

```
3    P:    ↓ dan mag je dat ook °zeggen°.
            ↓ then you may say that too.
4          (0.3)
5          zeg je Anna,
           you say Anna,
6          (0.3)
7          ik snapput nie;
           I don't understand;
8          (0.*9)   *
     k:        *nods*
9    P: →  •pt want assik jou vraa:g;
           •pt because if I ask you;
10      →  domicilie;
           domicile;
11         *(1.0)     *
     k:    *gaze at P*
12   P: →  *↑ wat              *zeg je ↑dan?
           *↑ what             *do you say ↑then?
     k:    *shifts gaze to camera left*
13         (0.7)
14   K: →  *<s:nap ut nie:   >;*
           *<don't understand>;*
           *shrugs slowly      *
```

The police officer makes an effort to engage the child in practicing (line 9-10). She flags in several ways that it is the child's turn to say something. First, she connects the upcoming practicing to the instruction-proper with "because" (line 9). This retrospectively constructs the instruction as leading up to the practicing and suggests that the instruction is about to be applied.[47] Second, the police officer flags the practicing as such with "if" (line 9) and describes the action ("pose a question") rather than asking straightaway. This constructs whatever comes next as something hypothetical and not as an actual question. Finally, she allows a substantial silence to develop (line 11)

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[47] Police officers also use additional indications of practicing such as the word "example", as well as explicit announcements like "we are going to practice that" (see excerpt 3.10).

after she has dropped the jargon word "domicile" (line 10).[48] All these resources produce and highlight the opportunity for the child to produce a display of understanding the instruction in line 11. Indeed, children repeatedly provide the solicited response (e.g. excerpt 3.1 lines 18-19, excerpt 3.10 lines 11-12), but Lisa remains silent.

This silence might be attributed to the ambiguity created by the design of the police officer's turn in lines 9 and 10. As mentioned above, the police officer's "because if I ask you domicile" can be understood as communicating that practicing is in order, and therefore as eliciting a display of understanding from the child (cf. Koshik 2002). At the same time, 'If I ask you X' can also be understood as the first part of a 'If I ask X, then you do Y' construction. In this type of construction, the *if*-clause projects a *then*-clause by the police officer. The projected *then*-clause includes an instruction ('then you should do Y'). If lines 9-10 are understood that way, the silence in line 11 does not 'belong' to Lisa but to the police officer. Examples elsewhere in this chapter show that the if-construction is also used to introduce practicing the correction-instruction (e.g. excerpt 3.1, lines 8-10) and the *I don't know*-instruction (e.g. excerpt 3.8, line 9-11). Also, in those cases, the *if*-clause does not always lead to an immediate display of understanding the instruction.

The police officer resolves the ambiguity in line 12 by explicitly asking Lisa for a response and thus allocating the turn to Lisa. This move does delicate work. It is designed as the continuation of the *if-then*-construction and thus retrospectively constructs the pause in line 11 as a turn-internal pause. This minimizes the child's accountability for not yet responding. At the same time, the police officer makes clear that she is searching for a particular answer while avoiding prompting a particular answer. The phrase "what do you say then" (line 12; see also excerpt 3.8 line 11) invokes the search for a particular response without actually giving clues in the question as to what the answer should be. Another variant that I found in the data set is "what can you say to me then". In both variants, the design of the turn allocation

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[48] In many other cases, the police officer asks a full grammatical question "what is your domicile". Only dropping the word as in this case makes it more obvious what the expected trouble source is.

avoids explicit indications of what the answer should be.[49] That is, the turn assignment does not 'help' the child in formulating an answer. This can be understood as maneuvering within institutional constraints: the police officer pursues the child's participation in practicing while avoiding the desire to steer towards a particular answer with the question design.

Lisa produces her answer (line 14) as hesitant. She delays her answer (line 13)[50] and produces her answer slower and stretched out (line 14). She thus treats the test question as somehow problematic, even though she produces the response that was probably targeted by the police officer. A problematic aspect is also observable in responses by children in other interviews. A regular response to the test question related to the *I don't understand*-instruction is "I don't know" and variations thereof. By doing so, children attribute the problem of this question to their own lack of knowledge rather than to the difficulty of the question. They thus avoid holding the police officer accountable for producing an incomprehensible

---

[49] In some cases (five instances), the police officer does provide clues as to what the problem is and what the answer should be. For example, in this case, from an interview with Felix (8). Felix's "yeah" in line 6 is ambiguous and can both be heard as a continuer and as a claim of understanding. The police officer (line 8) however pursues an explicit claim that Felix does not know the police officer's bunny's name. This treats Felix' "yeah" as insufficient.

```
1    P:   WANT AS IK VRAAG: ;
          BECAUSE IF I ASK ;
2         AAN JOU,=
          TO YOU,=
          YOU,=
3         =van;=
          =like;=
4         •hhh hoe heet mijn kon↑IJN,
          •hhh what is my b↑Untny's name,
5         (1.4)
6    K:   jah,
          yeah,
7         (0.5)
8    P: → %↑ weet jij hoe    %%mijn kon↑ijn% ↑hee:t?
          %↑ do you know      %%my b↑unny's % name?
          %moves head backward%%??headshake?%
9    K:   *°neeh°.      *
          *°noh°.       *
          *shakes head*
```

[50] If it was only the delay, this might have been be due to the fact that children have been found to be slower in their responses overall (Stivers, Sidnell and Bergen 2018).

question, even just after the instruction. This indicates that practicing the *I don't understand*-instruction is not as straightforward as it may seem. Hence, doing face threatening such as correcting the police officer or indicating that the police officer has not been sufficiently clear is not necessarily something that can be done straightaway, even when the child has just been instructed to do something. Therefore, it seems that children sometimes treat issues of face as at least as important as following the instructions.

It is also worth considering what practicing is conveying to the child. In excerpt 3.6, the child has claimed understanding of the instruction by nodding (line 8). The pursuit of a display of understanding communicates that Lisa's claim of understanding is not taken for granted and that the police officer needs further evidence.[51] Also, the police officer uses a jargon word that she apparently knows and is able to use and explain (see excerpt 3.10), whereas the child is likely not to know. This highlights the knowledge asymmetry between the police officer and child and suggests that there are right and wrong answers here, in other words, it is a test question. The testing nature is even more obvious when the *I don't know*-instruction is practiced. Police officers do this by asking the child something from their own knowledge domain, e.g. "what is the color of my car" (excerpt 3.1, line 61). The test questions that should serve to practice the *I don't understand*- and *I don't know*-instructions are therefore in contradiction with other SIKs, namely the SIK that the police interview is different from test questions by teachers in that the police officer does not know the answer, and the SIK that the instructions serve to create a relationship that is as equal as possible so that the child feels free to intervene when necessary.

The ways in which the instructions are practiced also raise questions about how well the practicing prepares for the interview-proper. The tacit assumption in the advice to practice is that practicing is at least similar enough to the actual interview to be useful (Stokoe 2013). However, practicing is constructed *as* practicing. As we have seen, police officers introduce practicing in this way to work towards a contribution from the

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[51] This is different when a practice item replaces the *then*-part ('then you should do Y') of the instruction-proper. This is for example the case in excerpt 3.8 in section 3.5.1.

child, using devices such as "because", "if, '"for example", "practicing" and pauses. Additionally, practicing usually directly follows the instruction and thus, the sequence makes available the targeted response. Moreover, an interactional context that might actually occur during the interview-proper (e.g. question-answer sequences) is lacking. The practicing lines are therefore isolated phrases working towards a particular response, rather than giving an impression of when the instructions become relevant in the interview-proper.

Another question about representativeness is raised by the content of the practicing. For instance, I have not come across words like "domicile" in the interview-proper. This probably has to do with police officers' orientation to recipient design (Sacks 1995II: 540) and because police officers are explicitly instructed not to use such jargon (Dekens and Van der Sleen 2013: 95). In other words, "domicile" does not appear to be a representative way of practicing situations of trouble of understanding. The test questions for the *I don't know*-instruction (e.g. "what is the color of my car?") concern the police officer's knowledge domain, whereas the reason for doing the interview is the child's knowledge domain, and therefore such questions seem unlikely to occur. One police officer orients to that unlikeliness saying to the child: "I'm not going to ask that, but what are the names of my cats". Children might also orient to the implausibility of the test question, as their responses often produced with laughter or a smiley voice. This laughter constructs children's responses as oriented to silliness of the question. Hence, the practicing questions sometimes achieve something similar to the ostensibly silly questions (Stokoe and Edwards 2008), in the sense that practicing both establishes an institutional task and affiliation, or at least lightens the mood.[52] Finally, the test phrases for the correction-instruction mention a piece of information that is clearly incorrect, either about the physical environment (e.g. "you are wearing a blue sweater" when the child is wearing an orange sweater), or a detail from the child's story (e.g. "we

---

[52] This is particularly the case in one interview where the child is very reluctant to talk about what happened. The police officer at some point temporarily abandons her attempts to elicit the story from the child and provides the instruction and practices the instruction. In these instruction sequences this particular child is suddenly participating much more actively.

were sitting eh in the <u>amusement</u> park", excerpt 3.1 lines 16-17, which incorrectness is available from the direct sequential environment). Moreover, police officers often highlight the wrong information using intonation, pausing before the piece of wrong information and by slowing their pace of speaking down. The police officers thus flag what the child should target when correcting the police officer. This too is unlikely to occur in the interview-proper. The current ways of practicing thus primarily focus on *saying* "I don't know", "I don't understand" or "that's not correct", rather than making clear when these responses may be actually appropriate in the interview-proper.

In sum, practicing instructions is a complex matter that presents police officers and children with interactional difficulties. Practicing an instruction after a claim of knowledge (such as "okay") treats the claim of knowledge as insufficient. Additionally, children often do not engage in the practicing straightaway by providing the answer. This may be explained by the *if*-clause that introduces the practicing item and that leaves it ambiguous as to whose turn it is. An additional explanation is that children suddenly find themselves in an unexpected testing situation in which they are pushed towards an *I don't know*-, *I don't understand*- or *that is incorrect*-response, that are interactionally problematic. In turn, these difficulties present the police officer with the question of how to deal with the child's lack of immediate uptake within the constraints of the institution; excerpt 3.6 shows how participants skillfully overcome these challenges. Finally, the ways of practicing are not in line with the SIKs for various reasons, including doubtful representativeness of the practice items used.

3.5 Moving out of the instruction sequence

It was noted in section 3.2 that the Manual does not provide advice on how to close the instruction sequence. Yet, participants in interaction need to do interactional work to recognizably end discourse units (Houtkoop and Mazeland 1985), 'sections' in talk (Heritage 1997: 168). Moreover, participants need to make such an ending interactionally recognizable. Therefore, this is a place where participants can agree on the interpretation of the instruction that has just been given. In this section, three main ways

of ending the instruction sequence are discussed: endings that emphasize the instruction or its aim (3.5.1), endings that acknowledge the child's claim of understanding (3.5.2) and endings that wander away from the instruction activity (3.5.3).

3.5.1 Instruction sequence closings that emphasize the instruction or its aim

The police officers in my data regularly use a return to the beginning at the end of instruction sequences. This practice is used to recognizably close discourse units (Houtkoop and Mazeland 1985). In the instruction sequences in my data, a return to the beginning usually means repeating the instruction that was issued at the beginning of the sequence. Another, less common, way to recognizably mark the end of an instruction sequence is to refer to the aim of the instruction. For the sake of brevity, I discuss excerpt 3.7 which includes both devices. This should not be taken as a suggestion that both devices co-occur regularly: returning to the instruction happens far more often than making the goal explicit. The excerpt is taken from an interview with Merel (10).

```
EXCERPT 3.7 @THEn we do understand each other@;
1    P: →  •hhh en als je iets nou niet snA:pt,
             •hhh and if you don't understA:nd something,
2    P:    (0.5)
3       →  als ik een vraa:g aan °je stel°;=
             if I ask you a questio:n,=
4       →  =en je sn↑apt 'm niet,
             =and you don't underst↑and //it//,
5          (0.5)
6       →  ↓ °dan mag #je dat gewoon# ook tegen me
             zeggen°.
             ↓ °then may #you that just# also to me say°.
             ↓ °just say so then°.
7    K:    ja;
             yes;
((20 lines omitted in which the police officer and
child practice the instruction with the domicile-
excercise))
```

```
28  P:   dan >zeggik gewoon<,
         then >I just say<.
29       Merel;
         Merel;
30       in welke plaats woon jij;
         in which town do you live;
31  K:   °Beverwijk.°[(h)
         °Beverwijk.°[(h)
32  P: →             [#nou#.
                     [#well#.
33     → °#dan-#°
         °#then-#°
34     → @DAn begrijpen we mekaar we:l@;
         @THEn we do understand each other@;
35     → ↑dus ↓mag je gewoon °zeggen°.
         ↑so ↓may you just °say°.
         ↑so just say so.
36       (0.2)
37       •hhh NOU: (.) Merel;
         •hhh WELL: (.) Merel;
38       (0.9)
39       °wat kom jij mij vertellen?°
    P:   °what come you me tell?°
         °what have you come to tell me?°
```

From line 32, the police officer produces an uptake of Merel's response. The police officer prefaces her uptake with "well", projecting the next step in the instruction sequence (Mazeland 2012). Next, she makes the point that Merel and the police officer do understand each other now (line 34), that is: after Merel has indicated trouble with the question "what is your domicile" (data not shown) and after adjusting the question (lines 29-30). This emphasizes that it is useful to follow the instruction to indicate trouble of understanding, and it can be heard as an encouragement to apply the instructions. Line 35 further emphasizes the importance of the instruction. The police officer re-issues a version of the instruction that was given in lines 1-6 and returns to the beginning. She begins the re-issued instruction with "so" and thus constructs this instruction as a conclusion following from the usefulness that was asserted in line 34. After a pause (line 36), the police officer starts a new activity, marked with another "well" (*nou*) that projects a next step

(Mazeland 2012) and with an attention-grabbing device by addressing the child by her name (line 37). This rounds off the instruction sequence. Restating the instruction-proper (line 35) and pointing out its usefulness (line 34) emphasizes the nature and point of the activity, namely instructing the child. Returning to the instruction therefore creates both a clear closing of the instruction sequence and a clear message.

Police officers also sometimes use a deontic format like 'you can/may/should/have to/must do X' for the first time at the end of the instruction sequence (eight instruction sequences)(cf. Herijgers 2018). This happens, for instance, when the police officer does not provide an explicit instruction at the beginning of the instruction sequence, but instead uses the practicing items to initiate a joint construction of the instruction. Excerpt 3.8 from an interview with 6 year-old Ben illustrates this.

```
EXCERPT 3.8 So if I ask you
1   P:    ↑Als ik jou nou een <v:r↑:aag stel>,
          ↑If I ask you a q↑uestio:n,
2         (.)
3   K:    °hjha°;
          °hyes°;
4         (1)
5   P:    <en je:> (0.2) °e:hm° weet 't antw#oord daar
          niet op hè#;
          <and you:> (0.2) °e:hm° don't know the ans#wer
          to that right#;
6   K:    (°#nee: eh/ehj:a#°)
          (°#no: eh/ehy:hes#°)
7   P:    •H want als ik aan jou vr↑a↓a:g,
          •H because if I a:sk you,
8         (0.7)
9         <#wa:t e::h↓weh-# (0.4) hoe heet mijn hond.
          <#wha:t e::↓whi-53# (0.4) what is my dog's name.
10        (1.8)
11        ↑ wat ↑zeg ↑je ↑dan?
          ↑ what do you ↑say ↑then?
```

---

53 Based on other police interviews in my data set, my guess is that *weh* was going to be *welk* in a phrase like *welk huisdier heb ik* ("which kind of pet do I have"). Therefore, I translated *weh* as "whi".

```
12          (0.7)
13  K:      ja ik weedik nie,
            yeah I don't know.
14  P:      ↑↑ nee?
            ↑↑ no?
15          ↓ dat kan je ook niet we:ten,=
            ↓ indeed you cannot kno:w that,=
16      →   =↑dus ↓dat ↓mag je gew↑OOn ↑zeggen,
            =↑so ↓that may you j↑Ust ↑say,
            =↑so j↑Ust ↑tell me ↓that,
17          (0.3)
18      →   ↓dat weet ik niet.=
            ↓I don't know that.=
19      →   =•h dus °als ik een °vraag aan je °stel°;=
            =•h so °if I ask you a question;=
20      →   =•h en je weet (0.2) ut <antwoord> niet?
            =•h and you don't know (0.2) the <answer>?
21      →   ↓ mag je dat gewoon °aan mij stellen°.⁵⁴
            ↓ may you that just °to me ask/tell°.
            ↓ just ask/tell me that.
22  P:      •HHH ↑Als ik jou nou een <f:r:aag stel>,
            •HHH ↑If I ask you //nou// a <q:uestio:n ask>,
            •HHH ↑If I ask you a question,
```

The police officer starts with an *if*-clause in two components (lines 1 and 5) and the child gives a 'go ahead' in lines 3 and 6. This projects an instruction like "(you can) just say so". However, the police officer abandons the if-then construction. Instead, she asks a typical question to test the *I don't know*-instruction for her dog's name, thus asking for information known to the police officer (lines 7-15). The child provides the targeted *I don't know*-answer in line 12. This answer is prefaced by "yeah" which treats the question as not asking a question, but as making a point.[55]

---

[54] The use of the verb *stellen* ("to claim/ask") is strange here. *Vertellen* ("to tell") would have been a more obvious lexical choice.

[55] In this construction, the police officer delays the instruction-proper ('you should do Y') and exploits the practice item to construct the instruction in collaboration with the child. Consequently, the sequence lacks the instruction-claim of understanding sequence and, hence, the message that the child's claim of understanding is insufficient.

The police officer confirms the child's answer (line 15) with an upgrade: not only does the child not know the answer, the child cannot know it. Some instruction sequences end here (data not shown), but in excerpt 3.8 the police officer returns to the instruction (lines 16-18). The police officer presents the instruction as a conclusion drawn from the previous exchange about the dog's name. This formulation is closely connected with the previous exercise and can be rephrased as "if you cannot know the answer, you should answer I don't know". It is doubtful whether this is the message the police want to get across to children. It would make more sense to instruct them that they should tell the police officer *whenever* they do not know an answer. The police officer in excerpt 3.8 resolves this issue by producing another formulation (lines 19-21), signaled by "so" (line 19). This formulation is designed as a more general instruction by "if I ask you a question" (line 19), rather than making it follow directly from the exchange about the police officer's dog. The formulation is thus stating explicitly the gist of the instruction and emphasizing that to the child. It is also marked as a sequence final utterance by the markedly dropping intonation (line 21). In line 22, the police officers starts a new instruction sequence that is marked as such with a hearable inhale and strongly rising intonation.

Although emphasizing the instruction is a clear way of closing the instruction sequence, this does not always mean that the child claims or displays understanding of or alignment with the instruction. Sometimes (eight instruction sequences) children display being more focused on something else such as props like the police officer's notes or the police officers pets as mentioned in the I don't know test question. However, these uptakes do align with the sequence closing in that they treat the instruction sequence as having come to a close.

3.5.2 Instruction sequence closings that acknowledge the child's claims of understanding

The excerpts in the previous section show how police officers achieve the closing of the instruction sequence by explicitly highlighting what the child should do. In the next example, the police officer marks the end of the sequence with the marker "yes?". This is the frequently occurring marker, but "good?", "okay?" and "right?" also occur. Such markers have a distinctly

rising intonation, or are produced at a higher volume than the directly preceding speech. They can be coupled with a return to the beginning of the sequence (see 3.5.1) as well as formulations or summaries, but they also occur on their own. Excerpt 3.9 illustrates the latter case. It is taken from the *I don't understand*-instruction sequence in the introduction phase of an interview with Delphine (9).

EXCERPT 3.9 ↑↑**yES:?**

```
1   P:    want <↑soms>;
          because <↑sometimes>;
2         •hh #eh# stel ik misschien ook wel es een
          #vraa:g#;
          •hh #eh# I maybe also ask a #questio:n#;
3         dat je denkt van;
          that makes you think like;
4         waar <heef' ze'n'ut ove[r>,
          what <is she talking about>.
5   K:                            [(↑hh)
6         (0.4)
7   P:    •hh (0.6) zeg dat-dat #gew↓oon#.
          •hh (0.6) just say that-that.
((7 lines omitted in which P and K practice the
instruction with 'what is your domicile'))
15        •HH DAN VRAAG IK,
          •HH THEN I ASK,
16        (0.6)
17        waar woon je;
          where do you live;
18        (0.8)
19        °want dat's eigenlijk precies utz#elfde#.°
          °because that's actually exactly the #same#.°
20        (0.2)
21        [°doe'k * um gewoon              an*ders;°
          [°I just do it             dif*ferently;°
22  K:    [(hh)   *hides face behind folded hands*
23        •hh (jè: ) ,
          •hh (jè: ),
24  P: →  ↑↑jA: ?
          ↑↑yES: ?
25        (.)
```

```
26  P:    •hhh
          •hhh
27        (.)
28        hee >want--<
          hey >because--<
29        (1.3)
30        ik heb net gezegd;
          I've just said;
31        ik ben Jennifer,
          I'm Jennifer,
```

The police officer provides an alternative question for the test question "what is your domicile" (data not shown): "where do you live" (line 17) and accounts for that alternative question (line 19). The child responds to this with a snort and hiding her face behind her hands (line 22) and treats something in the sequence as laughable. In overlap, the police officer announces the solution when the child indicates problems of understanding: "do it differently" (line 21).

Delphine claims understanding in line 23[56], followed by the police officer's "↑↑yES:?" (line 24). Uptakes like the police officer's "↑↑yES:?" (line 24) (that is: "checks of understanding" after a claim of understanding) have been studied by Bakker (2017).[57] She shows that one of the functions of these checks of understanding is to acknowledge the claimed understanding. In her data, checks of understanding accomplish acknowledgement when the check of understanding is followed straightaway by something else by the same speaker, treating the previous claim of understanding as sufficient to continue.

Excerpt 3.14 is slightly different from Bakker's data. After the police officer's "↑↑yES:?" (line 24) Delphine has the opportunity to confirm or disconfirm understanding (lines 25 and 27). However, she does not provide

---

[56] The transcription *jè* looks like a hybrid between *ja* ("yes") and *nee* ("no"), but when watching the video, it comes across as a clear confirmation. Additionally, the participants do not orient to it as a 'no' or a hesitation.

[57] In the instruction sequences that are the topic of this chapter, claims of understanding can also be heard as a token of understanding what *has to be done* rather than a claim of mere understanding. They can function as a token of commitment.

an observable uptake. She treats "↑↑yES:?" as not needing a second pair part and orients to the police officer's turn as an acknowledgement. She passes on the opportunity to add something on the topic (cf. Schegloff and Sacks 1973). This allows the police officer to proceed with an inhale (line 26), and "hey" (line 28), which marks that she moves on to something else and thereby closes the *I don't understand*-instruction sequence. In other cases, children respond to the check of understanding with a minimal claim of understanding, such as nodding, "hmhm", "yes", etc. that provide a go-ahead for closing the instruction sequence. Sometimes the police officer produces a final comment or reassurance (e.g. "I really don't mind if you do that"). The checks of understanding thus acknowledge the child's claims and displays of understanding and work towards closing the instruction sequence, but are not necessarily the final turn of a sequence.

3.5.3 Instruction sequence endings that wander away

Instruction sequences sometimes develop into a different activity (15 instruction sequences). This happens most often in the *I don't understand*-instruction sequence (13 instruction sequences) and much less so in the *I don't know*-instruction sequence (two instruction sequences) and the correction-instruction sequence (zero instruction sequences). Usually, it is the police officer who initiates moving away from the instructing activity.

The transition from instruction-sequence to something else typically happens after the practicing question for the *I don't understand*-instruction "what is your domicile" and variations thereof. There are two main ways in which the instruction activity changes: into explaining what domicile means and collecting or verifying address information. The two can also occur in the same instruction sequence. Excerpt 3.10 from an interview with Cornelis (6) is an example of that.

EXCERPT 3.10 asking for an address and explaining domicile
```
1   P:    maar als ik nou iets aan jou vraag Cornelis;=
          but if I ask you something Cornelis;=
2         =en dat is een beetje m↑oeil↑ijk,
          =and that is a bit d↑ifficult,
```

```
3    P:    of dat snap jij niet,
           or you don't understand it,
4          (1.7)
5          ↓ dan mag jij dat ook tegen mij zeggen.
           ↓ then you may also say that to me.
6          (0.6)
7          want da' gaan we ↑oefenen?
           because we're going to ↑practice that?
8          (0.7)
9          want als IK TEGEN JOU ↑ZEG,
           because if I SAY TO YOU,
10         WAT IS JOU' DOMICILIE,
           WHAT IS YOUR DOMICLE,
11         (0.9)
12   K:    (h)m 'k weet (Al-) 'k wee nie wat een
           domicilie.
           (h)m I don't (Al-) I do not know what a
           domicile.⁵⁸
13   P:    ↓ nou.
           ↓ well/so.
14         dan ga je dat gewoon tegen mij zeggen.
           then you're just going to say that to me.
15         ↓ dat is niks anders dan ↓ waar woon jij.
           ↓ that is nothing else than ↓where do you
          live.
16         (0.6)
17    →    ↑ en dat had ik nog nie aan jou gevraagd,
           ↑ and I had not yet asked you that,
18         (0.5)
19    →    °want waar woon jij°;
           °because where do you live°;
20   K: →  de Kortelaan nummer vie:r,
           the Kortelaan number fou:r,
21    →    in Malden,=
           in Malden,=
22   P:    =↑okeeh,
           =↑okay,
23         (1.0)
```

---

⁵⁸ This utterance lacks a verb in Dutch as well.

```
24  P: → dus als OOIT >IEMAND TEGEN JE ZEGT<,
        so if SOMEONE EVER SAYS TO YOU,
25     → WAAR IS JE DOOI-DOMICILIE?
        WHERE IS YOUR DOO-DOMICILE?
26       (0.4)
27     → dan betekent dat niks anders;
        then that means nothing else;
28     → als dat ze aan jou vragen waar jij woont.
        than that they are asking where you live.
29       (0.6)
30  K:   en ik moet ook een keer (0.2) >bij de
         politiebureau<;
         and I also had one time (0.2) >at the
         police station<;
```

The police officer instructs Cornelis (lines 1-5) followed by practicing in lines 7-13. She rounds off by repeating the instruction (line 14) and explaining the word domicile (line 15). In line 17, the police officer notices that she "had not yet asked that". This noticing is both presented as a continuation of what they were doing and establishes a change of activities. The continuation is produced as such with the *and*-preface and "that" which refers to "where do you live". At the same time, the silence (line 16), the rising intonation and the use of the verb "ask" (line 17) construct a transition to questioning.

The utterance in line 17 presents the child's address as a question that still needs answering. The child, however, does not respond (line 18), and the police officer explicitly asks for an address (line 19) which the child provides this time (lines 20-21). The police officer thus changes from the instructing activity to collecting information about the child's address. Crucially, the police officer does not take up the child's answer with something like "see, now you do understand me", like we saw in excerpt 3.7 and which would have emphasized the importance of indicating trouble. Instead, the address-request sequence is produced as being about gathering information about the child's address, thus wandering away from the instruction activity.

The formulation by the police officer in lines 24-28 both returns to the instruction sequence and further transforms it, digressing even further from the instruction. The *so*-preface (line 24) suggests that the police officer is going to gloss the point of the sequence and thus treats the previous

exchange (including asking the address) as part of the sequence. The formulation, however, surprisingly does not highlight the instruction itself, but the meaning of "domicile". She thus treats learning the meaning of this word as the goal of this instruction sequence. This retrospectively turns the instruction sequence into teaching, which de-emphasizes the instruction activity and highlights the knowledge asymmetry (in the sense that the police officer has taught the child this word). This way of ending the instruction sequence does not support the institutional task at hand.

Children do no not tend to treat it as wandering away. Cornelis provides his address and thus aligns with the police officer's project of collecting information (in lines 20-21). In line 30, he volunteers a story about going to a police station that is constructed as a continuation of a previous story with "and". It does not push back on the police officers moves as being off task, but it is topically unrelated to the instruction. This is hearable as a display that the child was not listening to the instructions, but at least it is showing little engagement.

3.6 Conclusion and discussion

This chapter reported an analysis of three instructions that are meant to enhance the reliability of children's testimonies. Given that police officers themselves sometimes find it difficult to insert the instructions and, given the finding that practicing was lacking relatively often, the question was how these instructions and practicing are embedded in the interaction.

The chapter identified three important ways in which police officers insert the instruction activity: a) announcing the next phase of the interview and connecting the instruction to that phase, b) announcing the instruction and c) connecting the instruction to something that the child says. The first one allows the police officer to work in a stepwise fashion towards the instruction and to embed it in the transition to another activity. The second variant presents instruction as an activity in its own right and it makes it thus more obvious that other activities are postponed by the instruction. This way of inserting the instruction also highlights the asymmetrical nature of the interaction. Connecting the instruction to something that the child says (the third way) can establish an abrupt transition from other activities to a very

institutional activity. This sometimes happens at the expense of reassuring the child and may come as unexpected to the child. Moreover, the recommended practice of asking for the police officer's name leads to a difficult situation for the child because it holds the child accountable for knowing the police officer's name. This applies even stronger because the police officer and child have just been introduced to each other. Only in retrospect does the police officer reveal that that *I don't know* was a targeted response here. Conversation analytical research cannot make claims on how the child feels about such moves. However, it is observable that children indeed construct their *I don't know*-answers to this question as dispreferred and thus display interactional difficulty.

The chapter also examined how the instructions are practiced. The analysis showed that practicing comes with interactional difficulties for both the police officer and the child. The police officer needs to engage the child in practicing while avoiding prompting the answer. For children, it is often ambiguous if it is their turn to say something. Additionally, practicing conveys to the child that merely claiming understanding is not sufficient and it highlights the knowledge asymmetry between police officer and child. Furthermore, the ways of practicing that police officers use, are clearly test questions in an environment that is supposed not to be a testing environment. Given this complex situation, it is remarkable how well participants deal with the practicing activity.

The analysis also shows that practicing is clearly produced as practicing and testing in several ways. It is therefore very unlikely that the ways of practicing are similar to what occurs in the interview-proper. This draws attention to a tacit assumption in the SIK, namely that practicing is similar enough to what might happen during the interview-proper. It is questionable whether this assumption is valid based on the findings in this chapter. This is in line with the findings from Stokoe (2013) who compared actual police interviews with suspects with role played training interviews for police officers. She found that there are clear differences between the actual interviews and the training interviews, even in the strongly regulated beginning of the interview. The analysis in this chapter indicates that there are probably also differences between the interview-proper and practicing

that is embedded in that same interview. However, the current study has not compared the practicing with occurrences of *I don't know*-answers, trouble of understanding and correction in other phases of the interview. Further research is necessary to explore this.

It was noted in the introduction of this chapter that practicing is lacking relatively often, even though police officers find both instructing and practicing important. One possible explanation is that practicing communicates doubt whether the child has understood what was just explained, especially when the child already claimed understanding. In essence, requiring a display of understanding can be redundant and displays a lack of confidence in the child's understanding. This may sometimes weigh heavier than the SIK that instructions should be practiced. Yet, it does not explain why the correction-instruction is lacking relatively often. Further research is necessary here.

Finally, the chapter discussed three important ways in which the instruction sequences end. One way is that police officers highlight the instruction or its aim; the second is to acknowledge the child's claimed or displayed understanding of the instruction. The difference between these first two methods of closing the instruction sequence is that the return to the beginning device (excerpt 3.7) that features in the first way of closing the sequence explicitly repeats what the child is supposed to do. It thus hammers home the message and is very clear, but also might come across as redundant and putting little trust in the child's comprehension. This becomes especially clear when compared with the second way of closing the instruction sequence that acknowledges the child's claims and displays of understanding. The repetition of the instruction also takes a more emphatic stance of being entitled to tell the child what to do and thus prioritizes the institutional task of instructing the child (cf. Antaki and Kent 2012). The acknowledgement, on the other hand, orients to the child as an understanding interlocutor. The first two ways of closing the instruction sequence thus show a dilemma between being clear about the instruction and creating a somewhat more equal relationship with the child.

Perhaps more surprising than the first two ways of closing the instruction sequence is the third way of ending the instruction sequence by

wandering away from the instruction task and activity. Police officers move from instructing and practicing the instruction to collecting information about the child's address or emphasizing that children have now learnt a difficult word. Even though this is potentially strange to the child, children tend to align with this wandering away and do not observably treat the police officer's change of activities as being off-task. The children's alignment is possibly a place where it shows that there is a knowledge asymmetry as to what needs to be accomplished in the police interview and therefore what can be regarded as being off-task (cf. Ruusuvuori 2005). A possible reason why police officers ask for the child's address is that police officers attempt to train the child to respond to open questions and to do most of the talking. They thus may be trying to combine two institutional tasks.

This chapter has shown how police officers and children deal with three of the instructions and practicing instructions. The next chapter explores unsolicited accounts by children and how police officers respond.

4 Children's unsolicited accounts and the illusion of neutral uptakes

This chapter focuses on how children report their own role regarding the crime. This happens for example in the following excerpt, taken from an interview with 6-year-old Ben who was allegedly abused by his teenage cousin Jonah. The police officer invites Ben to produce a narrative (lines 1-2) which follows in lines 4-31. The police officer encourages the boy to continue ("hm ↑hm:?", line 17).

EXCERPT 4.1 I couldn't do anything else

```
1    P:    wa(n)t Be:n;
           because Be:n;
2          w↑↑at kom jij mij vert↑ellen?
           wh↑↑at is it that you have come to t↑ell me?
3          (0.6)
4    K:    °nou;
           °well;
5          ik k°om vertel'•h,
           I've c°ome to tell •h,
6          da:t- (0.3) dat (.) <mij eh-
           tha:t- (0.3) that (.)< me eh-
7          nou Jonah •h hij heb verzonne dat we da-,
           well Jonah •h he has this idea that we tha-,
8          dan wij: gingen wij •h wat verzinnen,
           then we: we started to •h make something up,
9          ((swallows))
10         °en- •h en-°t:oen (ging xx)—
           °and- •h and-°th:en (went xx)-
11         >en toen-- en toen< we boven-
           >and then-- and then< we upstairs-
12         daar (zat/had) Jonah--,
           there (was sitting/had) Jonah--,
           Jonah was sitting there--/Jonah had--,
13    →    toen had Jonah wat v-verzonnen,
           Jonah had m-made up an idea then,
14         en toen eh •hh—
           and then eh •hh—
```

```
15  K:    en toen eh gi--=
            and then eh we--=
16        =en toen •h zullen we piemel tegen piemel
            doe:n;
            =and then •h shall we do: willy to willy;
17  P:    hm ↑hm:?=
            hm ↑hm:?=
18  K:    =ja en toen •hh;
            =yeah and then •hh;
19     →  ja toen m↑oede ik m↑aar,=
            yeah then I just h↑ad⁵⁹ to,=
20     →  •hh ik kon niks anders doen,
            •hh I couldn't do anything else,
21     →  wan- (.) •h ik kon niet weglopen,
            cos- (.)•h I could not walk away.
22     →  me deur zat-- •h de deur (zelf/zat) was open,
            my door was-- •h the door (itself/was) was
            open,
23     →  maa' ↑ja:,=
            but ↑yeah:,=
24     →  =ik dach' >dan moet ik ut< maar •hh maar
            doe::n,
            =I thought >then I just •hh just ha::ve<
            to do:: it,
25        (0.6)
26     →  #maar# (1.4) i-(.)ik-- ((schraapt keel))
            #but # (1.4) I-(.)I-- ((clears throat))
27     →  en- (0.4) toen eh dee ik ut ↑OOk een ke↑e::r,
            and- (0.4) then eh I did it ↑o::nce ↑tOO,
28        (0.6)
29        °zei°--
            then °said°--
30     →  en toen had ik ook meegedaan eigenlijk,
            and then I also joined in actually,
31        •hh dus: ;
            •hh so: ;
```

In this fragment, we observe that the child presents his own contribution to the alleged offence in different ways. He first attributes the initiative to his

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⁵⁹ Ben uses an incorrect past tense.

cousin in line 13, implicitly downplaying his own role. He then provides an account for joining in the activity proposed by his cousin (lines 19-30): he presents himself as having had no other option with "yeah then I just h↑ad to,= •hh I couldn't do anything else,". He also initiates an account for this by saying that he couldn't walk away (line 22), but then gets stuck in why he couldn't walk away through an open door (line 23). Nevertheless, he reports that his conclusion was: ">then I just •hh just ha::ve< to do:: it," (line 24), using direct reported speech to provide evidence of his conviction that he had no other option (Holt 1996).

This way of reporting presents his role as excusable because it was forced by his cousin rather than a voluntary choice, which is supported by his voice quality that sounds tearful. When he reports that he had a more active role (line 27-30) as well, Ben does interactional work to downplay those reported actions. He did it "once" (line 27) which presents his contribution as an exception rather than taking an active role throughout the incident. He also presents "doing it once too" in a disfluent way (lines 26-30), uses "actually" (line 30) and downplays his own initiative by "joined in" (line 30). These features present his contribution as a confession, that is, as something potentially wrong and blameworthy. Both the account in lines 19-24 and the confession of his own active role orient to and address possible blame attribution and accountability.

This might be unexpected from a legal point of view. The children interviewed in this data set are witnesses and victims. Therefore, their behavior is not at issue, even more so because children are not liable according to Dutch criminal law until they are 12 years old (article 77a of the Dutch Criminal Code). Furthermore, police officers are instructed to inform the child in the beginning of the interview that they will not become angry or punish the child (Dekens and Van der Sleen 2013: 65). This informing aims to address possible associations of the child between police and punishment and prisons (Aldridge 2010: 301; Dekens and Van der Sleen 2013: 65). More generally speaking, the whole set-up of the interview room aims at making the child feel comfortable (section 1.1.1). From this point of view, children should not feel the need to account for themselves. A relevant question is, then, what children establish in the interview by providing such reports and why they do this.

Another key point of excerpt 4.1 is that Ben provides a report of his own behavior without an explicit invitation to do so. This is interesting because children apparently treat their own behavior as relevant to report, and not only in response to the police officer's questions. Such questions certainly do occur in police interviews with children. This has become clear in previous studies of interviews with child witnesses (Fogarty 2010: 283-290) and other vulnerable witnesses (Antaki et al. 2015a). It is salient that children highlight their own behavior without the police officer making this relevant by eliciting an account. Children apparently do not simply fill slots created by the police officer (see also Fogarty 2010).

The data show that unsolicited accounts recur. A search in thirty interviews led to a collection of 95 instances of unsolicited reports by children of their own role in thirty interviews (see section 2.3.2). In eight interviews, no relevant sequences were found. Of 22 interviews with relevant sequences, four interviews provided 34 of the sequences. These are the interviews by four different police officers with Myrthe (10-year-old; 14 sequences), Dorien (10 or 11-year-old; 9 sequences), Lieke (9 or 10-year-old; 11 sequences) and Jenna (8 or 9-year-old; 10 sequences). In eighteen interviews, one to six unsolicited reports were identified. This brief overview shows that some children clearly provide more unsolicited reports of their own behavior than others. The children who produce most of the sequences in this collection are girls (cf. Stivers 2012), mostly in the upper age range within the group of children in the corpus. At the same time, the unsolicited reports of their own role are certainly not unique to these four children, nor to these girls.

If we look back at excerpt 4.1, another salient feature is the lack of uptake by the police officer. She is writing throughout the excerpt and does not observably respond to the child's account nor to the tearful voice. This fulfills the official requirements of police interviewing, in the sense that she presumably attempts to take a neutral stance by avoiding commitment to the child's story. Yet, intuitively some kind of affliative response is missing. In this chapter, I also address the question how police officers respond to children's reports of their own behavior.

The analytical part of this chapter follows the order of the sequence. Section 4.2 discusses different ways in which children volunteer reports of

their role in what happened and what these reports accomplish. Section 4.3 offers an analysis of the police officers' uptakes of volunteered reports of children's behavior. Generally, police officers respond by 'doing being neutral'. This finding seems to follow from the instructions for police officers. This section thus returns to the general research question of this project: how do actual investigative interviews relate to the advice literature? Section 4.4 turns to what happens after the police officer's uptakes. In this section, I show how children sometimes treat the police officers' uptakes as insufficient or inappropriate. This section is mostly based on two interviews in which children repeatedly emphasize either their resistance or that they could not help it. Before I turn to the analysis, section 4.1 discusses some key concepts in the analysis.

4.1 Key concepts

A few themes emerge from the discussion of excerpt 4.1 that will be discussed briefly in this section: Accounts and accountability (4.1.1), Accounts in legal context (4.1.2), and Stake (4.1.3).

4.1.1 Accounts and accountability

In the introduction of this chapter, I have used the term 'report' as a general term for what Ben says about his own role. From an interactional perspective, this could also be called an 'account'. This term has been conceptualized in various ways. In this section, I explain some important uses of the account concept, mostly based on conversation analytical and discursive psychological literature.

Accounts and accountability have interested conversation analysts from their inception. Sacks points out in his first lecture series from Fall 1964 to Spring 1965 that participants in interaction provide accounts or reasons for their actions or ask for such reasons (Sacks 1995I: 4-5, 72-80). In both cases, the speaker proposes that the particular action is accountable. Since then, researchers have studied accounts from different perspectives (e.g. Buttny 1993; and, for a concise overview, see Potter and Wetherell 1987).

Authors have tried to create taxonomies of different types of accounts. A basic distinction suggested by Buttny and Morris (2001) in their

overview of research on accounting is accounts *for* versus accounts *of*. They claim that the first type, accounts *for*, typically refers to justifications and excuses, that is, to accounts that indicate that some norm has been broken or an expectation has not been met. This is similar to the everyday use of accountability as liability (Ten Have 2002). Buttny and Morris mention Scott and Lyman (1968) as the classic study of accounts *for*. Scott and Lyman argue that accounts are crucial for maintaining and repairing relationships. They claim, with reference to Austin, Urmson and Warnock (1961), that justifications accept responsibility, but deny that what was done is wrong. By contrast, excuses accept the wrongness of something while disputing the responsibility. Furthermore, Scott and Lyman (1968) distinguish justifications and excuses from explanations. In their view, explanations are not crucial for relationships.

The distinction between excuses versus justifications is not undisputed. Atkinson and Drew argue that in everyday talk, "it does not seem to capture the claims which people may make about their action through excuse-type accounts" (1979: 140). Despite these different insights, accounts are often associated with unmet expectations. It is therefore unsurprising that accounts *for* have been found as a regular component of dispreferred second turns (e.g. Davidson 1984: 102-128; Pomerantz 1984a: 72; Pomerantz and Heritage 2013: 214; Potter and Wetherell 1987: 84). For example, when invitations and offers are rejected, they often include an account that emphasizes the inability to accept the offer or invitation (Drew 1984).

The second type of accounts that Buttny and Morris mention, accounts *of*, relates to how activities are understandable for others. They refer to Garfinkel's understanding of accountability (1967: 1). This view is explained very clearly by Ten Have (2002: n.p.):

> While "accountability" in ordinary talk is often associated with liability, here [Garfinkel 1967: 1] it is closer to intelligibility or explainability, in the sense that actors are supposed to design their actions in such a way that their sense is clear right away or at least explicable on demand. People who stand in line for a service point, for example, show that they are doing just that by the way they position their bodies, but they are also able to understand and

answer a question like "Are you standing in line?" or "Are you in the queue?" So the understandability and expressability of an activity as a sensible action is, at the same time, an essential part of that action.

The term accountability in Garfinkel's sense refers to how things are done according to common sense. The term accounts *of*, then, indicates how the world around us is reported and described in a sensible way.

The distinction between accounts *of* and accounts *for* is useful in the sense that it is quite intuitive and relatively easy to explain. However, the distinction between accounts *of* and accounts *for* is not absolute, for two reasons. First, Buttny and Morris point out themselves that excuses and justifications become relevant precisely at the moment usual sense-making procedures fail (Buttny and Morris 2001: 287; with reference to Heritage 1984b). Reversely, accounts *for* also work to make sense of things, albeit those things potentially did not or will not make sense immediately. Therefore, the two types of accounts and accountability are in fact related.

Second, one might expect that accounts *for* are designed as explicit apologies or justifications, including markers like "sorry" or "because". Ben used such a marker in excerpt 4.1, line 21: "cos I could not walk away". Although such formats occur, accounts *for* also regularly take the shape of descriptions (Potter 1996), that is, of accounts *of*. For example, speakers can respond to a colleague's invitation for lunch with the description "I came in late" and thereby accomplish a declination and account for it. Similarly, as Atkinson and Drew make clear, giving a description can do justifying and defending work (1979: 138-141). We have already seen this in excerpt 4.1, which is partly repeated here as excerpt 4.1a.

EXCERPT 4.1a I couldn't do anything else
```
30  K: → en toen had ik ook meegedaan eigenlijk,
            and then I also joined in actually,
```

Ben *describes* what he did, but in this description, he constructs the actions as initiated by his cousin rather than by himself. This description also reduces his responsibility and liability for his participation.

It seems that the difference between accounts *for* and accounts *of* is not so much that one accomplishes justifying and excusing work, while the other does not.[60] Nor does it seem that accounts for/of are realized in clearly different forms or action types. Rather, I suggest that accounts for and accounts of do not form a dichotomy, but a continuum from overtly to covertly justifying work. On the overt end of the continuum accounts *for* do overtly justifying work, while on the other end accounts *of* also do justifying and excusing work, but in a way that is presented as factual (compare section 4.1.3). Between those extremes, accounts can be done more or less overtly. The analysis for this chapter therefore includes unsolicited accounts in which children talk about their own role that vary along the line from a more factual report of what they did to accounts that display a more normative orientation.

4.1.2 Accounts in legal settings

Participants in legal settings have been found to orient to accountability in the sense of liability. This is perhaps unsurprising, as Edwards and Potter point out, because the whole point of courts is to decide if responsibility can be attributed or not (1992: 159). In criminal courts, attribution of responsibility often leads to punishment. Therefore, many defendants present their role in a way that denies responsibility or the problematic character of what happened (Komter 1998). This happens both in courtroom interaction (e.g. Drew 1990; Ehrlich 2001: chapter 2; Komter 1998: 31-59; Komter 1994) and police interviews (e.g. Benneworth 2006; Newbury and Johnson 2006; Sliedrecht 2013: 148-157; e.g.Van Charldorp 2011).

Not only suspects and defendants do interactional work to avoid blame attribution; witnesses and victims do similar things. A famous example

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[60] Atkinson and Drew use the term "defense components" to avoid the suggestion that only accounts in the sense of Scott and Lyman work to pre-empt and rebut blame attribution, and to highlight that different sequence types make relevant different types of accounts. They place accounts in sequence types like invitations-declinations (such as "I came in late" in response to an invitation for lunch), whereas they use "defenses" and "defense components" in the context of blaming and anticipated blaming (Atkinson and Drew 1979: 138-141; e.g. excerpt 4.1). This term has not been used widely, so I prefer to use 'accounts'.

occurs in Atkinson and Drew's *Order in Court* (Atkinson and Drew 1979; Potter and Wetherell 1987) They studied the cross-examination of a police officer who testifies as a witness in a court about Catholic-Protestant violence in Northern Ireland. During the criminal procedure, one of the questions was if the police should have protected one group against the other more actively. The police officer avoids blame in three main ways: a) he disputes that there was a need for action, b) he accounts for not having taken action, generally implying (but not stating) that another task was more important, and c) he stresses the difficulty of taking action under the circumstances of the event. Atkinson and Drew found that police officers use defending components in different sequential environments: in response to explicit solicitation of accounts and accusations, and in response to questions that do not explicitly accuse or solicit an account. In the latter case, the witness treats the question as part of a line of questioning that is working towards blame attribution.

More recently, Fogarty (2010) studied accounts in Australian investigative interviews with child victims and witnesses (7-11 years-old). She discovered that children talk about their agency in relation to crimes in three main ways: a) children report their active resistance, b) children account for why they could not stop the abuse from happening and c) they emphasize their lack of complicity (Fogarty 2010: 283). She argues that children observably attend to the issue of who was agentive and that this suggests that they perceive agency as relevant for culpability. Consequently, children themselves do not treat the interview as simply retrieving uncontaminated information, but as a social event in which issues of blame are at stake (Fogarty 2010: 307-309).

Similarly MacLeod (2016) found that British rape victims pre-empt blame by providing accounts for their behavior. They provide accounts that a) counter the possibility that they were reckless, b) display that they tried to avoid the use of alcohol and drugs but that the suspect was very persistent, c) make clear that suspects were trustworthy, especially when they are known to the victim, and that the victim had no reason to be suspicious, d) show that the victim offered appropriate resistance or provide a reason why they could not do so. MacLeod (2016) pointed out that these types of account map on so-called rape myths.

Rape myths have been defined as "attitudes and beliefs that are generally false but are widely and persistently held, and that serve to deny and justify male sexual aggression against women" (Lonsway and Fitzgerald 1994: 134). Part of the stereotyped and normative picture of a rape victim is that of a decent young woman, who is attacked by an armed stranger in a dark alley or in bushes and who puts up a physical fight to escape from the situation (Aldridge and Luchjenbroers 2011: 5-6; Larcombe 2002). These stereotyped ideas are used to attribute blame to victims who do not fit the stereotype, for example victims who did not offer sufficient resistance according to some standard (Edwards et al. 2011; Estrich 1987) or victims who used alcohol or wore short skirts and who are therefore portrayed as indecent. Not living up to the stereotypical norms often leads to reasoning that apparently the victim was reckless, wanted to be raped[61] or even 'asked for it'. This then converts rape into consensual sex, discounting the criminal nature of the action and attributing responsibility to the victim. This process undermines the victim's position and exculpates the suspect. The accounts produced by the rape victims studied by MacLeod (2016) are designed to rebut potential attempts to attribute blame to the victim.

4.1.3 Managing stake

Discursive psychology points out an important difficulty for speakers, which may undermine their credibility, namely that they can be seen to have a stake in the social interaction (Edwards and Potter 1992; Edwards and Potter 1993; Potter 1996). People treat each other as having wishes, agendas and motives. This is especially obvious in certain institutional settings. For example, the suspects of a crime can be treated as merely trying to talk themselves out of a criminal procedure or punishment, instead of providing a credible statement about what happened (e.g. Komter 1998: 1, 29-30). As a result, speakers are vulnerable to objections and interpretations that treat the talk as informed by that stake alone. The problem for speakers then becomes how to produce their talk in a way that makes them less vulnerable to such objections and interpretations. This is what Edwards and Potter call 'the

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[61] The belief that women secretly want to be raped is also one of the rape myths (Edwards et al. 2011).

dilemma of stake' (Edwards and Potter 1992: 158-165; Edwards and Potter 1993; Potter 1996: 110).

Studies in discursive psychology have identified several techniques to manage stake in interaction. One main category of managing stake is to talk in a way that downplays the stake and that highlights and constructs the factuality of the account, that is, to depict the speaker as merely reflecting phenomena that are "out there". There are several techniques to create "out-there-ness"; Edwards and Potter (1992; 1993), and Potter (1996) describe a non-exhaustive number of those techniques.

One way to increase the factual character of a report is by so-called category entitlements. Some people are treated as being more entitled to have access to particular knowledge than other people, based on the particular categories they belong to (e.g. Raymond and Heritage 2006). Their assertions on a particular topic may therefore be treated as more reliable than other people's assertions on the same topic. For example, a head of security may be treated as more knowledgeable when reporting a disturbance to the emergency switchboard than a regular caller (Edwards and Potter 1992: 160-161; with reference to Whalen and Zimmerman 1990). The second important technique is providing a vivid factual detail, for example, by providing graphic descriptions or reported speech, suggesting that the speaker provides direct evidence. This suggests good perceptual skills and supports the credibility. Detail can also be provided in the shape of narratives, which allow to create coherence and to present events to be causally related rather than informed by the speaker's interest. The opposite of providing much detail is being vague. For example, idioms and common wisdom make it more difficult to undermine statements because they provide less factual information that can be countered (e.g. Drew and Holt 1988). Other techniques to create out-there-ness are presenting conclusions as following the rules of logic and by empiricist accounting, that is, by deleting the observer or depicting the observer as a passive recipient. These techniques are typical for scientific literature. Finally, speakers can present a phenomenon as factual by presenting it as true across witnesses. Extreme case formulations (Pomerantz 1986) can contribute to such constructions, for example "everyone" in "everyone does/thinks/knows X" (Edwards and Potter 1993: 37). In summary, these techniques work to make the speakers'

stake in what is reported as invisible as possible and the report as factual and therefore as credible as possible.

Another main approach to enhance credibility is to address issues of stake observably rather than to make them invisible and downplay them. Potter (1996) mentions two techniques. The first is the "stake inoculation" (1996: 125). This term indicates a construction in which the speaker claims or suggests initially having been unwilling to accept something, but then was convinced by the facts. For example: "Dr Post was initially skeptical, but having looked at the lives of nearly 300 famous men he believes exceptional creativity and psychiatric problems are intertwined." (Potter 1996: 126, quoting from The Guardian, 30 June 1994). This construction works up the facts as so strong and convincing that they have even won over the initially skeptical Dr Post. The stake inoculation makes Dr Post's assertions less vulnerable to undermining as being informed by what was his private opinion anyway.

Another technique to deal with accountability has been described as 'we were doing X, when Y happened' (Kidwell 2009; Wooffitt 1992). X stands for an ordinary activity that is then contrasted with some unusual event Y. For instance: "I was riding my bike and then a guy on a scooter pushed me off my bike". The ordinary context provides a background that emphasizes the unusual character of the unusual event, Y. Moreover, it presents the narrator as not having foreseen or made an effort to make the unusual event happen. That is, the speaker does interactional work to take a role as someone to whom Y happened, rather than a role of actively looking for Y. Suspects (Van Charldorp 2011) and witnesses (Kidwell 2009) have also been found to report their own behavior as X or as "doing being ordinary" (Sacks 1984b), for example indicated by the use of "just" (Van Charldorp 2011). Suspects and witnesses who use this construction, present themselves as not having been looking for trouble or inviting trouble: rather, the trouble came to them. Consequently, they take the role of recipients of trouble, rather than responsible causers of that trouble. The use of 'doing being ordinary' thus can work to anticipate and counter blame allocations, which is particularly relevant in the context of police interviews and court hearings.

A third technique to observably address issues of stake mentioned by Potter is called "stake confession" (1996: 130). Speakers sometimes make

explicit that their account could be heard as merely informed by their stake, for example when politicians praise their own political party, or a salesperson says that the products of competing companies are less sustainable. A prototypical way of formulating a stake confession is "But I would say that, wouldn't I?" (Potter 1996: 130). Potter suggests that the stake confession may work as a display of honesty and objectivity. Moreover, it makes it more difficult to undermine the statement interactionally, because an objection of self-interest has become redundant.

This section has discussed the key concepts of accounts, defensive work and managing stake. The next section will use these concepts to understand what happens in police interviews with child witnesses.

4.2 Doing being a real victim

This section discusses several ways in which children report their own behavior and how they allow the child to assume a victim role. Children report their own behavior in different ways. Some of these ways are produced as more factual, whereas in other cases, children clearly orient to their own behavior as potentially appropriate or inappropriate. Other instances hold a middle ground. Yet, what the instances have in common is that children report their own role and make it relevant in this context. Section 4.2.1 considers some of these instances. Section 4.2.2 is dedicated to how these features accomplish 'doing being a victim' and how that may be related to common sense reasoning based on the rape myths.

4.2.1 Reporting the child's role

Children regularly make it clear in their accounts that what has happened was not their initiative or that they did not enjoy it. Three ways to do that are illustrated in the following excerpt from the free recall phase in an interview with 8-year-old Wencke about a man in the park. The target lines are in line 3-9, 12 and 14.

```
EXCERPT 4.2 and then suddenly a gentleman came
1   P:   jij ↑kom >vertellen watter gebeurd is<;
         you have ↑come >to ↑tell //me// what happened<;
```

```
2    P:    en wat ↑↑is er gebeurd,
           and what ↑↑did happen,
3    K: →  nou: we waren-- ik was *met een vriendinnetje,*
           we:ll we were-- I was  *with a little friend, *
                                  *smile+looks up------->*
4          •hh
           •hh
5    P:    ↓°ja:°,
           ↓°ye:s°,
6    K: →  en (0.2) eh°m:° we gingen naar buiten;
           and (0.2) eh°m:° we went outside;
7       →  we gingen daar •hh (daa/naa)-- naast ons woont
           een flat,
           we went there •hh (there/next)-- next to us
           lives a flat,
8       →  •hh en daar e:hm (.) •hh >ging(en) wij< dus
           spelen;
           •hh and so we e:hm (.)•hh >went there< to
           play;
9       →  en toen kwam er opeens een men↑eer,
           and then suddenly a gentleman came,
10         •hhh en (.) >eh<-die zoekte iema:nd,
           •hhh and (.) >eh<- he was looking⁶² for
           someo:ne,
11   K:    •hh en die f::ond ie niet;=
           •hh and he didn't f::ind him/her;=
12   K: →  =en toen ehm •hh trekte die mij op *schoot.=
           and then ehm hh he pulled me on /his/ lap
                                           *gaze on P->
13         =en toen •hh *
           =and then •hh*
           ------------>*
14      →  dat wou ik niet;
           I didn't want that;
15         maar •hHH (0.3) ehm hij (.) ging ook helemaal
           aan me zitten,
           but •hHH (0.3) ehm he (.) also was touching me
           all over,
```

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[62] The child uses an incorrect past tense.

```
16  K:    °en° (0.2) •h toen (0.4);
          °and° (0.2) •h then (0.4);
17     →  ((slikt)) >toen wouden we nog verder spelen,
          ((swallows)) >then we wanted to go on playing,
18     →  maar< ik wou     *iets pakken,=
          but< I wanted to *get something,=
                           *smile------->
19     →  =>en dan< •hh @houdde ie mij nog steeds*
                                      v↑a::st@,
          =>and then< •hh @he was still h↑o::lding me@,
          --------------------------------->*
20        •HH en toen (.) zei hi- zei he- h zei hij,
          •HH and then (.) he sai- he sai- h he said,
```

Let us first consider the utterances in lines 3-9. Wencke uses the construction 'we were doing X, when Y happened' (Wooffitt 1992; Kidwell 2009) as an introduction to a sequence of reported events marked by "and then" (lines 12, 16, 20). She begins sketching a fairly ordinary scene: she went playing with a girlfriend in a place nearby her house (lines 3-8). In line 9, she introduces something new: "and then suddenly a gentleman came". The use of "suddenly" (*opeens*) is notable here. Komter (1994) calls this a passivity marker. It constructs the arrival of the gentleman as something unexpected and unanticipated. This construction thus works to portray Wencke and her friend as not having been looking for that gentleman, not seeking trouble, and definitely not initiating that the man should approach them. It also implicitly counters a blame-attributing version of the story that they could and should have left earlier: because they did not expect him to approach them, they had no reason to leave earlier.

In other interviews, children do similar work, sometimes more explicitly than in excerpt 4.2. For example, one girl reports that she and her friends continued playing despite seeing an unknown man because "he was behind a fence anyway". Another girl reports that her family, including herself, thought it would be safe if her older brother would be living with them again after he had been treated at an institution for behavioral problems. These accounts treat the children's choice not to go away or to allow the brother in their environment as accountable, that is, as choices that are not self-evident and in need of explanation. Simultaneously, they disarm

potential damaging inferences by making clear that they were not being reckless and that they were not looking for trouble (found in four instances in the corpus). Similarly, children do interactional work to show that they had innocent intentions (ten instances). For example, 10-year-old Pien reports a Skype session in which an unknown adolescent says "weird things" to her and her friend Myrthe. That makes them laugh and Pien reports saying, "weird things back". She accounts for that by saying "because then we are really in such a giggly mood" (*omdat we dan helemaal in zo'n giechelbui zijn*). The account attributes the girls' laughter to the giggly mood that Pien and her friend were in when the abuse happened. The lexical choices are relevant here. The word "mood" (*bui*) indicates that this was a temporary state. The extreme case formulation "really" (*helemaal*) builds the mood as something that they were fully immersed in, so that they were not able to reflect on their own behavior at the time. The demonstrative "such a" (*zo'n*) implies such moods are common and presupposes that the police officer is familiar with such moods. The phrase thus presents the mood as normal, rather than unusual or problematic. It is also notable that she uses "giggly" rather than, for example, "naughty". All these features contribute to a motive that was normal and innocent, and counter a potential interpretation of the children's behavior as being motivated by sexual interest.[63]

The second point to be made about excerpt 4.4 concerns line 12. It is an example of what Ehrlich calls "the grammar of non-agency" (2001). In line 12, the girl reports that the suspect pulled her on his lap, rather than for example "I sat down on his lap" or "I had to sit on his lap". Both alternatives would have indicated purposeful action from the child. Hence, the linguistic construction presents the suspect as the acting person here and presents the girl as the passive object of his actions (e.g. Deckert 2010; Ehrlich 2001; Halliday 1994; Pomerantz 1978a; Toolan 2001).

Finally, in line 14, the girl explicitly takes a negative emotional stance towards the man's actions with "I didn't want that". This practice is recurrent in the data; I identified twenty sequences, including different forms such as

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[63] In other cases children suggest that they did not see the abuse coming, that they did not understand what was going on or that they did not have particular knowledge (14 sequences). This contributes to the construction of innocence.

"and I didn't find it so pleasant" (*en ik vond ut niet zo gezellig*), "and I found that annoying" (*en dat vond ik vervelend*), and "I didn't like that" (*en dat vond ik niet leuk*). The phrase makes explicit that what the man was doing was against her will from the beginning. By doing so, Wencke both reports the man's actions as problematic and her own role as involuntarily. It is relevant to consider when she produces "I didn't want that". In the previous line, she sets off to continue reporting the course of events with "and then •hh—", which typically would be finished by a phrase like 'I/he did/said/saw Z'. Yet, she does a self-repair and begins a new turn constructional unit "I didn't want that", thus showing an orientation to this utterance as important to produce here. The girl's involuntariness and the problematic character of the man's behavior are further built up in lines 17-19: when she wanted to leave, but the man was still holding her.

The excerpt shows various ways in which children provide an account of their own role as not wanting the abuse to happen, having innocent intentions, not doing anything to invite the abuse, not having seen the trouble coming and therefore having had no reason to take action. Rather than presenting themselves as actively taking a role to accomplish something in the story, these features allow the children to assume a role as rather passive participants with no bad intentions and to whom the abuse happened. They are 'doing being the victim'.

Children also frequently (in 53 sequences in total) highlight that they resisted the suspect, and how well they did that, as illustrated in the next excerpt (excerpt 4.3). The sequence occurs almost 36 minutes into the recording of an interview with 9-year-old Delphine about repeated sexual abuse by her father. The lines of interest are line 17-20, in which the girl reports how she escaped after the abuse:

EXCERPT 4.3 I really @pret(h)ended that I was falling asleep@
```
1   P:   hoe ↑stopte-n-ut da:n,
         how did that ↑stop the:n,
2        (0.8)
```

```
3    K:   (~o:h/e:hm~)*pffff°ff°
          (~o:h/e:hm~)*pffff°ff°
                      *eyes up'thinking'--->
4         (1.6)*
          ---->*
5    K:   °<k wee nieh>°;
          °<I don't know>°;
6         (2,5)
7         gewoon,=
          just,=
8         =op een 'geven'mnt ging'k gewoon weer
                                      °↓slapen°;=
          at a certain moment I just fell °↓asleep°
                                        again,=
9         =°en hij *ook°          *,
          =°and he *as well°      *,
                   *2x minor shrug*
10   P:   okee;
          okay;
11        ging(eh) %#je::#-      %  hij slapen,
          fell(eh) #you::-#      %  he  asleep,
          did you- he fall asleep,
                   %moves backward%
12   P:   en jij ook  %#e[hm#;
          and you too %#e[hm#;
                         %eyes on notes->
13   K:                [°ja.°
                       [°yes.°
14        *(1.4)              *
          *bounces pen on table*
15   P:   •pt (m[k#ee:#)
          •pt (m[k#ay:#)
16   K:        [en %%zO e:h,
               [and %%like thAt e:h,
     p:   --------->%%eyes on pen--->
17   →    dee ik %*%>nEt(h) @as(h)of da'k in slaap
                                      <viel>@*,=
          I @pret%*%(h)Ended that I was falling
                                      asleep@,  =
     k:            %*smiles----------------------->*
     p:   ------>% %gaze on K's face---------------->
```

```
18  K:  →  %=eneh •hh sliep hij ook echt;=      %
          %=andehm •hh he was really sleeping;=%
          %head backward, pouts lips---------->%
19      →  %=°en toen ben ik% eh (0.2) geslopen°,
          %=°and then I    % eh (0.2) slipped away°,
          %1x 'nod'------->%
20      →  >naar Berend toe?=
          >to Berend?=
21         =↑en toen zijn we weer gewoon gaan ↓°spelen°;<
          =↑and then we just started playing ↓°again°;<
22         (0.4)
23  P:     %°°okee:°° ;          %
          %°°okay:°°;          %
          %turns gaze to notes%
```

In line 1, the police officer poses the question that is answered in lines 2-9. The police officer receives this answer with "okay" (line 10) and an answer-repetition (lines 11-12). Delphine confirms the repetition with yes" (line 13). The police officer projects a next sequence with '"mkay" (line 15; Beach 1993; Gaines 2011) and by directing her gaze to her notes. The girl, however, expands her answer with a rather dramatic move before the police officer can produce a next question. The girl's initial answer in lines 2-9 reports the ending of the abuse as something she did not pay particular attention to, by using "dunno" (Potter 1996: 131-132), and as nothing special, using "just" (*gewoon*). By contrast, her elaboration (lines 17-21) portrays the ending of the abuse as the result of fooling the suspect by pretending to fall asleep. This, in turn, allowed her to escape and go to her brother Berend. Hence, this second version of how the abuse ended is interpretable as highlighting her agency.

Other unsolicited accounts of resistance include that children said "no" or "let me go", that they were "shouting", that they "ran" away before or after the (attempted) abuse (instead of "walking"; implying an urgency to leave as quickly as possible), that they avoided the suspect, e.g. by pretending to be asleep, that they clicked on 'refuse' in a Skype session with the suspect and that they told the suspect to stop. These reports establish and highlight that children did what they could to avoid the abuse, to escape from it or to leave as soon as possible. One thing that such reports imply is

that they did not want the abuse. In that sense, they are similar to statements like "I did not want that" in excerpt 4.4: they establish that what happened was unwanted and that they are, therefore, a victim. Yet, when children emphasize that they resisted the suspect, they also assume an active role in preventing the abuse from happening and make this relevant in the interaction.

Children also show a normative orientation to providing resistance in their talk in different ways. This is shown first of all by the frequency with which they bring up resistance themselves as discussed in the previous paragraph. Another way is by accounting for not providing resistance or not leaving (twelve sequences), for example by claiming that they had no other option (e.g. excerpt 4.1), or that they did not dare to say something. Such accounts address an implicit norm that dictates that the child should have chosen to leave or to resist if that option would have been available. The accounts anticipate such potential reproaches and deal with them by making clear why they did not resist or escape the suspect (cf. MacLeod 2016).

Excerpt 4.3 shows a third way of showing a normative orientation, namely laughter (twelve sequences from four interviews). It is notable that the laughter comes in precisely when the girl accounts having successfully outsmarted the suspect (line 17). She thus presents her resistance in a cheerful way. This makes it possible to hear the report as proud and to hear the report as having an implicitly normative orientation to resistance as the right thing to do (cf. Jefferson 1984).

The fourth and most salient displays of normative orientations to resistance occur in self-evaluations. Self-evaluations can be either positive evaluations of resistance or negative self-judgements. Positive evaluations are quite rare (four sequences in three interviews), for example an interview with Teun. He reports having said "no" to an unknown man who wanted him to touch the man's private parts. He then adds "•hh and my mother was proud of that?". This implies that the child's behavior is under evaluation and that, apparently, there are courses of action to be proud of. Although these reports are uncommon, they suggest that resisting is the norm to adhere to (see also excerpt 4.6).

Negative self-evaluations or self-judgements occur slightly more often (eight sequences in four interviews). In excerpt 4.4 below, 9 or 10-year-

old Lieke judges herself for answering the suspect's question where she lived and not being more resistant. The suspect is an unknown man at an open air festival who later pushes her over and tries to put his hand in her panties.

EXCERPT 4.4 and so that was very-also very stupid

```
1    K:    <e:n toen> (0.3)(°toen°) vroeg tie waar'k
            woonde;=
            <a:nd then> (0.3) (°then°) he asked where I
            lived;=
2    →     =<en toen> zei ik zoa(h)s een kip zonder kop,=
            =<and then> I said li(h)ke a chicken without a
            head,=
3          =•h dat-dat-dat- @waar we w(h)oonden@,
            =•h that-that-that- @where we were l(h)iving@,
4    P:    ↑hm↑hm,=
            ↑hm↑hm,=
5    K: →  =@e::n dat was dus heel-ook heel do::m@,
            =@a::nd so that was very-also very stu::pid@,
6          (0.3)
7    K:    maar (°↑ja°) @'kwist ook helemaal nerges van@,=
            but (°↑yeah°) @I didn't know anything@,=
8          =[•hh <en t~oe~n> (0.6) °m jha°,
            =[•hh <and th~e~n> (0.6) °m yhes°,
9    P:    [%°↓hm.°                        %
            %°↓hm.°                        %
            %shrugs + shakes head a little%
```

The self-judgment starts in line 2. Lieke portrays answering the man's question (line 3) with the idiomatic expression "like a headless chicken" (*als een kip zonder kop*). Although this is not yet formulated as an explicit evaluation, she displays a retrospective understanding of her own action as not properly thought through. In this case, the accompanying laughter supports her presentation as having been silly. The police officer treats the girl's narrative as not yet finished by producing a continuer (line 4). Next, the

girl provides an explicit self-judgement (line 5). She judges her own behavior negatively by deeming answering the suspect's question as "very stupid", emphasizing this even more by stretching the sound. The self-judgment orients to the norm 'you should not tell strangers where you live'. With this self-judgement the girl suggests that she would have done things differently in retrospect. This is further supported by the past tense in line 7 in which she excuses herself by claiming "I didn't know anything" which suggests that she knows now.

Interactionally, the self-judgment reminds us of a stake-confession (section 4.1.3). The girl classifies her action as accountable and stupid and she provides this evaluation herself. This self-judgement makes a judgment by the police officer redundant and thus renders the child's report less susceptible to judgements by the police officer. Even stronger, the preferred response to self-deprecations is disagreement (Pomerantz 1984a). This indicates that after the child's judgement, a denial by the police is relevant. The police officer refrains from providing an uptake in line 6 and does not align with the projected next turn. Only after the justification (line 7), he gives a very minimal uptake (line 9) (section 4.3 further discusses police officers' uptakes).

The final example of an account of the child's own role is excerpt 4.5. It presents an account of why the child did not report the abuse straightaway (found in eight sequences from six interviews). The police officer is interviewing Jenna, an 8 or 9-year-old girl about her teenage half-brother Lucas. In the free recall phase, Jenna tells the police officer that her brother had shown his private parts in the bedroom, despite her repeated request to stop, that she found it very annoying, that they played "dogs"[64] and that they went downstairs. This where excerpt 4.5 begins, still in the free recall phase, in which she accounts for not telling straightaway what happened (lines 1-6 and 12-15). The police officer is taking notes throughout the excerpt.

---

[64] There is no clue in the interaction that the child understood this game in a sexual way.

EXCERPT 4.5 because I was a little afraid of eh the consequences

```
1   K: →  •h toen durfde ik ut niet te zeggen;=
           •h then I did not dare to say it;=
2      →  =omdat ik de gev- eh    ge%volge een   beetje:,
           =because I the cons- eh consequences a little:,
           =because I was a little: afraid of eh the cons-
       p:                          %2 minimal slow nods->
3   K: →  daar was ik een beetje bang% >van;=
           that I was a little afraid>% of;
           eh consequences I was a little afraid of that;
       p:  ----------------------->%
4   K  →  =van< wa:t e:h •h;--
           =like< wha:t e:h •h;--
5         (0.3)
6      →  krijgt ie nou straf of nie:t,
           will he be punished or no:t,
7         %•hh (.)      % en ehm;
           %•hh (.)      % and ehm;
       p:  %minimal nods%
8   K:    •h >uiteindelijk (dus toen) gingen mama en
           ik<afruimen,=
           •h >finally (then) mummy and I started to
           clear< the table,=
```

Jenna claims that she did not dare to say what happened straightaway (line 1). This claim implies that she wished to tell someone, but that she did not do so. It also invokes fear as a justification for not-reporting.[65] She accounts for not daring by saying that she was concerned about the consequences for her brother (lines 2-3). She warrants this by starting off in line 4 with an utterance projecting something like "what e:h •h is going to happen to him". Instead, she repairs her utterance (lines 5-6) to make more specific what made her hesitant: she feared that her brother would be punished. This dilemma between the implied wish to tell versus concern for her brother

---

[65] As turns out later in the interview, she tells her mother after the *second* time that her brother shows his private parts. There is at least a week between these two occasions, so the delay is actually more than it seems on the basis of this excerpt from the free recall phase.

justifies the delay in telling someone.[66] Jenna returns to this concern several times throughout the interview, highlighting its dilemmatic nature, and treating both blaming her brother and not-reporting as problematic.[67]

An important point to take away from this excerpt is that the girl orients to not telling straightaway as an accountable matter. This occurs in some other interviews as well. Other accounts for not telling someone straightaway include that it was weird to tell their parents what happened, that children were afraid that their parents would be angry at the child or someone else, that they would not be believed, that the suspect had threatened the child, and so forth. Children thus seem to orient to a norm that prescribes that a victim should report abuse as soon as possible. Komter's study of knowledge in Dutch courtrooms (1995: 116-117) provides an interesting example of how a deviation of this norm can lead to damaging inferences. She shows an example of a defense lawyer who explicitly states that not reporting rape immediately negatively affects the reliability of the victim. Children's justifications for not telling someone straightaway thus seem to pre-empt such inferences. Additionally, excerpt 4.5 shows that children may be attentive to problems of loyalty as well.

4.2.2 Relations to rape myths and implications

The previous section has shown that children's unsolicited accounts are regularly used to highlight the child's role in trying to escape and resist. Furthermore, children observably orient to their own behavior as governed by a range of norms, including that they should physically resist suspects, that they should say "no", that they should leave whenever possible, that they should avoid the suspect, that they should not give their address to strangers, that they should report the offence directly after the abuse. Some of the reports also establish that what happened was against the child's will. These norms are remarkably compatible with various rape myths (see

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[66] This type of loyalty is often mentioned as a factor that prevents disclosure by victims of sexual assault (Nationaal Rapporteur 2014: 52, 129, 140,148).

[67] The girl continues explaining how it happened that she told her parents in spite of the consideration that her brother may be punished. She treats this as an accountable matter by presenting telling her mother as something that she couldn't help (data not shown).

section 4.1.2) that form a stereotyped 'common sense' idea about what establishes 'real rape' and a 'real victim'. The children's reports of their own behavior work to fit in stereotyped ideas of what establishes a 'real victim' and to pre-empt damaging inferences (cf. MacLeod 2016).

It is significant that children do not only provide these reports when the police officer solicits them. The focus on volunteered reports of the child's behavior shows that children make these issues relevant on their own, often starting from the free recall phase. Children apparently treat 'doing being a real victim' as relevant in the interaction. That is, they treat and construct the police interview as an environment in which it is relevant to establish that they are a real victim. Consequently, children do not necessarily treat their victim role as a given in the police interview.

The fact that children do this interactional work shows two main limitations of the police perspective on these interviews. First, the police emphatically refer to these interviews as "interviews with child *witnesses*" to make clear that the goal of the interview is to collect information, also when the child is the probable victim. Yet children treat their victim role as relevant to establish in the interaction and they orient to a set of stereotyped norms to do so. That is, children do not treat the interview as a purely factual and informative occasion, and they do not only orient to their role as a witness.

Second, although police officers inform the child that "the police officer won't think that anything is strange or silly" and that "the police officer won't get angry or punish", children still treat the situation as one in which they need to account for their own behavior. It appears saying such things cannot easily take away general orientations to the interview and pervasive social ideas about what it means to be a 'real' victim.

4.3 How police officers respond: neutralistic uptakes

The previous sections show that children work quite hard to display that they are a real victim. This section examines how police officers respond to such volunteered reports of the child's behavior. It is important to note that an uptake is not always relevant after children have highlighted, for example, how they resisted or provided a justification for not leaving. Children can continue their talk directly, thereby not providing a slot for an uptake by the

police officer. In these cases, the report of the child's behavior is embedded in a discourse unit and it would take interactional effort from the police officer to 'jump' back (cf. Sacks 1987: 58).

However, in many cases, the police officer is provided with a slot that could appropriately be filled with, for example, an affiliative uptake. This section shows that police officers generally avoid to producing such uptakes. Chevalier and Moore (2015) call such avoiding practices "restricted activities". This term indicates that parties in different types of institutional interaction withhold particular activities, such as affiliating and assessing. By withholding these activities, they contribute to a particular type of interactional context. Excerpt 4.1 from the interview with 6-year-old Ben provides an example. The excerpt is partially repeated as 4.1b. The target line is line 25. The police officer is writing throughout the excerpt.

EXCERPT 4.1b I couldn't do anything else

```
18  K:    =ja en toen •hh;
          =yeah and then •hh;
19  K:    ja toen m↑oede⁶⁸ ik m↑aar,=
          yeah then I just h↑ad to,=
20        •hh ik kon niks anders doen,
          •hh I couldn't do anything else,
21        wan- (.) •h ik kon niet weglopen,
          cos- (.)•h I could not walk away.
22        me deur zat-- •h de deur (zelf/zat) was open,
          my door was-- •h the door (itself was) was
          open,
23        maa' ↑ja:,=
          but ↑yeah:,=
24        =ik dach' >dan moet ik ut< maar •hh maar
          doe::n,
          =I thought >then I just •hh just ha::ve<
          to do:: it,
25  →     (0.6)
26  K:    #maar# (1.4) i-(.)ik-- ((schraapt keel))
          #but # (1.4) I-(.)I-- ((clears throat))
```

---

⁶⁸ The child uses an incorrect past tense.

Ben clearly orients to his own participation in the activity as accountable and justifies it by presenting participating as the only option. The police officer had the opportunity to respond in line 25, for example by acknowledging the distress displayed by the tearful voice (e.g. "poor thing") or reassuring Ben that it was not his fault or that his cooperation is understandable. Instead, she continues to make notes without verbal comments.

The avoidance of committing to the child's report is characteristic of police officers' uptakes (Antaki et al. 2015b). Examples can be found in excerpt 4.3 where the police officer's uptake is a brief silence and "okay" (line 23), and in excerpt 4.5 where the police officer keeps on writing and nods minimally (line 7). Other uptakes in the data include repeating a version of what the child said, next questions or clarifying questions, "hmhm", "yes" or combinations of such responses.

This broad range of uptakes (or lack thereof) have in common that do *not* approve of the child's behavior or reassure the child that it is not his or her fault. There are prosodic variations that make some uptakes more affiliative than others, but the uptakes are very minimal and do not take an overt stance towards the child's reported behavior. In short, these uptakes are "neutralistic" (Clayman and Heritage 2002: 120). This term highlights that neutral communication is an idealization, because speakers always do something and assume a role when they say something. The term is inspired by Robinson and Sheehan's (1983) distinction between objective and objectivistic. The latter indicates the behavioral attempts to reach objectivity, whereas the former refers to the result. The term neutralistic indicates that interlocutors display 'being neutral', rather than achieving actual neutrality.

Neutralistic uptakes are not necessarily unsuitable. When children construct their report of their own behavior as more factual (see section 4.1.3), this generally does not make relevant reassurance or approval and therefore uptakes like "hmhm", "okay" or a next question are interactionally appropriate. The police officer's lack of stance becomes problematic when the child's normative orientation becomes more overt, for example when the child displays being proud, or provides an explicit justification or evaluation and when the child leaves a slot for the police officer to respond. For

example, in excerpt 4.6, Myrthe explicitly evaluates her own choice not to comply with the suspect's request to show her belly via Skype (line 9).

EXCERPT 4.6 I'm very glad about that
```
1   K:    •h maar        * e-ehm zij heb wel e:h--
          •h but         * e-ehm she has e:h--
2         vroeg tie eh;
          he was asking eh;
3         laat je buik zien,
          show your belly,
4         (0.5)
          (0.5)
5   P:    [m
          [m
6   K:    [>Pien heef dat< gedaa:n,
          [>Pien has do:ne< that,
7   K:    *ik niet,
          *I haven't,
          *smiles--->
8         (hh)
          (hh)
9      →  ben ik heel blij om.
          I'm very glad about that.
10        (HH)=
          (HH)=
11  P:  → =en wat heeft Pien laten °zien van dr buik°;*
          =and what has Pien shown °of her belly°    ;*
    k:    ---smile fades------------------------------>*
12        *(0.8)                                       *
          *looks at P, sits back, gaze at belly, puts
                                      hand on belly*
13  K:     *>tot en met< hier;*
           *>including< here; *
           *rubs belly        *
```

Myrthe does several things in this excerpt, including creating a contrast between her friend Pien as compliant with the suspect's request and herself

who resisted the suspect.[69] The latter is produced with a smile and laughter (line 8) and is interpretable as being proud. She also explicitly assesses her own behavior in a positive way (line 9) and supports that assessment with laughter (line 10). This assessment makes relevant an agreement or approval of the girl's display of resistance. However, the police officer ignores the child's invitation to agree and proceeds with a factual next question about what was said in lines 1-6 that elicits more detail about what exactly Pien showed. The police officer thus stays clear of taking sides. Simultaneously, the notable lack of uptake allows the inference that the police officer does not agree with the child's assessment.

A consequence of the police officers' neutralistic uptakes of children's accounts is that they do not disarm the implicit and problematic norms that children should resist the suspect. They therefore implicitly agree with these norms in the interaction. I am not suggesting that police officers explicitly advocate these norms, but in effect they establish agreement with these implicit norms by treating them as unproblematic.

There are only a few cases where the police officer does more than a neutralistic uptake, but even in those cases, the demonstration of affiliation is very minimal. We have already seen excerpt 4.4, partially repeated as 4.4a:

EXCERPT 4.4a and so that was very-also very stupid
```
5    K:   =@e::n dat was dus heel-ook heel do::m@,
          =@a::nd so that was very-also very stu::pid@,
6         (0.3)
7         maar (°↑ja°) @'kwist ook helemaal nerges van@,=
          but (°↑yeah°) @I didn't know anything@,=
```

---

[69] Myrthe works throughout the interview to blame her friend Pien. Pien is presented as the initiator of going online and making contact with the suspect via Skype, and as the one who was potentially sexually interested (ten blaming moves in six unsolicited sequences). Towards the police officer, Myrthe thus presents herself as not only the suspect's victim, but also as her friend's victim. She thus exculpates herself.

The fact that Myrthe attempts to redirect blame to her friend, further attests to the idea that children orient to their own actions as being right or wrong for victims. Although Myrthe and Pien form one of in total three pairs of children who talk about the same crime, I have not seen similar work by other children in my data collection.

```
8    K:    =[•hh <en t~oe~n> (0.6) °m jha°,
            =[•hh <and th~e~n> (0.6) °m yhes°,
9    P: →  [%°↓hm.°                        %
              °↓hm.°
            %shrugs +shakes head a little%
```

The police officer acknowledges the child's self-judgment and her account with a minimal "hm", a shrug and headshake. The embodied behavior is understandable as "it doesn't matter" or "don't worry" and thus denying the importance, and therefore as reassuring. It also works as an encouragement to move on to a next topic. All this work is very implicit, minimal and hardly on-record. It can be seen as a trade-off between the orientation to being neutral and what is interactionally relevant.

Excerpt 4.7 offers another example of minimal ways of doing something more than a neutralistic uptake. The excerpt is taken from the questioning phase of the interview with 7-year-old Karin. She reports that she was playing outside when an unknown man asked her if she wanted candy, invited her into his home and asked her to lick his private parts and to show her private parts. Directly prior to the excerpt, the police officer had asked what she did when the man asked her to show her private parts, to which she replies that she said "no" because she is not allowed to do that.

EXCERPT 4.7 yes; well that is an idea
```
1    P:    en van wie mag je [dat niet,
           and who says you're not allowed to do that,
2    K:                      [hhh
                             [hhh
3          van mn moeder en mn vader aan iemand dat laten
           zien,=
           my mother and my father to show that to
           anyone,
4          =•h want als ut nou op een verjAArdagsfeestje
           doet,=
           •h because if //someone//⁷⁰ does it at a
           bIRTHdayparty,=
```

---

⁷⁰ The Dutch utterance is grammatical incorrect because it is missing a subject.

```
5    K:    =voor de jArige,=
           =for the bIrthday person,=
6          =•h=
           =•h=
7    P:    =>↓hmhm<.=
           =>↓hmhm<.=
8    K:    =zeg ik nee,
           =I say no,
9          want ik m↓Ag ut n↑IEt?
           because I'm n↑Ot allowed to?
10         •hh of als eehn- als een beetje als smoesje;
           or if a h- like a bit an excuse;
11         >dat ik ut niet< ↑do[e?
           >that 'm not   < ↑doi[ng it?
12   P:                        [hmh   [m.
                               [hmh   [m.
13   K:                               [•h dan >zeg ik<;
                                      [•h then >I say<;
14         (.)
15   K:    ↑nee hij zit hartstikke strak,
           ↑no it's⁷¹ very tight,
16         •h en d'r zitten ↑heel veel vliegen op,=
           and there are very many flies on it,=
17         =en poep,
           =and poop,
18   P:    oh.
           oh.
19   K:    dat zeg ik dan als smoe:sj[e;
           I say that then as a little excu:se;
20   P:                          [↓okeei.
                                 [↓okay.
21         ja;
           yeah;
22         nou dat ↑is een id↑ee
           well that ↑is an id↑ea,
23         (0.8)
24         en je zegt ook,=
           and you also say,=
```

---

⁷¹ *Hij* is translated here as "it" because it likely refers to her panties or pants.

```
25  P:    =van nou ik ben blijven vragen,
          =like so I kept asking,
26        •h of ik weg mocht,
          •h if I could go,
```

Karin volunteers a strategy about what she would do in the hypothetical situation that someone asks her to show her private parts (lines 3-6, 8-16). She would try to put that person off by suggesting that her private parts are both difficult to reach because her clothes are very tight and that they are very dirty.[72] She thus portrays herself as having thought about such a situation, being smart and being prepared. The police officer receives this plan as new information using "oh" (line 18) (Heritage 1984), rather than, for example "that's a smart plan". The girl treats this "oh" as a sign of potential trouble by explicating that she would say this as an excuse (line 19). This explication orients to the possibility that the police officer has misunderstood her strategy as a report of an unhygienic status.

Now that the girl has unambiguously reported that she has prepared a strategy, approval is relevant. The police officer claims understanding now (line 20), in slight overlap with "yeah" (line 21) and then moves to a next move with "well" (nou; Mazeland 2016). She acknowledges that the child's proposed strategy is *an* idea, but she notably does not use an adjective like "clever" or "good". This utterance could have been a downright disapproval. Yet, the rising intonation makes it ambiguous between a less than enthusiastic assessment and a slightly positive acknowledgement of the idea. Furthermore, the lexical choices allow the police officer to account for her response in a literal manner by saying that she only said that the plan is "an idea". This can be seen as not adding information and thus as neutralistic.

The neutralistic and factual uptakes can be explained by looking at the training and prescriptions that police officers receive. Police officers are encouraged to conduct the interview as neutrally as possible:

> Because fact finding is key, the interview must be conducted in the most neutral way possible. (…) In this context, neutral means:

---

[72] This brings to mind the menstruation put-off strategies adult women report when they report rape to the police (Woodhams et al. 2012).

without influencing the witness's testimony, neither in posture, mimic and intonation, nor in the way questions are formulated. No matter the means, influencing must be avoided.[73] (Dekens and Van der Sleen 2013: 13-14).

And

It is very persuasive to ask suggestive questions combined with positive feedback on 'desired' information and negative feedback on 'undesired' information[74] (Dekens and Van der Sleen 2013: 46)[75].

An instructor at the police academy explained that police officers should not assume that something has happened, because the police officer's task is to find the truth. In other words, the child's story is still under investigation. These obligations form external constraints (in the terms of Chevalier and Moore 2015) that are enacted by police officers when they provide neutralistic uptakes like "hmhm", "okay", next questions and so forth where affiliation or alignment was relevant.

The constraints prescribed by the police organization and training apply to the free recall phase in an even stricter sense. Police officers are instructed that children should provide their own story with as little influence from the police officer as possible (Dekens and Van der Sleen 2013: 74). Police officers should only encourage the child's narratives with continuers like "hmhm", "tell me about that" and "what happened next". The objective is to encourage children to tell their own narrative, because experimental

---

[73] *Omdat het om waarheidsvinding gaat, moet het verhoor zo neutraal mogelijk uitgevoerd worden. Dit heeft consequenties voor de wijze van informatie-inwinning. Neutraal wil hier zeggen: zonder de verklaring van de getuige te beïnvloeden, noch in houding, mimiek en intonatie, nog in de vraagstelling. Beïnvloeding – op welke manier dan ook – moet worden vermeden* (Dekens and Van der Sleen 2013: 13-14).
[74] *Sterk beïnvloedend werkt het stellen van suggestieve vragen gecombineerd met positieve feedback op 'gewenste' informatie en negatieve feedback op 'ongewenste' informatie* (Dekens and Van der Sleen 2013: 46).
[75] See also: "(…) and finally the interviewers should avoid expressing disbelief or belief at all times, whether verbally or nonverbally" (Dekens and Van der Sleen 2013: 77).

research points out that this leads to the most reliable information (Dekens and Van der Sleen 2013: 45, 74). Note that the Manual acknowledges that being fully neutral is not possible by formulating the aim as "the most neutral way possible". Elsewhere, the Manual makes this more explicit by saying that "(…) in practice, it is difficult or maybe even impossible to do an interview in an entirely neutral way"[76] (Dekens and Van der Sleen 2013: 47). Nevertheless, being neutral is presented as the police officer's aim and prescription and is considered important by police officers and trainers (Rassin and Van Koppen 2002: 26).

The police officers' assignment to be neutral in their interviews creates a dilemma for interviewers. Responses like "okay" and "hmhm" might seem neutral in isolation or when the interview is regarded as exchanging information. Yet, from an interactional perspective, they sometimes turn out to accomplish disaffiliation in ongoing interaction, affirm normative sources for self-blaming procedures and enable problematic inferences.

Police officers may indeed experience this dilemma between the guidelines and what is relevant in interaction as problematic themselves, as is shown by Jakobsen, Langballe and Schultz (2017). These researchers interviewed Norwegian detectives. The detectives watched recordings of their own interviews with children who witnessed the 2011 Utøya terror attack, especially those parts in which children were clearly upset, and were asked to comment on their interviews. One of the detectives' recurring comments was that they should have provided more support instead of being so focused on truth-finding (Jakobsen, Langballe and Schultz 2017). Actual crying or being upset is rare in my data set, and the collection of unsolicited reports of the children's behavior is no exception to that. Yet the problem is similar: doing being neutral or objective and doing truth-finding can be interactionally inappropriate. Another indication that neutralistic uptakes are not always satisfactory comes from children's responses to the police officers uptakes. This is the topic of the next section.

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[76] *(…)in de praktijk is het echter moeilijk of misschien zelfs onmogelijk een compleet neutraal verhoor uit te voeren.* (Dekens and Van der Sleen 2013: 47).

4.4 Pursuing more than a neutralistic uptake

Children do not treat the police officer's lack of uptake as problematic in explicit ways. They generally attend to the next question, as Myrthe does in excerpt 4.6 (partially repeated as 4.6a) or continue their narratives as in 4.8 below. Excerpt 4.8 is taken from the free recall from the interview with Pien about the Skype session with Myrthe. Prior to the excerpt, Pien had explained that clicking away the suspect meant seeing the suspect's private parts on the screen and she suggests that her friend did not want that. In line 1, Pien reports that she did it, "it" meaning "clicking away". Given that her friend did not want to do this, she presents herself as sacrificing herself.

EXCERPT 4.6a I'm very glad about that
```
11   P:    =en wat heeft Pien laten °zien van dr buik°;*
           =and what did Pien show °of her belly°     ;*
     k:    ---smile fades---------------------------->*
12     →  *(0.8)                                         *
     k: →  *looks at P,sits back,gaze at belly puts hand
                                              on belly*
13   K: →   *>tot en met< hier;*
            *>including< here; *
            *rubs belly        *
```

EXCERPT 4.8 and then later
```
1    K:    toen- (0.2) toen dee ik ut,
           then- (0.2) then I did it,
2          en toen ~e:h~ toen eh zag ik @zijn@ •hh ja-eh
           and then ~e:h~ then eh I saw @his@ •hh yeah-eh
3          (.)
4          zijn mannelijk gesl(h)acht.(hh)
           his manh(h)hood.(hh)
5          •hh °en dat° dat vond ik wel vies;
           •hh °and I° found that quite disgusting;
6          en dat v von ik niet leu:k,
           and I didn't l-li:ke that,
7          (0.3)
8      →  •h en toen e:h later;
           •h and then e:h later;
9      →  toen wouden we <wegdoen>,
           then we wanted to <make go away>,
```

```
10   K: → klikken h↑em,=
            clicking h↑im,=
```

In excerpt 4.6a, the police officer could have approved of the child's report that she didn't show her belly, or she could have claimed understanding (cf. Iversen 2018; Stommel and Te Molder 2018; Weatherall and Keevallik 2016), instead, she produces the next question. Myrthe aligns with that question, albeit with a pause and changing facial expression. In excerpt 4.8, Pien establishes that she did not like seeing the man's private parts (lines 5-6). This counters potential blame attribution about being sexually interested or wanting to see the image. Simultaneously, she reports trouble that also makes relevant an affiliative uptake, for example "I can imagine" or "I understand". The police officer does not provide an uptake and is silent (line 7). The girl simply continues her story from line 8 onwards.

However, children sometimes pursue a more explicitly aligning or affiliative uptake. Most of the relevant sequences come from two interviews that have been introduced in this chapter: the interview with Lieke about the man at the festival and the one with Myrthe about the Skype session. It occurs in some other interviews as well, though even less frequently. As said, children do not pursue more affiliative uptakes by explicit requests. Rather, they provide response cues, repeat or rephrase their accounts for not resisting (enough), provide an explicit evaluation or emphasize how successful their resistance was. The following excerpt is the clearest example of a pursuit. It is taken from the interview with Lieke about the man at the festival, thirteen minutes into the recording, in the questioning phase. The police officer invites her to narrate what happened next (line 1) and specifies from which point the girl should resume the talking (lines 2-4).

EXCERPT 4.9 and then I started shouting no and
kicking him
```
1   P:   >wat gebeurde d'r<toen=;
         >what happened   <next=;
2        ='meneer duwt jou?
         =gentleman pushes you?
3        dan kom je op je rug op de grond terecht,
         then you fall on your back on the ground,
```

```
4    P:    [(in/bij) de bosjes,
           [(in/near) the bushes,
5    K:    [*(en) toen probeerde die onder me    **broekje
                                               te komen,*
           [*(and) then he tried to get under my little
                                               pants,
     k:     *Rindex knee-thigh;eyes follow finger**looks
                                               up*
6    K:    want ik had een: kort broekje aan,
           because I was wearing shorts,
7    K:    [en    ](.) toen had ik *ut d↓oor;          *
           [and   ](.) then I       *g↓ot it;          *
     k:                             *bares teeth/'smile'*
8    P:    [j::a, ]
           [y::es,]
9    K:    *en toen rende ik @weg@*;
           *and then I ran @away@ *;
     k:    *-------smiles-------->*
10   P:    ↑ okee,
           ↑ okay,
11         •h en ↑↑hoe probeerde die meneer (0.3)
           •h and ↑↑how did that gentleman try (0.3)
12         onder jouw broekje [te komen;
           to get under your shorts;
13   K:                       [*nou 'khad zo'n broekje
                                                  aan,*
                               [*well I was wearing
                                   shorts like this,*
     k:                       *Rindex finger
                                 thigh;looks at finger*
14   K:    en toen ging die *zo (dan) met           *
           and then he       did (then) with
     k:                      *Rfingers under imaginary
                                 Rtrouser leg*
15   K:    z'n hand d'r gewoon onder.
           his hand just underneath it.
16         °•hh°
           °•hh°
17   P:    [okee?
           [okay?
```

```
18  K: →  [en toen °(ren-)°toen gin°'k um (xx)°-
           [and then °(run-)°then I started um (xx)°-
19         (0.5)
20      →  ~nee~ roepen en um schoppen,
           shouting ~no~ and kicking him,
21         °en toen°
           °and then°
22  P:     hm↑[hm,
           hm↑[hm,
23  K: →      [•hhh en toen ging die van me af;=
               [•hhh and then he got off me;=
24  K: →  =•hh en #toen rende ik heel# hard weg::.
           =•hh and #then I ran away::# very hard.
25         (0.8)
26  P:     en methh (.) welke ↓hand *(.)          *
           and with (.) which ↓hand *(.)          *
    k:                                *shoulders up*
27  P:     ging hij (.) onder je broekje.=
           did he (.) go under your shorts.=
```

The girl resumes the narrative as requested by reporting that the man tried to get under her shorts (line 5) and by explaining how the man could do so by explicating that she was wearing shorts (line 6). Then she shifts to her own role and claims that she now understood what the man was up to with a somewhat apologetic smile (line 7), possibly treating it as something that she should have understood earlier. She then reports running away juxtaposed to "got it", suggesting that she ran away immediately (line 9) with a smile that makes it understandable as a proud report. The report works to depict herself as potentially blaming herself for not grasping the man's intentions earlier, but also as taking action as soon as she knew what the suspect was after. The word choice "running" suggests urgency.

The police officer receives the account with "okay" (line 10) and a request for more detail about how the suspect tried to get into her pants (line 11). The pitch in "okay" is higher and may be heard as appreciative. Yet, it is clearly not overtly approving of the child's resistance. The girl provides an answer to the police officer's request for more detail by explaining that and demonstrating how the man put his hand in her trouser leg (lines 13-15).

The police officer provides another acknowledgement "okay" (line 17), using rising intonation that presents the uptake as surprised or as a news receipt.

At this point, Lieke again moves on to reporting her own resistance, but in an upgraded and expanded version. She begins reporting "and then I ran", which would bring her to the end of the narrative, but she interrupts herself. Rather than reporting 'merely' understanding and running away, she now enacts shouting "no" (though not at full volume) and kicking the man (line 20). She also portrays her resistance as effective by reporting that the man got off her (line 23; see also excerpt 4.5). Finally, she upgrades "running away" (line 9) to "running away very hard" (line 24). These upgrades emphasize her resistance and hence arguably pursue an uptake that is more affiliative than the 'okay+question' (lines 10-12)(cf. Weatherall and Stubbe 2015), e.g. approval ("good that you did that") or reassurance ("good that you did that, but no matter what happened, we're not here because you did something wrong"). The police officer picks neither option and proceeds by asking for more detail (line 25-27).

Pursuit of affiliation (reassurance, approval) does not only occur in this interview in the sequence mentioned above. Already in the free recall phase, the girl mentions that the man 'luckily didn't succeed' and that she ran away. Roughly ten minutes into the interview, the girl also brings up shouting "no", kicking and running away. She returns to her own resistance without solicitation, adding up to 14 times (including pursuits) in 9 sequences.[77] [78]

These moves invite the police officer to do more than doing being neutral. Children thus provide subtle sequential evidence that neutralistic uptakes can be interactionally problematic, even though such uptakes are meant to serve the institutional goal of truth-finding.

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[77] Sequences in which Lieke only constructs her innocence are not included in this count.

[78] Myrthe's pursuit seems to be oriented towards reassurance. Although she also makes relevant approval, e.g. in excerpt 4.6, she repeatedly highlights that she could not help it. She repeatedly provides unsolicited accounts that display that she had innocent intentions (three sequences), that she didn't want to connect with the suspect or see his private parts (five sequences), that she didn't know how Skype works (three moves in two sequences) and that her friend is responsible (ten moves in ten sequences). Finally, she does self-judgement (four moves in two sequences).

4.5 Conclusion and discussion

This chapter started off with noting that children provide unsolicited reports of their own role regarding the abuse or attempted abuse. The question was what children establish by providing these reports, why they may do so and how police officers respond to them.

The analysis showed that children often use unsolicited reports to display that they did not want the abuse to happen, that they were not reckless, that they did not see the trouble coming and that they had innocent intentions. Such reports accomplish 'doing being the victim'. Moreover, the analysis showed that children report that they resisted the suspect or tried to, either by being smart or by offering verbal or physical resistance. Children also show a normative orientation towards resistance by highlighting the resistance, accounting for their role and sometimes providing evaluations, including self-judgments that deem their own role as not resistant enough. Children thus treat providing resistance as a normative requirement. They do so as early as in the free recall phase. This suggests that accounting is not something they have learnt in the course of the interview. The norms that children observably orient towards map very well on elements of rape myths that establish what a 'real victim' is, specifically the requirement that a real victim should provide appropriate resistance. Children thus appear to use the unsolicited accounts to do 'being a real victim' while anticipating and countering potential victim-blaming moves that would undermine their victimhood (Jol, Stommel and Spooren in press). These issues also occur in Fogarty's study (2010); however the focus on unsolicited accounts allows for an even more confident claim that children themselves treat their own behavior as a relevant issue.

Another finding is that police officers respond to such accounts in a neutralistic way. They avoid taking a stance towards the child's accounts and they generally acknowledge children's accounts as information by providing uptakes such as "okay", "hmhm", pauses, answer-repetitions, next questions and combinations of these. This can be explained by the institutional constraints that police officers have to comply with. Police officers are supposed to refrain from committing to the child's story, since it is still under

investigation. Accepting the child's story too easily may be seen as disturbing the police's primary goal of truth-finding. The fact that the interview is monitored, recorded and may be scrutinized in the future during the criminal procedure, adds to the importance of conduct that can be seen as neutral. The police officer's mostly neutralistic uptakes are in line with previous research into displays of emotions and distress in institutional settings where institutional neutrality is important (Antaki et al. 2015b; Hepburn and Potter 2007; Weatherall and Stubbe 2015) and confirm earlier research that signals a tension between neutral evidence gathering and rapport building (Antaki et al. 2015b; Childs and Walsh 2018; Iversen 2018)[79].

The requirement of 'neutrality' creates a dilemma for the police officer. This may manifest itself when police officers comment on their own interviews, like the Norwegian police officers (Jakobsen, Langballe and Schultz 2017; see also section 4.3). The dilemma also manifests itself in the interaction. First, when police officers produce uptakes that are slightly affiliative, the affiliative character tends to be minimal and implicit. They thus show a trade-off between interactional requirements and the constraint that police officers should be neutral. Second, children sometimes pursue a more affiliative uptake, thus displaying that something was lacking. Not all children do this, and pursuits can be quite subtle, but their occurrence nevertheless shows that neutralistic uptakes can be treated as inappropriate in ongoing interaction and that it can be problematic for children (cf. Weatherall and Stubbe 2015). Consequently, attempts to adhere to the norm to be neutral undermines other institutional tasks such as creating a safe environment for the child to tell its story.

On a more general level, the analysis adds to previous literature that argues against the conduit-metaphor of interaction (Hutchby 2005; 2007; Phillips 1999). The conduit metaphor (Lakoff and Johnson 1980; Reddy 1979) conceptualizes language (words, sentences) as containers of meaning. Those containers transfer ideas (feelings, thoughts, memories) from a sender to the receiver of the message. This metaphor is often implicit in many English

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[79] This chapter considers a particular sense of 'neutrality', namely 'not-suggestive'. For a discussion other meanings of 'neutrality', see section 6.2.

expressions about language and interaction, such as 'putting thoughts into words' and 'giving an idea' and 'hollow words'.

The conduit metaphor supports the idea that language use can be neutral. A speaker or writer is merely sending ideas to be unpacked by the receiver, and language thus can be a neutral way of transporting ideas. This way of conceptualizing language has found its way into advice literature. As we have seen in section 4.3, the Manual for police interviews with children encourages police officers to interview children 'in the most neutral way possible', thus building on the idea that interaction can be mostly neutral. This is in line with advice literature for mediation (Phillips 1999) and therapeutic sessions (Hutchby 2005). As Hutchby summarizes, the professional can be seen as a "conduit, a largely neutral presence 'drawing together' and 're-expressing' or clarifying" (Hutchby 2005: 308).

The notion of neutrality has been challenged. Research has shown that contributions that are considered neutral in advice literature (e.g. summarizing), fulfill decidedly institutional goals and steer and shape the interaction (Hutchby 2005; 2007; Phillips 1999). The conduit metaphor has thus been shown to hide particular aspects of interaction, namely the institutional, goal-oriented aspects of the professionals' contributions to the interaction. This chapter confirms that the actual neutrality in interaction is not possible. More importantly, the analysis adds to this debate that attempts to achieve neutrality sometimes are treated as interactionally inappropriate and problematic.

Children's efforts to present themselves as real victims also point to another dilemma. As mentioned, children orient to resistance as the right thing to do (cf. MacLeod 2016). In the present analysis, police officers do not challenge these norms and thus treat the norms that children orient towards as unproblematic. This would be even more pronounced if police officers would provide more affiliative responses: approval would implicitly confirm the norm that children should resist offenders. Thus, a question for police officers to answer is whether they consider it their task to address such problematic norms or not, and if so, how.

The findings also lead to questions for follow-up study. The uptakes by police officers and the lack thereof, have been looked at from the perspective of

what they have in common: the absence of explicit affiliation and overt commitment to the child's story. Undoubtedly, the different variations accomplish different interactional work that are worth further analysis. The same applies to the different varieties of pursuits by children. It is also notable that four of the children provide many of the examples and that these children also tend to be among the older children, and they are all girls. Quantitative methods could shed more light on the question whether this is a more general tendency.

Another question that the study raises is whether children have indeed acquired common sense notions about what establishes a real victim of sexual assault or rape. Based on the current study, it is not possible to say whether this is the case. It could very well be that children orient to what parents, care givers, teachers of friends told them about what they should do when they are confronted with a potential abuser. Another issue relating to the rape myth is whether it is actually appropriate to talk about rape myths, since most cases in the data collection do not involve rape but rather assault. However, the point here is that children apparently actively orient to norms of how victims should behave.

5 How children respond to questions about sources of knowledge

The following excerpt (5.1) introduces the topic of this chapter. The excerpt is taken from an episode in the interview with a boy called Brian (8) about repeated abuse by his grandfather. Brian also reports that his grandfather received emails with videos that Brian had to watch. Based on the description of the child, this was possibly pornographic material. Excerpt 5.1 comes from an episode when the child has gone to the bathroom escorted by the case detective (see section 1.1.3). The interviewing police officer (P) stays in the interview room. The director (P2) takes the opportunity to come over to the interview room for a direction deliberation (1.1.3); the feedback-exchange is therefore captured on tape. Excerpt 5.1 is a part of this feedback exchange:

EXCERPT 5.1 Direction consultation[80]
```
1    P2:   there is also a question here about the
           email that grandpa receives,=
2          =how does he[81] know that?
3          (0.6)
4    P:    hyesh
5          (xx xx) there is also eh;
6    P2:   yeah,
7    P:    [correct
8    P2:   [>yes there is also<- we are fill- we are
           filling in;
9          that eh •hhh that is being talked about,
10         but (.) he may as well have [seen it.
11   P:                                 [•hhh
12         yes,
13   P:    (but) I'm not filling that ↑i:n,
14         >I will just ask how he got that information<,=
```

---

[80] This excerpt is given to illustrate that the phenomenon of questions about sources of knowledge is treated as an important issue by police officers themselves. Because it is only an introduction to the phenomenon, only the translation is provided. In the other excerpts in this chapter, the original Dutch exchange is provided.

[81] 'He' refers to the witness.

```
15  P2:  =yes,
16       how does he know that,=
```

In lines 1 and 2, P2 advises, suggests, requests or urges the interviewing police officer to ask how the child knows about the emails. In other words, the director requests a question about the child's source of knowledge. The police officers discuss this issue further in the remainder of the excerpt. Both police officers treat question about the source of the knowledge as important. P2 does so by raising the issue and urging her colleague to ask this question (lines 1-2). P orients to the importance of *inquiring* about the source of knowledge. He denies that he is assuming how the child knows by "filling in" the source of knowledge. He states that he will "just" (*gewoon*) ask the child how he obtained information about the videos (lines 13-14). Hence, he distances himself from the idea of assuming how the child knows and constructs asking how the child knows as the 'normal' way and the right thing to do.

The importance of the questions about sources of knowledge is also demonstrated in their frequency. They occur in 29 out of the 30 interviews that I studied for this chapter and, in total, I collected 210 instances of questions about sources of knowledge. Only three interviews included only one or two instances, while 26 interviews provided three or more instances. Furthermore, all thirteen police officers provided at least one instance; one police officer (who did one interview) provided one instance; all others produced at least three cases (in one interview) of questions about sources of knowledge.

The phenomenon is interesting because asking for sources of knowledge is not the default practice in everyday interaction. People tend to take a lot of implicit information for granted without asking for clarification (Garfinkel 1963; Heritage 1984b). As Pomerantz put it:

> If people ask for evidence, they are asking for grounds for believing that given assertions are true. One sort of evidence that people give is to tell the *sources* or *bases* of their believing given assertions. The source or basis of an assertion may not be relevant when an assertion's validity is assumed. When, however, its validity is called into question, the source or basis comes into play. (Pomerantz 1984b: 608)

The use of questions about sources of knowledge thus accomplishes something specific, namely: not assuming the validity of a child's assertions straightaway. Frequent use of such questions presumably contributes to a critical interactional context and might be one of the features typical for police interviews with child witnesses.

This chapter analyzes such questions about sources of knowledge. In order to understand which goals these questions serve from a police perspective, section 5.2 describes the legal framework. Then, the chapter turns to the analysis of how questions about sources of knowledge are responded to by children. This can be divided into two parts: the first part (section 5.3) shows that questions about sources of knowledge can be dealt with in an unproblematic way. The second part of the analysis (5.4), shows that the question regularly leads to interactional difficulties for the child. Roughly, subsections 5.4.2-5.4.5 are organized along the line of their increasingly problematic character displayed in the child's responses. A conclusion and discussion follow in section 5.5. First, section 5.1 explains a few key concepts for this chapter.

5.1 Key concepts[82]

This section discusses epistemics (knowledge) in interaction and evidentiality (sources of knowledge) in interaction in sections 5.1.1 and 5.1.2 respectively. Another concept that is relevant to the analysis is that of accounts; for a discussion of this concept, see section 4.1 of the previous chapter.

5.1.1 Epistemics in interaction

An important notion in the context of knowledge in interaction is "epistemic stance" (Heritage 1984a: 250; Heritage 2012; Heritage and Clayman 2010: 25). This term refers to the knowledge claims that speakers make in their talk. For example, if people ask for information, they implicitly claim or propose that the addressee of the question knows more about that particular topic than the person who asks the question. Such claims and proposals are open for negotiation in interaction; they can be misunderstood, challenged, disputed and confirmed (Fox 2001; Heritage and Raymond 2005; Pomerantz 1984b).

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[82] An earlier version of this section is part of (Jol and Stommel 2016b).

Such negotiations about how much and which knowledge a turn claims can take place throughout the question sequence, e.g., by posing a question (first position), by giving an answer (second position), by taking up that answer (third position) and possibly beyond that. The following excerpt from everyday interaction, from Heritage (2012: 19), illustrates these points nicely:

EXCERPT 5.2
```
11  Mom:   Do you know who's going to that meeting?
12  Rus:   Who.
13  Mom:   I don't kno:w.
14         (0.2)
15  Rus:   .hh Oh::. Prob'ly .h Missiz Mc Owen ('n Dad
           said)
16         prob'ly Missiz Cadry and some of the
           teachers.
(Heritage 2012: 19, partly quoted)
```

Mom asks whether Russ knows who is going to the meeting in line 11. This turn is ambiguous. It can be heard as requesting that information from Russ and thus as an implicit claim of no knowledge; it can also be heard as a pre-telling and thus as an implicit claim of knowledge (Terasaki 2004). Russ' response in line 12 treats Mom's turn as a pre-telling: he inquires who is coming. He thus treats Mum as more knowledgeable on this topic and he gives a go-ahead for his mother to tell who is going to the meeting. However, Mom produces a no-knowledge claim in third position (line 13). This implies that Russ' uptake of line 11 as a pre-telling (Heritage 2012: 19-20) was not the right interpretation. Russ now does a self-repair and answers the initial question as a request for information (line 15-16). He produces his answer carefully with "prob'ly", "('n Dad said)", but he nevertheless provides an answer. This constitutes a remarkable switch from a not-knowing stance (line 12) to a relatively knowing stance (lines 15-16). The excerpt shows that implicit and explicit knowledge claims might change throughout sequences and that they are subject to negotiation.

Another important notion is the notion of "epistemic status". This notion refers to the more stable knowledge that speakers "actually" have but that is inaccessible for interlocutors. It can be contrasted with the local, negotiable

and accessible epistemic stance. Both notions were introduced by Heritage (2012; 2013) in search for an explanation of how interlocutors determine if a particular utterance is a question or a statement. How this may work, can again be illustrated with excerpt 5.2. The discussion of this excerpt signals that Mom's turn in line 11 is ambiguous, and notices *that* Russ treats it as a pre-telling. However, it does not explain *how* Russ decides to treat it in this way. This is where the idea of epistemic status comes in. If Russ thinks that his mother's epistemic status is higher than his own on this particular topic, that explains his choice for treating his mother's turn as a pre-telling rather than a request for information. This would also work the other way around.

The introduction of the idea of epistemic status led to a fierce debate between conversation analysts. Two principle objections to the approach by Heritage and Raymond is that the notion of epistemic status is cognitivist (Drew 2012; Lindwall, Lymer and Ivarsson 2016; Lynch and Wong 2016) (for rebuttals, see Heritage 2018; Raymond 2018) (that is, as concerned with the thoughts, ideas, intentions that speakers may have) and informationist (that is, considering interaction as the exchange of information). This is seen to be problematic because CA traditionally focuses on analyzing what is observable in the data, primarily by looking at the next turn (see section 1.3), and on what participants *do* with their turns rather than considering interaction as an exchange of information (see sections 1.3 and the discussion of the conduit metaphor in section 4.5). This leads some researchers to reject what they call the "Epistemic Program" altogether (Lynch and Wong 2016). Other researchers (e.g. Steensig and Heinemann 2016) agree with some of the criticism in that they confirm potential dangers of overemphasizing the importance of epistemics, however, they also highlight the importance and usefulness of studying how speakers orient to knowledge and knowledge rights in their talk (2016: 606). This chapter takes the latter approach.

Finally, I would like to return to questions and the knowledge asymmetry they propose. Speakers do not only take a less knowledgeable stance when they ask a question, they orient to it in an observably normative way. That is, they

sometimes treat asking for the obvious as problematic[83]. For example, Stokoe and Edwards find that police officers frame some questions as "silly", like "Um (1.4) may sound a bit silly bu- uh do y'know whose window it is" (simplified from Stokoe and Edwards 2008: 92). The account "may sound a bit silly" displays that the question transgresses the interactional rule "don't ask things you already know" (Stokoe and Edwards 2008). Likewise, police officers have been found to account for questions that ask for known information with "for the benefit of the tape" and variants thereof (Stokoe 2009: 1887). Reversely, answerers can hold questioners responsible for questions that ask for known information. "Of course" and "absolutely" in responses treat a question as unaskable based on for example general knowledge or previous discourse (Stivers 2011). Similarly, the change of state token "oh" in response-initial position treats the question as unexpected or inappropriate and suggests that the questioner should have known better (see also Heritage 1998; Sidnell 2014).

5.1.2 Evidentiality in interaction

Sources of knowledge play an important role in how speakers position themselves epistemically (Sidnell 2014). In many languages, sources of knowledge, or evidentiality, must be provided in order to produce a grammatically correct utterance (Aikhenvald 2004; Chafe and Nichols 1986). In other languages, like English and Dutch, providing such sources is optional (e.g. Fox 2001: 168; Sidnell 2014: 128). Pomerantz writes: "Recipients may infer the access or bases speakers have for making assertions. (…) And routinely if the source is what one would normally infer, it is not explicitly described" (Pomerantz 1984b: 610-611). In other words, when speakers add a source of knowledge to their assertions, they do something specific (Pomerantz 1984b). Consider for example:

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[83] The moral obligation not to ask for known information mirrors the interactional rule about *telling* "don't tell others what you figure they already know" (Sacks 1995II: xv, 438).

Example 1a: "There is over a hundred thousand **according to** this article"
Example 1b: "**Sounds** like you had a great time"
(examples from Fox 2001: 171-172; bold in original)

In example 1a "according to this article" provides a source of knowledge and simultaneously distances the speaker from the assertion that "there are over a hundred thousand". The speaker thus only takes responsibility for correctly quoting the article (Pomerantz 1984b). In example 1b "sounds" presents the evaluation as based on what the interlocutor has reported about a particular event, rather than on direct access to the event. The reserved assessment of the event thus treats the other person as more entitled to assessments, in this case because of his or her direct experience and knowledge of the event (cf. Raymond and Heritage 2006; see also Stivers, Mondada and Steensig 2011). Using evidential or epistemic marking is therefore not just a matter of indexing that something is "*not* certainly, definitely, and unproblematically established" (Pomerantz 1984b: 608), downgrading the certainty or representing an actual cognitive state. It also orients to the relationship between interlocutors (Fox 2001), the sequential positioning (Fox 2001) and the knowledge of one interlocutor relative to the other (Kim 2005; Sidnell 2014). Another point to take from the examples relates to the sequence in which they may occur. The first example could be taken from a discussion about refugees and the second one from reporting about a holiday. In such sequences, the main activity is not establishing "who knows what and how". Instead, the speakers use sources of knowledge to manage their mutual epistemic relationship "*en passant*" (Sidnell 2014: 128, 137).

Just as providing a source of knowledge does specific interactional work, asking for a source of knowledge does more than merely ask for information about a cognitive state. It was mentioned in the introduction of this chapter that asking for evidence, including sources of knowledge, implies that the validity of a given assertion is not taken for granted and that there is some degree of doubt about what was asserted (Pomerantz 1984b). Moreover, whereas much negotiation about who knows what and how happens *en passant*, asking for a source of knowledge topicalizes the source of knowledge and highlights the accountability of the other speaker for the correctness of his or her assertions. It is interesting that the other study that

mentions questions about sources of knowledge is about Australian police interviews with child witnesses (Fogarty 2010: 187-278). She notes that children regularly volunteer sources of knowledge and present their answers as tentative, displaying an orientation to the importance of precise information and accuracy. She also finds that children sometimes do not volunteer accounts of how they know; in these cases, police officers prompt a source of knowledge. Sometimes children provide unproblematic answers, but she notes that children display considerable trouble formulating answers at other times.

From these considerations, it follows that the questions about sources of knowledge that police officers are instructed to ask are marked. The interview guidebook does not prescribe that children should be informed about the background of these questions (Dekens and Van der Sleen 2013) and in our interview data, police officers never explain to children the reason for questions about sources of knowledge. A relevant issue then is how children deal with these questions.

5.2 Legal requirements for witness evidence

The purpose of the Dutch criminal procedure is to seek the truth (1.1), with professional judges as the ultimate decision makers. Because judges have not experienced the events under investigation themselves, they must reconstruct 'what happened' in a way that approximates 'the truth' as much as possible. One way to facilitate that reconstruction is safeguarding reliability of evidence (Philips 1993). Indeed, the Dutch Code of Criminal Procedure (Wetboek van Strafvordering, henceforth 'Sv') restricts what counts as evidence in court in several articles. For instance, article 342 Sv defines that a witness statement concerns: "his [sic] account given during the court hearing about facts and circumstances which he [sic] has observed or experienced himself [sic]."[84] This indicates that the witness' knowledge only counts if the witness has acquired it first-hand. In order to allow the court to evaluate if this is the case, article 291 Sv prescribes that: "the witness states as much as possible explicitly what

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[84] *Onder verklaring van een getuige wordt verstaan zijne [sic] bij het onderzoek op de terechtzitting gedane mededeling van feiten of omstandigheden, welke hij [sic] zelf waargenomen of ondervonden heeft.*

he (sic) has perceived and experienced and what his [sic] reasons of knowledge are"[85]. The term "reasons of knowledge" refers to "reasons that enabled the witness to perceive or experience something" (Wöretshofer 2009: 1120), for example the witness having a view from his/her apartment onto the scene of the crime. In general, it follows from this rule that witnesses in court must not only tell in court *what* they know, but also *how* they know.

For the police, there is a similar rule. Article 153 Sv prescribes that police officers should include their reasons of knowledge in their reports (*processen-verbaal*). When taken literally, this rule concerns the reasons of knowledge of the *police*, and not necessarily *witnesses'* reasons of knowledge. Nevertheless, handbooks advise that police officers also inquire about the reasons of knowledge of witnesses as well, both in case of adult (Van Amelsvoort, Rispens and Grolman 2012: 205, 208) and child witnesses (Dekens and Van der Sleen 2013: 92). The following quote is from the Manual for interviewing child witnesses and other vulnerable witnesses:

> During the entire interrogation, the interrogator regularly asks open test questions about the sources of knowledge. The goal of asking test questions is to determine the origins of particular information and to gain insight in causal relations.[86] (Dekens and Van der Sleen 2013: 92).

The Manual illustrates the practice as follows (it is unclear whether these examples are real or invented):

> Police: 'How do you know it was twelve o'clock?'
> Witness: 'I saw that on the clock.'
>
> Police: 'How do you know that you had to take off your pants?'
> Witness: 'Don't know.'

---

[85] *De getuige moet bij zijn [sic] verklaring zo veel mogelijk uitdrukkelijk opgeven wat hij [sic] heeft waargenomen en ondervonden en wat zijn [sic] redenen van wetenschap zijn*.

[86] *Gedurende het hele verhoor stelt de verhoorder regelmatig open toetsvragen naar redenen van wetenschap. Het stellen van toetsvragen heeft als doel de herkomst van bepaalde informatie te achterhalen en inzicht te krijgen in oorzaak en gevolg*.

> Police: 'Did he say that you had to do that, or was it your idea, or did he take your pants off, or did it happen in another way?'
> Witness: 'He said so.'
> Police: 'What did he say then?'
> (Dekens and Van der Sleen 2013: 92)[87]

A reason for including such guidance in manuals seems to be that the police anticipate questions of reliability that may be raised in the further criminal procedure. By advising such questions for the police interview, the interview and the corresponding written report (see section 1.1.3) become more similar to the testimony that is required in court and thus become more suitable to replace it.

What is interesting about the instruction to ask test questions, both in the law and in the manuals, and the accompanying examples, is that they convey the idea that asking questions about sources of knowledge are 'neutral' devices that merely request information. The Manual does not elaborate on what such questions may accomplish on a social or relational level. One possibility is indicated by the quote from Pomerantz (1984b) in the introduction of this chapter and in section 5.1.2: requests for evidence treat an assertion as possibly invalid. This chapter discusses how children respond to such questions, and provides insight into how questions about sources of knowledge function in interaction. Section 5.4 will discuss responses to questions about sources of knowledge that display problems of some sort. First, however, section 5.3 attests that questions about sources of knowledge can function as eliciting a basis of knowledge as prescribed in the legal documents and Manuals described in this section.

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[87] (V= Police officer (*verhoorder*); G=witness (*getuige*))
V: 'Hoe weet je dat het twaalf uur was?'
G: 'Ik zag het op de klok.

V: 'Hoe weet je dat je je broek uit moest doen?'
G: 'Weet ik niet
V: 'Zei hij dat je dat moest doen of deed je het uit jezelf of deed hij je broek uit of ging het anders?'
G: 'Dat zei hij.'
V: 'Wat zei hij dan?'

5.3 Answers that treat questions about sources of knowledge as unproblematic

Children do not always treat questions about sources of knowledge as problematic. In the data, 186 responses about sources of knowledge were problematic and 27 (of 210) received straightforward responses. Excerpt 5.3 provides an example of the latter category. It is taken from an interview with Zoë (6) about the babysitter who flashed his private parts at her and her brother Robby, downstairs in the living room and in both of their bedrooms. The target line is line 20.

```
EXCERPT 5.3 but how do you know that you g- have to go
back upstairs
1   P:   •h En hoe gaat ut dan verder,
         •h And how does it continue then,
2        (0.5)
3   K:   ehm dat be:n ik >weer vergeten<.
         ehm that I ha:ve >forgotten now<.
4   P:   •pt hij heef' zn piemel uit z'n broek,
         •pt he has his willy out of his pants,
5        jij zit daar,
         you are sitting there,
6   K:   [(h/m)ja,
         [(h/m)yes,
7   P:   [>en je zegt dan;
         [>and then you say;
8        op een gegeven moment< ga je naar boven,
         at a certain moment < you go upstairs,
9   P:   weer naar bed.
         back to bed.
10       (0.3)
11  K:   yip.
         yep.
12  P:   wat ↑gebeurt er dan?
         what ↑happens at that moment?
13  ?    •h
    ?    •h
```

```
14  K:    e:h:m <dan loop 'kge>woon zelf naar m'n eigen
            °bed;=
            e:h:m <then I just walk> to my own bed by
            myself;=
15          =>en dan ga<•hh 'k zelf ut lichtje aandoe:n,
            =>and then I •hh go switch on the light myself,
16          (0.6)
17          [naar de gang,          ]
            [to the hallway,        ]
18  P:      [maar hoe weet je dan,      ]
            [but how do you know then,]
19          dat je weer naar ↑boven g- moet?
            that you g- have to go back upst↑airs?
20  K: →   dat zegt ie dan,
            'e says so then,
21  P:      ↑ok↓hee.
            ↑ok↓ay.
```

In lines 1-2, an attempt to elicit further talk from the child fails. The police officer then provides a version of the child's story (lines 4-5, 7-9, confirmed in lines 6 and 11) as a starting point for further narration, followed by a new invitation to talk in line 12. The girl starts telling now, and being independent girl: she walked to her bed by herself, and switched on the light herself. Moreover, the use of "just" portrays this as normal. After a pause (line 16), the child further specifies which light she means (line 17).

In overlap with this specification, the police officer produces a question about a source of knowledge (line 18-19) that concerns the baby sitter's wishes or the obligations created by the baby sitter. The question is phrased in a challenging way: "but" frames the requested information as lacking in the previous turn (Jol and Van der Houwen 2014), and "then" presents the question as following from what was said before, implying that what was said was not sufficient. Yet, the child does not treat the question about the source of knowledge in a defensive or otherwise problematic way. She produces her answer immediately, and without visible orientation to

trouble[88]. She could have prefaced her utterance with "because", framing her answer as an account, but she presents her answer as a factual report of a source of knowledge, and thus treats the police officer's question according to its literal meaning: a question about the source of her knowledge. Consequently, although the question is hearable as challenging, this does not necessarily mean that children treat it as such by reacting in a defensive way. The police officer in turn displays that her question is answered satisfactorily with an immediate and unproblematic "okay" (line 21). This shows that the ''e says so then'' is a sufficient answer to the question about how the girl knew what the suspect wanted her and her brother to do.

The answer "s/he said so" seems to be the targeted answer when the question about the source of knowledge concerns someone else's mental state. Usually the questions concern the suspect's intentions (45 out of 51 questions about sources of knowledge of someone else's mental state). In response to 21 of these 51 questions about the source of knowledge of someone else's mental state, the child responds by referring to verbal expressions by the other person, like "s/he said/explained that". Police officers generally accept these answers by moving on to the next question. Another type of interactional evidence for "s/he said so" as a targeted answer comes from three cases in which the police officer pursues an answer by asking if something was said, retrospectively showing that she actually was going for a response like "because he said so" as a default answer. Police officers thus treat talk as the primary source of knowing other people's intentions.

From a police perspective, the question about sources of knowledge does important work here. Whereas mental states are not directly accessible or knowable, asking how the child knows the suspect's intentions invites the child to formulate an explicit, observable and therefore verifiable source of knowledge. This makes the child's testimony more suitable as evidence (cf. Jönsson and Linell 1991; Van Charldorp 2011). Moreover, intentions are not just made explicit, they are also attributed to the suspect's behavior. Thus, the

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[88] A mere pause was not categorized as a problem indicator because children up to the age of at least 8 generally take more time to respond to questions and have more difficulty timing their turns (Stivers, Sidnell and Bergen 2018).

question about the source of knowledge works to construct the suspect's behavior as intentional (cf. Edwards 2008; Stokoe and Edwards 2008).

5.4 Questions about sources of knowledge that are followed by interactional difficulty

The previous section shows that children do not necessarily treat the question about sources of knowledge as problematic. However, the majority of the responses do display some type of trouble. In this section, I discuss four types of trouble that I identified in the data: answers that treat the question as unjustified (section 5.4.2), answers that treat the question as casting doubt upon the child's knowledge (5.4.3), answers that avoid contradictions (5.4.4) and responses that include defense components (5.4.5). First, section 5.4.1 discusses some indicators of trouble.

5.4.1 Disfluent responses and responses followed by reiterated questions

Questions about sources of knowledge regularly lead to disfluent responses. Moreover, such responses do not always fully address the question, neither are responses always treated by the police officer as fully addressing the question. Excerpt 5.4 illustrates both points. The interview concerns repeated sexual abuse of 10-year-old Adriënne and her little sister by their father.

```
EXCERPT 5.4 well you- he talks very quite loudly.
1   P:   •hhh want jij zegt,
         •hhh because you say,
((11 lines omitted in which P produces her version
of what happened on a particular day; K ratifies
P's version with "yes"))
13  P:   en toen ben je naar ut toilet gegaan,
         and then you went to the bathroom,
14       (1.1)
15  P:   e:::hm en jouw zusje moest jouw vader toen weer
         (.) aaien;
         e:::hm and then your little sister had to
         stroke your father again;
16       (0.9)
17  P:   >dat je< vader zei;
         >that your< father said;
```

```
18        van >je doet ut nie< g↑↑oed genoeg: ?
          like >you don't do it w↑↑ell enough: ?
19        (0.6)
20        en nu krijg je maar ↓tien ↓cent.
          and now you get ↓ten ↓cent only.
21  K:    [ja;
          [yes;
22  P:1→  [hoe <weet> je dat;
          [how do you <know> that;
23        (0.7)
24  K:    nou je- hij praat heel best wel hard.
          well you- he talks very quite loudly.
25  P:    ↑hm↑↑mm?
          ↑hm↑↑mm?
26  K:    dus dat hoorde ik °wel°.
          so I did hear that.
27  P:    dat hoorde je;
          you heard that;
28    2→  maar;
          but;
29    2→  >hoe wist je dan< wat je zusje aan ut
          d↑oen was,
          >how did you know then< what your sister
          was d↑oing,
30        (0.7)
31  K:    ehm: (.) met- dat eh dat vertelt ze soms.=
          ehm: (.) with- she tells that eh that
          sometimes.=
32        =>maar zij< (.) durft ut niet in één keer
          alles te vertell-•hh.
          =>but she< (.) doesn't dare to tell
          everything at once.•hh
33  K:    >ze vertelt ut meestal maar< in  <stukjes> .
          >she usually tells it only< in <little
                                           pieces>.
34  P:    °owkhee;
          °owkay;
35        ze durruft niet in één keer;=
          she doesn't dare at once;=
36  P:    =>maar ze vertelt< maar in stukjes.
          =>but she only tells< the story in pieces.
```

((P inquires about K's sister's age))

In lines 13-20 P gives a version of K's story that, while she went to the bathroom, her father told the girl's sister to stroke him and that he promised her ten cents. This sets up a puzzle (Sliedrecht 2013): how can the child know what happened while she was in the bathroom? The police officer treats this as problematic with an explicit request for an account of how the child knows in line 22 (indicated with "1→").

Yet, the use of "that" (line 22) is ambiguous: it can refer to the stroking (line 15), to what their father said (lines 17-20), or both. Adriënne treats "that" as referring to the most recent possible antecedent, namely what her father said (lines 18-20). She solves that puzzle by stating that her father speaks quite loudly so she could hear what her father was saying, although she was in the bathroom (lines 24, 26). The answer is a good example of a format that indicates trouble: it is delayed with 0.7 seconds (line 23) and it starts with "well', an indicator of non-straightforwardness (Schegloff and Lerner 2009)[89]. After a continuer by the police officer (line 25), the child also adds "so I did hear that" (*dus dat hoorde ik wel*, line 26). With this phrase, Adriënne orients to the possibility of *not* hearing and counters that possibility. She thus treats the question and continuer as casting doubt on her knowledge (these types of answers will be further analyzed in section 5.3.3). Another issue with this answer is that it only solves the puzzle with regard to what her father was doing. It does not address the issue how the girl knows what her *sister* was doing. The police officer does not leave it to this and elicits an answer to the question how Adriënne knows about her sister's behavior in lines 29-30 (indicated with "2→"). She prefaces the question with "but", which treats the previous answer as insufficient and constructs the question as pursuing that missing element (Jol and Van der Houwen 2014; Pomerantz 1984c).

After the reissued question (line 29-30), the child again delays her answer with a 0.7 second pause, "ehm" and a micropause (line 30-31). Her turn becomes even more disfluent by the self-repair of the phrase starting with "with". The answer is also problematic in the sense that the witness apparently

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[89] There may be differences in the exact use of English "well" versus those of Dutch *nou*. Many of the described functions of "well" do, however, also seem to apply to uses of *nou*.

learnt about what happened to her little sister in bits and pieces. This implies that it must have been difficult for the girl to get the picture of what happened. "She doesn't dare" furthermore suggests that her little sister was afraid to report the events, which possibly has influenced the sister's telling.

The excerpt thus illustrates different indicators that the child has trouble answering the question. First, there is disfluency, for example substantial delay (pauses, and items like 'ehm', 'well' and the like), restarts, self-repair, repair-initiations etc. Secondly, the example shows that the question can be taken as casting doubt upon the child's knowledge or reliability. Thirdly, responses are not always addressing all aspects of the question, which in turn can compel the police officer to try and solve the issue. I identified thirty questions about sources of knowledge that are reissued questions. This in itself suggests that questions about sources of knowledge can lead to trouble. Finally, children's responses sometimes show other trouble such as emotional distress. The next sections will go further into the nature of the trouble certain answers display.

5.4.2 Answers that challenge the question[90]

The first type of responses that treat questions about sources of knowledge as causing trouble are answers that are presented as self-evident. Excerpt 5.5 illustrates this type of response. The excerpt is taken from an interview with Ben (6) who was playing in the attic with his teenage cousin. At a certain point they start rubbing body parts with each other: their noses, bellies, buttocks and willies. Just prior to the excerpt, the police officer and boy have established that the rubbing was his cousin's idea.

```
EXCERPT 5.5 well we just did
1   P:    *was zijn °idhee°;*
           was his °idhea°;
    k:    *looks at P       *
2   K:    j*ha                    *
           yeah
            *closes eyes/looks down*
```

---

[90] A more elaborate version of this analysis has been published as Jol and Stommel (2016b).

```
3    P:    en hoe ↑wist je        *[↑dAn dat hij--

           and how did you⁹¹ ↑know  [↑then that he--
     k:                            *looks at P--->
4    K:                    [(ja,)⁹²
                           [(yes,)
5    P:    dat je dat (.) moest doen;  *
           that you (.) had to do that;*
     k:                          --->*
6          *(0.6)
     k:    *frowns------>
7          dat jullie dat gingen doen;
           that you⁹³ were going to do that;
8          (0.6)*
     k:     --->*
9          *kontje tegen kontje;         *
           *bottom to bottom⁹⁴;          *
     k:    *turns head to P,still frowning*
10         *(0.7)                       *
     k:    *leans forward,still frowning*
11   K:    nou,
           well,
12   K:    *hoe  @↑wi:sten **>we dat<,@             *
           *how @did we >↑kno:w that<@,             *
           *head to right/down**(smile?)+head
                                        middle/down>*
13     →   *nou gew↑oon,=                  *
           *well j↑ust,=                   *
           *well we just d↑id,=            *
           *looks in the camera, possibly smiling*
14   K:    =ik we-e *toen gingen we'ut maar•hh maar doen,=*
           =I we-e then we just •hh just started to do it,=
                    *head+eyes down+pouts---------------⁹⁵*
```

---

⁹¹ Singular
⁹² "Yes" (*ja*) is probably a late confirmation of the police officer's repetition "was his idea" (line 1).
⁹³ Plural
⁹⁴ The Dutch original uses a diminutive form: a more literal translation would be 'little bottom to little bottom'.
⁹⁵ The sudden change in embodied behavior supports the victim role that the child now takes by saying that he did not know what else to do (lines 14-18).

```
15        *=want be- wat wij ik (.) ko-we ik- •h     *
           =because (be)- what we I (.) cou-we I-•h
          *looks left-up-------------------------->*
16        *ik kon nie--
          *I could not—
          *turns left in chair, looks at seat--->
17        ik ik dach; *
          I I thought;*
          ---------->*
18        *nou ja dan •hh ik ut maar doen,
          *well okay then Ï just •hh do it,⁹⁶
          *turns slightly back to middle+looks left--->
19  P:    [°jha°; *
          [°yhes°;*
    k:     ----->>
```

The question about the child's source of knowledge is produced in lines 3 and 5-9. The question has several versions that move from making the cousin responsible for the activity (line 3: arguably heading for that he wanted to do that") and emphasis on what the child (the singular form of 'you' - *je*) "had to do" (line 5), to presenting the activity as a joint activity by using a plural form of 'you' (*jullie*, line 7). The child does not respond directly (line 8) and starts frowning near the end of the question (line 5), displaying difficulty to understand the question (Hömke 2018) or possibly doing thinking. The police officer further clarifies "that" with an incremental "bottom to bottom" (line 9).

Ben first delays his answer with 0.7 seconds (line 10) while still frowning, which displays difficulty responding to and making sense of the question. The delay is followed by "well" (*nou*) which constructs the upcoming answer as not straightforward (Schegloff and Lerner 2009), a shift in perspective or departure from constraints of the question (Heritage 2015). The modified repeat of the question (line 12) also characterizes the question as somehow problematic (Bolden 2009). In the next line, the child proceeds the prefacing of the answer with "well we just did" (*nou gewoon*; line 13). "Well" has been noted to contest the relevance of a question (Heritage 2015: 93) and the Dutch *nou* does this job in this fragment as well. The use of "well" also

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⁹⁶ The Dutch utterance is not grammatical.

seems to be colored and reinforced by "just" (*gewoon*). "Just" presents the answer as common sense and therefore as self-evident, that is, not in need of additional evidence (Fox 2001: 173). The answer preface in line 12 thus proposes that the answer was readily available for the police officer to infer and resists the question as a legitimate request for information (for different, yet also resisting, uses of *gewoon*, see Lamerichs, Alisic and Schasfoort 2015; Van Charldorp 2011). Other sources that children employ to present their answers as self-evident include intonation and references to things that you should know when you know someone (Jol and Stommel 2016b).

The child's self-evident response is orienting to a combination of two interactional rules. The first rule is that participants in interaction should not ask for the obvious, as discussed in section 5.1.1. The second interactional rule is, in Pomerantz's words, "Recipients may infer the access or bases speakers have for making assertions. (…) And routinely if the source is what one would normally infer, it is not explicitly described" (Pomerantz 1984b: 610). The self-evident answer thus targets the unknowing stance that the police officer takes regarding the source of knowledge. By challenging the terms of the police officer's question, Ben thus monitors and marks the borders of what can be reasonably and explicitly asked and what should be inferred.

Nevertheless, it is notable that the excerpt shows that the boy still attempts to provide an answer to the question about how he knew about his cousin's plans in this case, albeit in a rather disfluent and slightly off-point way (lines 14-18). This is the usual pattern in the answers that are presented as self-evident: even though children present their answers as self-evident, they attempt to provide an answer anyway. A possible response could have been to spend a whole turn on disputing the police officer's unknowing stance while refusing to answer, e.g. by saying something like "what kind of question is this?" or "aren't you listening?". By attempting to answer instead, children orient to the moral obligation to provide an answer. The (attempted) answer to the question treats the police agenda of acquiring information as important which maintains the idea of the police interview as a context in which the institutional agenda is often prioritized (cf. Drew and Heritage 1992: 49-50; for an example of resistance in police interviews see e.g. Newbury and Johnson 2006). The friction about how legitimate the question is takes a relatively implicit shape: in frown, the preface and by using intonation. Answers

presented as self-evident therefore show that the children are dealing with a dilemma. On one hand, the police officer has created a moral obligation to respond. On the other hand, the children's mundane inference systems apparently indicate that this question was unjustified. Doing two things at the same time - answering and disputing - enables children to simultaneously deal with both the question and, from their perspective, its unnecessary and unjustified character. This shows that children can appropriately deal with interactional dilemmas. At the same time, the responses treat the question as causing a dilemma, which shows that children apparently do treat the question about sources of knowledge as relevant straightaway.

Interestingly, police officers usually ignore the negotiation put up in children's answers. They often acknowledge the answer with an answer repeat, a sequence closing "okay" (Gaines 2011: 3298-3301; Gardner 2001: 54), or both, and move on to the next question. This is what happens in excerpt 5.6, from an interview with Delphine (9) about repeated abuse by her father. She responds to the police officer's question about the source of knowledge in line 4. She presents her answer as self-evident using a lip smack, a slightly impatient intonation and emphasis on "explained". In lines 6 and 7, the police officer acknowledges the answer and proceeds with the line of questioning.

EXCERPT 5.6 okay and what has he explained then?
```
1   P:    ↑ wat moet jij dan?-- w--
          ↑ what do you have to then?- w--
2         hoe weet jij wat je moet doe:n,

          how do you know what you have to do:,
3         (1.0)
4   K:    •pt # ↑omdat ie dat al uit# °heb gelegd° ,
          •pt # ↑because he has already °explained that°,
5         (0.3)
6   P: →  okee;=
          okay;=
7   P: →  =en wat heeft ie dan uitgelegd?
          =and what has he explained then?
```

Sometimes, however, police officers' uptakes do a bit of extra work that seems to orient to the negotiation presented by the self-evident answers. This is illustrated by example 5.7 from an interview with 6-year-old Teun. He was approached by an unknown flasher. The police officer attempts to establish the length of the man's coat and whether Teun actually could see the man's private parts. The boy compares the length of the flasher's coat to the length of his mother's jacket:

EXCERPT 5.7 ↑↑ok↑↑ay?
```
1   P:    =net zoals je moeder?
           =just like your mother?
2          okee.=
           okay.=
3          =•HH maar da' dè'-- dan denk ik;
           =•HH but then I thi- then I think;
4          hoe kan je dan z'n piemel zien?
           how can you see his willy then?
5          (0.5)
6   K:    nou hij (dee's-) gewoon ze ↑broek naar
                                         ben↑e[d↓e:n,
           well he just (pulled) his ↑pants
                                         d↑[o↓:wn
7   P: →                                  [↑↑ok↑↑ee?
                                          [↑↑ok↑↑ay?
```

The question about how the child could see the man's willy (line 4) is framed as a puzzle: if the man's coat was that long, how could the boy have seen the man's willy? The police officer distances himself from this challenging question by designing it as a report of his (possibly involuntary) thoughts (line 3), rather than as a direct question. In line 6, the child responds to this challenge by presenting his answer as self-evident, using "well", "just" and strong intonation in "pants" and "down". The police officer responds to that with "okay". Yet, the police officer uses a strongly rising intonation that accomplishes something more than just acknowledgment. In this case, the intonation adds an element of a news receipt (Heritage 1984a: 307-312). The okay-plus-intonation in line 7 then, treats the answer as informative for the police officer, despite the child's presentation of the answer as self-evident.

That is, the police officer's uptake retrospectively and implicitly claims that the question was a legitimate, information-seeking question. The police officer implicitly aligns with the rule "don't ask things that you already know". Yet, he pushes back on the child's tacit complaint that the police officer could and should have inferred the child's source of knowledge. A more explicit example can be found in the following excerpt from the interview with Myrthe (10) about a Skype session with an unknown flasher:

```
EXCERPT 5.8 that wasn't entirely clear to me.=
1    P:    ↑ >hoe [kommut dat dat dat ze dr buik< ↓laat
           ↓zien;
           ↑ >how [come that she shows< her belly;
2    K:          [(xx)
3          (0.5)
4    K:    hij vroeg ut.
           he asked it.
5    P:    en hoe weet je dat,=
           and how do you know that,=
6    P:    =>dat ie dat< vroeg.
           =>that he that< asked.
           that he asked that.
7    K:    ik zat dr b↑ij, (hh)
           I was th↑ere,  (hh)
8    P:    daar zat je bij:,
           you were the:re,
9          oke#e[:# ;
           oka#y[:# ;
10   K:         [>ut staat ook al< in de chat,
                [>it⁹⁷ is also already< in the chat,
                [it is already in the chat already
                 as well
11   P:    ((sniffs))
12      →  dat was me nie' heelmaal duidelijk.=
           that wasn't entirely clear to me.=
```

In line 7, Myrthe responds to the question about the source of knowledge (lines 5-6) by answering "I was th↑ere, (hh)" (line 7). The intonation in "there"

---

⁹⁷ "It" (*ut*) probably refers to the suspect's request to Pien to show her belly.

combined with the laughter presents the answer as self-evident. This implies both that the police officer could and should have already understood that the girl was there, and that this should have been enough ground to understand how the child knows. The police officer repeats the answer and acknowledges it (lines 8-9). In overlap with the police officer's "okay", the child produces another source of knowledge that is available to the police (the child elsewhere says that her father has given a printout of the chat to the police). This is marked with "also already" (*ook al*) which presents this source as yet another source, emphasizing even more that the police officer could have known the answer (line 10). In line 12, the police officer proceeds her uptake of the child's answer with "that wasn't entirely clear to me". This implies that she did not understand before, and that it is clear to her now. This uptake retrospectively accounts for asking the question: it was information or an understanding that the police officer did not have before and the question was, therefore, an information-seeking question.

Police officers thus warrant their question by implicitly or explicitly claiming that they did not know, rather than, for example, acknowledging that it was a silly question that they had to ask and thus invoking the institutional requirements as a warrant. They thus refrain from inferring sources of knowledge and from treating them as obvious and maintain an unknowing stance with regard to the child's sources of knowledge. This is in line with previous literature that points out that normal inference rules do not seem to apply to police officers interviews (Antaki and Stokoe 2017) and often take an uncooperative stance by not inferring what would normally be inferable (Iversen 2018). It is also in line with excerpt 5.1, at the beginning of this chapter. The feedback of the second police officer presses the interviewing police officer to avoid "filling in" how the child knows, and urges the police officer to explicitly ask how the child knows. For children, however, this is appears to be precisely one of the difficulties with the question regarding how they know.

5.4.3 Answers that treat the question as casting doubt upon the child's knowledge

In the introduction of this chapter, it was noted that asking for evidence treats an assertion as possibly invalid. Children sometimes treat it as such. This

section discusses answers that take a less certain stance about an assertion after a question about a source of knowledge (answers that introduce doubt or claim no knowledge) and answers that enforce their claim (answers that 'push back').

Answers that introduce doubt or claim no knowledge
Children often assert something without epistemic downgrading or without epistemic marking altogether. That may change after a question about the source of knowledge (26 occurrences), such as in the following example from an interview with 8-year-old Wencke who was playing outside with 7-year-old Jentl when an unknown man approaches them and pulls Wencke on his lap. The question about the source of knowledge is produced in line 13.

EXCERPT 5.9 I s<u>a</u>w him I think also--
```
1    P:    •hhhh (.) e:::n: ;
           •hhhh (.) a:::nd ;
2          (2.5)
3          toen dat die meneer;
           when that gentleman;
4          (.)
5          bij die flat was;
           was near that flat;
6    K:    °j[hha°,
           °y[hhes°,
7    P:      [weet >jij ook-<?
             [do you >also know-<?
8          (0.4)
9          hoe die daar is gekomen?
           how did he get there
10         (0.7)
11   K:    °h gewoon lopend;
           °h just walking;
12         (0.3)
13   P:    °en hoe weet je dat ie daar lopend kwam.°
           °and how do you know that he came there
           walking.°
14         (1.2)
15   K: →  ik zag `m volgens mij °ook°--
           I saw him I think °also°--
```

```
16  K: → ik zag `m aan (0.3) lo:peh,98
           I saw him to (0.3) wa:lking,
           I saw him (0.3) walking //in my direction//,
17     → •h volgens mij;=
           •h I think;=
18     → =van •hh mijn huis z'n kant;
           =from •hh my house's direction;
19        (.)
20  P:    °•hh okee,=
           °•hh okay,=
21        =je denkt,
           =you think,
22        >dat je `m<° aan hebt zien komen    [lopen
           >that you him<° to have seen coming [walking
           that you have seen him walking towards us
```

The police officer and the child jointly set the context of the next question in lines 1-5: the gentleman was near the flat. This is followed by a question about how the man arrived at that particular location (lines 7-9). After a pause (line 10) Wencke responds that the man arrived "just walking". There is no epistemic downgrading in this answer: on the contrary, the child includes "just" (*gewoon*) presenting the answer as ordinary, unremarkable and therefore possibly already known by the police officer. The police officer then asks for an account of how Wencke knows this (line 13). The girl first substantially delays the answer (line 14) and starts an answer that is hedged in lines 15 and 17 with "according to me"/ "I think" (*volgens mij*). This seems to be going towards a hedged version of her answer in line 15, but then a self-repair presents the answer in a more certain way (line 16), although it is still disfluent due to the 0.3 second pause. The repair orients to the need to provide a certain account, but then she adds another hedge (line 17). It is ambiguous what the hedge is related to, whether to the account that she saw him walking (line 16) or to the addition that he came from the direction of her house (line 18). In either interpretation, it is remarkable that Wencke moves from something that was obvious (line 11) to hedged versions of how she knows

---

[98] A grammatically correct Dutch version is *ik zag 'm aan komen lopen.* Possibly Wencke swallows *komen*-"to come". This is also what the police officer includes in her answer repetition (line 22).

after the question about sources of knowledge: she introduces doubt to her statement. I found such hedges in fifteen of the answers in this category; the other eleven consist of no-knowledge claims ("I don't know"). These responses to the question about the source of knowledge thus treat that question as challenging the child's knowledge.

Answers that 'push back'

Another way of orienting to questions about sources of knowledge as challenging is by doing the opposite from backing off, namely pushing back (23 occurrences). One way to do that is by extra interactional work that justifies the child's assertions (8 occurrences). This is illustrated by the following excerpt. It is taken from the interview with Brian who reports having been abused repeatedly by his grandfather (see excerpt 5.1). The question about the source of knowledge is in line 4.

EXCERPT 5.10 then he always asks
```
1    K:    ja #want hij wou-- 'ij wou me daar ook
           ontvoeren,
           yes #because he want-- 'e wanted to abduct me
           there too,
2          overal# waar die is;
           everywhere# where he is;
3          wou die me meenemen.=
           he wanted to take me with him.=
4    P:    =hoe ↑weet je dat da:n ,
           =how do you ↑know that the:n ,
5          (0.8)
6    K: →  want dan vraagt ie al-
           because then he asks al-
7    K: →  •hh dan vraa:gt ie altijd,
           •hh then he always a:sks,
8          van zn moeder is op ↑we::rk,=
           like his mother is at ↑wo::rk,=
9    K:    =•h en dan kan ik hem misschien meenemen.=
           =•h and then I can maybe take him with me.=
10         =dat zei die ook (.) bij de bus;
           =he also said that (.) at the bus;
```

```
11   K:    toen ik terugkwam.⁹⁹
            when I came back.
12   P:    ja,
            yes,
13         (0.5)
14   K: →  d't zegt ie over#[a:l#,
            he says that ever#[where#,
```

In line 4, the police officer asks how Brian knows that his grandfather always wants to abduct him. After a delay (line 5) the child starts responding to the question (lines 6-11). He uses the extreme case formulations (Pomerantz 1986) "always" (line 6-7) and "everywhere" (line 14). The child thus portrays his grandfather's behavior as a persistent and as a pattern, which makes the basis for his assertion about his grandfather's motive more solid. Other ways of justifying earlier answers are claiming or displaying that the child did have access to the inquired knowledge "well you- he talks very quite loudly (…) so I did hear that" (13 instances; see excerpt 5.3) and emphasizing that something indeed was the case "because he did take pictures" (2 instances).

In other cases, children include an explicit claim that they know (10 instances), for example in excerpt 5.11 from an interview with 6-year-old Lisa about a boy called Guus:

EXCERPT 5.11 well (0.7) I know that because I felt a willy
```
1    P:    •hh en Guus.=
            •hh and Guus.=
2          =jij zegt;=
            =you say;=
3          =Guus deed zn broek (.) °↑ook naar beneden°?
            =Guus °↑also pulled his pants (.) down°?
4          (0.9)
5    P:    •pt•hh (.) en wat ↑zag je toen,
            •pt•hh (.) and what //did// you ↑see then,
6          toen Guus z'n broek >naar benejen de[e;
            when Guus his pants >down         di[d;
            when Guus pulled his pants down;
```

```
7   K:                                              [↑ik zag
                                                       ni:ks,
                                                 [↑I saw
                                                  no:thing,

8   P:    ↑o:h,
          ↑o:h,
9         (0.8)
10        <maar> (.) hoe weet je dan,
          <but> (.) how do you know then,
11        dat ie z'n ↑broek naar benejen dee:d,
          that he his ↑pants down di:d,
          that he pulled his ↑pants do:wn,
12  K:    °nou;°°
          °well;°°
13        (0.7)
14  →     •h °dat weedik,
          •h °I know that,
15  →     omdat ik een #p↑iemel voelde#,°
          because I    #felt a w↑illy#,°
16  P:    °je weet;
          °you know;
17        omdat je een piemel voelde.
          because you felt a willy.
18        (0.5)
19        okee°.=
          okay°.=
```

In lines 1-3, the police officer provides a version of what Lisa has said earlier: that the suspect Guus pulled his pants down. After a pause (line 4), a question follows about what Lisa saw at that moment (lines 5-6). The girl denies having seen anything (line 7) and the police officer receives that with a news receipt with arguably surprised intonation (line 8). After a pause (line 9), this is followed by the question how the child could see that Guus pulled his pants down (lines 9-10). The question is prefaced with "but", which frames the question as an objection. Moreover, the question includes "'then" which functions as an inference marker (Heritage 2012: 9). "Then" can be

paraphrased as "given what you just said".[100] The question is thus presented as following from the child's earlier responses and treats the child's answer as not sufficiently informative. Furthermore, "but" contrasts "I didn't see anything" with seeing what suspect Guus did and presupposes that it is not possible to know something if you cannot see it. The question, therefore, challenges whether the child really knows.

The child prefaces her answer with "well" (*nou*; line 11) projecting a not-straightforward answer (Schegloff and Lerner 2009) or a "my side" telling (Heritage 2015) and pauses (line 12). The girl then states, "I know that because I felt a willy" (lines 13-14). By explicitly including "I know that" she claims and highlights that she is knowledgeable. At the same time, "I know that" repeats part of the question as a preface to her answer. The preface and the remainder of the answer therefore resist the presupposition that she must have *seen* it to know it and, hence, pushes back on the challenge whether she really knows.

5.4.4 Answers that avoid contradictions

We have seen above that questions about sources of knowledge can set up puzzles (section 5.4.1). This is in line with other research into contrasting versions. For example Pollner (1987) found that judges compare versions of an event to determine if they can be true. If two individuals provide incompatible versions of an event, one of them must be untrue. Similarly, Komter found that Dutch courts treat diverging testimonies as problematic (2011: 26), that they invoke the reports of previous police interviews to challenge the suspect's statement in court (2012) and that they provide the suspect with an opportunity to clarify inconsistencies (2011).

In Dutch police interviews, police officers also contrast different versions of an event produced by the same suspect, eliciting accounts from the suspect (Sliedrecht 2013). Suspects, in turn, escape from the puzzle, ignore it or admit the contradiction by adjusting one of the assertions (Sliedrecht 2013). Similarly, Kidwell (2009) found that American police officers use both common knowledge and information they have received from the call center to

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[100] Compare Antaki et al. (2015c: 334) about *so*-prefaced questions in police interviews with people with an intellectual disability.

challenge accounts by witnesses. Since the credibility of a testimony depends heavily on consistency, it is important for suspects and witnesses, including child witnesses, to avoid inconsistencies or to solve them if they occur in order to build up the position of a reliable witness.

The following excerpt illustrates how children can do observable interactional work that avoids contradictions in response to questions about sources of knowledge (8 instances). Suzanna (7 years old) reports about an unknown man who wanted to play a game with her when she was playing outside, but he suddenly walks away when a police officer happens to walk by.

EXTRACT 5.12 I also heard (0.3) a flash
```
1   K:   •hh en toen (0.5) ging die ook nog 'n beetje;=
         •hh and then (0.5) he¹⁰¹ also started a bit;=
2        =foto's en filmpjes van mij maken,=
         =to take pictures and videos of me,=
3        =volgens °mijh°;
         =I °think°;
4   P:   >oh< ?
         >oh< ?
5        ooh waar deed die dat mee ↑dan?
         ooh with what did he do that ↑then?
6        foto's en fillempjes maken?
         making pictures and videos?
7   K:   met z'n telefoo:n ,
         with his pho:ne,
8   P:   me' z'n telefoon;=
         with his phone;=
9        =en wat voor foto's en fillempjes,=
         =and what kind of pictures and videos,=
10       =maakte die van jou;
         =did he make of you;
11       (0.5)
12  K:   dat weet ik °nie°;
         I don't know °that°;
13  P:   •pt dat weet je niet;=
         •pt that you don't know;=
```

---

[101] *Die* (literally: "that") in lines 1, 5, 10 and 15 refers to the unknown man and is therefore translated as "he".

```
14  P:    =en hoe weet je da:n;=
          =and how do you know the:n,=
15        =dat die foto's en fillempjes maakte?
          =that he made pictures and videos?
16  K: →  want ik hoorde ook nog gekl-;
          because I also heard cl-;
17     →  ik hoorde ook nog (0.3) een flitsje,
          I also heard (0.3) a flash,
18        (0.4)
19  P:    •pt•hh jij hoorde 'n flitsje;
          •pt•hh you heard a flash;
20  P:    en hoe klinkt dat?
          and how does that sound?
```

In lines 1-3, Suzanna adds that she thinks the man also made videos and took pictures of her. After a follow-up question-answer-repetition sequence (lines 4-8), the police officer enquires what kind of pictures the man was making (lines 9-10). The police officer is possibly going for particular body parts, positions or nude pictures. This would broaden the suspicion from (attempted) licentiousness to child pornography and it would consequently be police-relevant information. It might also help to find the suspect, since pictures are possibly shared within digital child pornography networks. The child, however, delays her answer (line 11) and claims no knowledge (line 12), resisting the need for a response and working towards the end of this topic (Hutchby 2002). The police officer, however, treats the child's no knowledge claim as contradictory by repeating the child's answer (line 13) and asking a question about the source of knowledge that juxtaposes the repeated answers with the child's earlier claim: *that* the man took pictures of her and made videos (lines 14-15). She constructs the question as following from the child's earlier responses by "then", suggesting that the two assertions cannot be true at the same time.

Suzanna responds in lines 16-17 by saying that she also "heard cl-" which she aborts and then repairs with "I also heard (0.3) a flash". Of special interest here is "also" (*ook*), produced with emphasis. If she would have left this out, the answer would still solve the puzzle of how she knew the man was making pictures without knowing what kind of pictures. By adding "also" the child constructs her answer as adding a detail to the account that she has given

so far. This implies that her story was so far incomplete, but also that both one thing and the other can be true at the same time. This response does subtle work to avoid inconsistencies between something she is saying now what she did not say before. Her response therefore also pre-empts potential further questioning of such inconsistencies. Suzanna thus treats the question about the source of knowledge and its answer as a possible basis for further (critical) questions that construct her answers as inconsistent, and therefore possibly unreliable.

5.4.5 Responses that include defense components

In some cases, children respond to questions about sources of knowledge by defending themselves and portraying themselves as innocent. These responses are not the type of answer that was made relevant by the question. Such responses resemble the unsolicited accounts discussed in chapter 4. The responses in this category do interactional work to portray the child as a real victim and pre-empt blame.

Excerpt 5.13 from an interview with 6-year-old Ben (see also excerpt 5.5) illustrates this. Ben reports that he was playing in the attic with his teenage cousin and that they started doing "bottom to bottom" and "willy to willy" at some point. Just before the excerpt, the police officer and child have jointly established that the cousin suggested do willy to willy. This is followed by the question about the source of knowledge (lines 1, 3-5).

EXCERPT 5.13 I didn't know what else to do
```
1    P:    =•h ↑en (.) wat   wist    [je,
           =•h ↑and (.) what did you [know,
2    K:                            [(°ja.°)
                                    [(°yes.°)
3    P:    wat je toen moest doe::n,
           what you had to do:: then,
4          (.)
5          hoe wis je ↑da:t?
           how did you know ↑tha:t?
6          (0.6)
7    K:    •PT (0.2) [nou ja,
           •PT (0.2) [well,
```

```
8                    [((tearful/creaky voice))
9        (0.4)
10       ik wist nie •hh of was ik moet doen,
         I didn't know •hh or what I have to do,¹⁰²
11       en ik had er (in/en) moeten doe:n,
         and I should (in/and) have do:ne it,
12       ik wis' nie,=
         I didn't know,=
13  K:   [=wat ik anders moest doen,  ]
         [=what else I should do,     ]
14       [((end tearful/creaky voice)))]
15  P:   nee: ;
         no: ;
16       dat begrijp ik.=
         I understand that.=
17       =je wist nie,=
         =you didn't know,=
18       =wat je ↑ANders moest doen.
         =what Else to do.
19       [•hh
         [•hh
20  K:   [nee,
         [no,
21  P:   maar wat- (.) wat- (.) wat is dat dan precies;
         but what- (.) what- (.) what is that then
         exactly;
```

The question about the source of knowledge (lines 1, 3-5) questions how Ben knew that this was the activity he and his cousin were going to do. The police officer frames the action as something Ben "had to do". This implies that it was not his idea and the question thus attributes minimal responsibility to the boy. Furthermore, the question is *and*-prefaced, which marks an unproblematic progress along the institutional agenda (Heritage and Sorjonen 1994).

Ben responds elaborately. He first presents himself as helpless by "I didn't know what to do" (line 10). This utterance also suggests that he did not have experience with such a situation (in which case he probably would know what to do) and contributes to a self-portrayal as innocent. It is followed by an

---

[102] The English translation reflects mixed up verb tenses in the Dutch original.

inarticulate utterance that arguably is "I shouldn't have done it" (line 11)[103]. Ben thus provides a negative self-evaluation which displays regret of what happened. By "I didn't know what else to do" (lines 12-14), he presents the event as something he could not avoid and accounts for what he did, even though he considered whether there were other options. Cooperation is thus presented as the only choice he had, and which could not reasonably have been avoided. He thus maintains his role as a victim and being remorseful, which is underlined by the tearful or creaky voice. Ben's response may be best summarized as responding to the question *as if* the police officer had asked "why did you do that", which would have held the child accountable for the events that took place (Antaki et al. 2015c; Bolden and Robinson 2011). One possible explanation is that the child heard the question as implying that he had prior experience with, and knowledge of, the "willy to willy" activity. Given the fact that the boy is now being interviewed at the police station, this was apparently inappropriate. Another option is that the child has misunderstood or misheard the question as "why did you do that". Under both explanations, he orients to the activity as something he did wrong and does work to justify himself.

The police officer orients to the misalignment by an exceptional uptake (see chapter 4), namely explicitly claiming that she understands the child's difficult situation with "no, I understand that" (Iversen 2018; Weatherall and Keevallik 2016). She specifies what she understands with "you didn't know what else to do" (lines 15-18). However, she does not show that she is able to interpret the child's feelings or psychological state, like "I understand that you must have panicked" (cf. Iversen 2018; Stommel and Te Molder 2018; Weatherall and Keevallik 2016). Instead, the police officer merely repeats the child's report and only displays that the police officer has received the child's account. Therefore, the police officer only claims understanding rather than displaying understanding. This can be explained as an attempt to remain neutral while doing what is interactionally relevant (see chapter 4), but it can also be heard as constrained and pro forma aligning and

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[103] What exactly is said, is very difficult to hear, but given the grammar of the utterance and the context of the response, *en ik had het niet moeten doen* ("and I shouldn't have done it") is the most likely utterance.

as being less than affiliative. Hence, it projects a "but", which indeed follows in line 22.

In the next excerpt, the child does interactional work to pre-empt blame implications. Jenna (8/9) has been bothered by her teenage brother who showed his penis on two occasions and insisted that she touch his private parts.

EXCERPT 5.14 I said like ↑sto:p it
```
1   P: → [↑hoe-↑hoe weet jij dat] jouw hand (.) daar
                                (0.5) naartoe moest;
         [↑how-↑how do you know that] your hand (.) has
                                to go (0.5) there;
2          (0.4)
3      → °hoe ging dat°?
         °how did that go°?
4   K:  •h nou ik vroeg;
         •h well I asked;
5       zullen we de-ik zei zo hou ↑o:p,
         shall we the-I said like ↑sto:p it,
6       en toen hield ie d'r ook mee op;=
         and then he indeed stopped doing it;=
7       =>en toen dach'ik van<;=
         =>and then I thought like<;=
8       =•hh nou;
         =•hh well;
9       >zullen we samen es< gaan gamen?
         >shall we game< together?
10      •hhh
11  P:  ↑hm[↑hm?
         ↑hm[↑hm?
12  K:     [toen zei hij: van;
            [then he: said like:
13  K:  ↑ja >ik doe ut alleen maar< as je me piemel
        °aanraakt°;
         ↑yes >I will do it only< if you touch my
         willy.
14      °en dat zei die dan een paar keer°°,
         °and he said that several times then°°,
15  P:  ↑o[k↓ee,
         ↑o[k↓ay,
```

```
16  K:     [•hhh
             [•hhh
17         (.)
18  K:     <en toen> dee ik dat ook,
           <and then> I indeed did it,
19         °en toen gingen we gaming°.
           °and then we started to game°.
20  P:     okee;
           okay;
21         dus hij ↑segt tegen j↑ou,
           so he ↑says to y↑ou,
```

The police officer asks how Jenna knows that her hand had to touch her brother's penis in line 1. After an initial pause (line 2), the police officer produces an incremental invitation for a narrative about how that happened (line 3), still referring to how she knew what she had to do. The girl sets off telling that she was asking her brother something. The reported question is arguably heading for a proposal to play a computer game (lines 4-5). However, she does a self-repair. The repair highlights that the girl has explicitly asked her brother to stop and presents her resistance as successful (lines 5-6). She then introduces another activity, gaming (lines 7-8). This is hearable as trying to distract her brother and offering a way out (Woodhams et al. 2012). Jenna's response is not as far removed from the question as Ben's response in the previous example. Nevertheless, Jenna builds her response in a way that portrays herself as resisting her brother's proposals and, hence, pre-empting possible blame implications, including that she should have resisted more (see chapter 4).

Both excerpts show that children sometimes respond to the question about sources of knowledge by orienting to something they might have done wrong and addressing that something. The defensive responses may have been triggered by the challenging nature of the question "how do you know", but at the same time the orientation to blame is not made relevant by the question.

5.5 Conclusion and discussion

The analysis shows that children often display trouble in response to questions about sources of knowledge. One type of trouble is that the answer is presented as self-evident and therefore disputes the necessity and legitimacy of the question. Self-evident answers to questions about sources of knowledge observably manage and show a dilemma between providing a conditionally relevant answer and resisting the question as unjustified. Although the answers deal with this dilemma, the orientation to the question as a dilemma demonstrates difficulty making immediate sense of the question. The self-evident responses visibly showcase how the inference system in police interviews with child witnesses is different from mundane inference systems. This is evidenced by some uptakes of self-evident answers in which police officers defend their questions as genuine, information-seeking questions. In these uptakes, police officers maintain an unknowing stance with respect to how the child knows until the source of knowledge is made explicit. The findings in this section provide an example of how the institutional interaction can be constrained and how that institutional interaction includes particular inferential framework (Drew and Heritage 1992; Heritage 1997).

Another type of response to questions about sources of knowledge treats the question about the source of knowledge as challenging their knowledge (5.3.3). It treats the question as doubting whether the child actually knows, i.e. as a distrusting question. Children can do so by either marking their knowledge as less sure or by claiming not to know, or they can push back by claiming knowledge or justifying their assertions. In both cases, the response shows that the question can function as a form of 'institutionalized distrust'. Related to that, children also observably make an effort to avoid inconsistencies (5.3.4) and do interactional work that portrays them as reliable witnesses. These responses show that children do not just treat the question about sources of knowledge as asking for information. The responses are also responses to the challenging action that the police officer performs (cf. Pomerantz 1984b) and the setting of testing that they contribute to.

Finally, children respond to questions about sources of knowledge by pre-empting blame (5.3.5). Such responses are defensive and show that, although children are interviewed as witnesses and not as suspects, they

orient to the interaction as an encounter in which blame is a relevant issue. Children thus maintain their role and status as a victim. These defensive responses cannot be directly ascribed to the question about the source of knowledge, as they are challenging the certainty of the evidence provided, and not the child's actions (cf. Antaki et al. 2015c: 347). Nevertheless, questions about sources of knowledge apparently sometimes compel children to account for their behavior and defend their status as a victim.

By the end of section 5.1, the suggestion was raised that questions about sources of knowledge do not only function as requests information. The analysis in this chapter confirms that. Questions about sources of knowledge also construct the suspect's criminal intention and evidence thereof, are treated as unjustified questions, challenge the child's knowledge, urge the child to solve inconsistencies (which may help to avoid a second interview; see section 1.1.3; Dekens and Van der Sleen 2013: 47,105) and are sometimes followed by accounts for the child's behavior that include defensive components. Children treat the questions about sources of knowledge as contributions to the interaction, that is, as performing social actions and as utterances regulated by interactional rules (cf. Fogarty 2010), including "don't ask what you already know" and "sources of knowledge can usually be inferred; giving or asking for a source of knowledge is doing specific interactional work". Consequently, reinforcements and hedges in children's answers are not simply reflections of a cognitive state of being that is more or less sure, but are produced in response to the police officer's challenge. The questions about sources of knowledge contribute to a setting in which the child's answers can be continuously tested and challenged. This can be heard as talk for the later audience: police officers, public prosecutors, judges and defense lawyers. This critical context perhaps also promotes responses that treat the question as making relevant accounts that orient to the overall critical character of the encounter.

The challenging character of the *how do you know*-question perhaps also relates to a feature that is not explicitly addressed in the analysis: the lack of warrant for the question about sources of knowledge. Steensig and Drew argue that it is not only the case that asking a question is not an innocent thing to do and that "it takes extra work to produce an affiliative question" (2008:

12). As an example of questions that include such affiliative work, they refer to Stokoe and Edwards who analyze silly questions by police officers in interviews with suspects, for example "Um: (1.4) m:ay sound a bit silly bu- *uh* do y'know whose window it is." (2008: 92-93; see also sections 1.3 and 5.1.1). The characterization as "silly" distances the police officer from the question and presents the question as doing bureaucracy. This establishes affiliation with suspects, who often respond with laughter. In the questions about sources of knowledge, such affiliative work is hardly found, nor is it explained in the introduction of interviews that police officers may ask silly questions.

Asking how the child knows also contributes to a decidedly asymmetrical interactional context. It may be obvious, but nowhere in the data does the child challenge how the police officer knows something. Both police officer and child clearly orient to this practice as something that is done by the police. Moreover, children are remarkably collaborative in their responses to questions about sources of knowledge. Children display trouble in their answers but nowhere in the data did I find cases where a child responds to questions about sources of knowledge with overt resistance, like "why do you need to ask" or "why don't you believe me". When children display trouble they tend to do so more implicitly and often in the course of attempting to answer the question. In the responses studied here, children orient to the need to provide answers and, consequently, to the institutional agenda set by the police officer's question. It is likely that the moral need for an answer is even more pressing because of the power asymmetry between the lay child and the police officer who is an adult and an experienced representative of a law enforcement agency.

The findings in this chapter are both similar to and different from Fogarty's (2010) study, the only other study that includes an analysis of questions about sources of knowledge in police interviews with child witnesses that I am aware of. Both her study and the current one find that police officers ask these questions, that these questions challenge inconsistencies, that they construct the testimony as more robust and possibly convincing, that children sometimes respond smoothly and other times less so and that children orient to the police interview as a social encounter. The current analysis differs from Fogarty's study, because it focuses on what happens in response to questions about sources of knowledge. This allows a description of the nature of the

trouble children show in response to this question. Also, the discussion of connection between the guidelines and actual interaction in the current chapter adds to Fogarty's (2010) analysis.

The analysis also opens up possibilities for further research. First, an interesting question arises from the discussion of the unproblematic answers (section 5.3) and the reissued questions about sources of knowledge (section 5.4.1): when do police officers treat a source of knowledge as satisfactory and what other types of sources of knowledge are police officers apparently after? An answer to these questions would add to the literature about epistemics and evidentiality in interaction by showing members' orientations to which sources of knowledge provide 'better knowledge'. At the same time, such an analysis would be informative for police officers as it would show some of the working assumptions about 'how people know' in a context where they try to refrain from presuming and suggesting things.

Second, the emphasis on how children react to the question about sources of knowledge means that the focus of the analysis is not on the questions themselves. These questions are interesting material especially from the point of view of question design, which can be more or less challenging. This topic, that occasionally arose during the analysis, is especially relevant because of the potential tension between challenging questions and the importance of maintaining a good working relationship. Furthermore, it would be interesting to do a collection study of *how do you know*-questions and their answers in other settings, seeing that it would provide more insight into how specific these questions and their functions are to this particular setting.

6 Conclusion and discussion

In chapter 1, I noted that much existing research into investigative interviewing with child witnesses, as well as the existing guidelines depart from an informational perspective on language. It was also pointed out that this is problematic from the perspective of talk as social interaction. The question that I explored in this thesis is how the interaction unfolds, in what ways this conduct is related to the guidelines and how we can consequently evaluate the guidelines. This chapter summarizes the most important findings and relates them to the Stocks of Interactional Knowledge (6.1), discusses both theoretical (6.2) and practical (6.3) implications and provides suggestions for further research (6.4).

6.1 Main findings

Chapter 3 focused on the relation between the prescription to instruct children at the beginning of the interview and to practice these instructions on the one hand, and the actual instructing and practicing on the other. More specifically, I looked at how the instructions were embedded in the interaction. I identified three ways in which police officers insert the instruction sequences: by announcing the next phase of the interview (which presents the instructions as a logical part of the next phase), by announcing the instructions (which emphasizes the instructions as an important and independent activity) and by connecting the instruction to something the child says. It was noted that the last way of inserting the instructions can be quite abrupt. Moreover, the version in which the instructions are connected to the question "do you remember my name?" creates an interactionally difficult situation for the child if the child does not remember the police officer's name.

The analysis of practicing the instructions shows that eliciting a display of understanding treats claims of understanding as insufficient (except for cases when 'practicing' is used to jointly formulate the instruction). This might explain why practicing lacks relatively often: pursuing a display of understanding after a claim of understanding is redundant and implies that the child may not understand. The analysis also showed that the

introduction to the test question or test phrase makes it ambiguous whose turn it is. This leads to difficulties for the child as well as a dilemma for the police officer who should elicit a display of understanding without suggesting the answer. It was also noted that the representativeness of practicing sequences is questionable: contrary to what happens in the interview-proper, practicing is, explicitly or implicitly, introduced as practicing and therefore recognizable as such, practicing also directly follows the instruction which is not the case in the interview-proper and, finally, the test items are not representative of interview questions. The test questions for the *I don't know-* and *I don't understand*-instructions highlight that the police officer knows more than the child and therefore convey that they are test questions; the test phrases for the correction-instruction highlight what the target mistake is, which is also unlikely to occur in the interview-proper.

Chapter 3 also examined how instruction sequences are closed. In many cases this is quite clear, either because the police officer highlights the instruction or the purpose of the instruction or because police officers work recognizably towards closing the instruction sequence in some other way. The former way of closing the instruction sequence emphasizes the instruction; the latter treats the child as probably understanding while offering an opportunity to ask for clarification. In some instruction sequences, however, the police officer wanders away from the instruction activity. This happens especially after the *I don't understand*-instruction. Police officers do so by emphasizing the new word the child has learnt (e.g. 'domicile') or by changing the activity into enquiring about the child's address. Thus, progressing to the interview-proper seems postponed for something that is unrelated to the instructions or the interview-proper.

Chapter 4 provided an analysis of unsolicited accounts by children and their uptake by police officers. Both the frequency and the way in which children report resistance and lack thereof indicate that they treat resistance as something that is normatively required. Sometimes children's unsolicited reports are constructed in a relatively factual way, but sometimes they orient to issues of resistance in a more explicitly normative way. Especially when the orientation to resistance as something normative becomes more obvious, affiliative uptakes such as approval or reassurance become more

relevant. However, police officers tend to provide minimal and neutralistic uptakes, or no uptake at all. This can be attributed to the guidelines for police officers that require that police officers conduct interviews as objectively as possible. This is not necessarily problematic. Children do not always leave a slot for the police officer to react. Moreover, if police officers respond with silence or other minimal uptakes, children usually do not treat it as problematic. Yet, in some cases they subtly pursue a more affiliative response, both showing that something was lacking and adding to the police officer's dilemma between doing what is interactionally relevant and appearing to be neutral.

Chapter 5 concerned questions about sources of knowledge, and analyzed how children respond to such questions. The analysis showed that children sometimes treat questions about knowledge as unproblematic. Most of the occurrences, however, show signs of trouble. Four types of trouble were identified: responses that treat the question as unjustified, responses that treat the question as a challenge, responses that treat the question as potentially working towards probing inconsistencies and responses that include defensive components. Especially the first three variants indicate that children orient to the police officers' contributions as actions and not just to their literal or informational meaning. They also hold police officers accountable for asking things police officers should have inferred themselves; at the same time, the questions contribute to an environment in which children need to provide evidence and in such a context accounts of what happened are not simply accepted. This type of critical environment may be one reason for defensive responses (the fourth type of trouble to occur).

The analytical chapters show that children generally align with the police officer's projects. They sometimes display difficulty, pursue something more or push back. Yet, they rarely contest the police officer's moves overtly. They tend to go along with the instructions (or attempt to do so) and with practicing them and they act cooperatively even if the instruction sequences wander away. They usually continue their stories after a lack of affiliative uptake and attempt to provide answers even though they subtly resist

questions about sources of knowledge. Children thus deal with the specifically institutional way of interacting in a largely collaborative way. As a result, the interaction tends to be remarkably smooth, given the abstract meta-linguistic nature of instructions, the sometimes disaffiliative nature of uptakes by police officers and the challenging and redundant nature of questions about sources of knowledge. At the same time, each chapter reveals interactional difficulties for both parties. The conclusion is that it pays to study these interviews in their interactional detail.

Another general point that emerges from the three analytical chapters is that the Stocks of Interactional Knowledge (SIKs) on which the police officers rely systematically downplay the social and interactional nature of the encounter. This thesis adds to earlier research that the informational view on language causes trouble for the interactants. This trouble becomes especially clear in chapters 4 and 5, where it was shown that there is tension between how children approach the encounter, namely as a social occasion, in contrast to the informational and non-committal project of police officers. Similarly, the advice to ask the child whether it remembers the police officer's name (chapter 3) reveals an informational approach that downplays the socially problematic action that comes with such a question.

Relation to the guidelines and evaluation of the guidelines
This brings us to the question of how the findings based on the CA approach to interaction pursued in this dissertation relate to professional Stocks of Interactional Knowledge or SIKs, mainly provided by the guidelines in this case. Chapter 1 (section 1.3.2) mentioned possible relations: CA findings may correct SIKs, provide a more detailed picture of a SIK, add new dimensions to the SIK and provide missing links (Peräkylä and Vehviläinen 2003). The three analytical chapters provide examples of each of these possible relations.

Chapters 4 and 5 show how CA can falsify and correct underlying assumptions of SIKs, namely that interaction is an exchange of information. These chapters show that what looks neutral or what looks as "just a request for information" does not work that way in ongoing interaction.

All chapters provide a more detailed picture of how the guidelines are applied and how that affects the interaction. The findings in chapter 3

provide more detail of how instructing sequences are inserted, practiced and closed; chapter 4 shows in greater detail what the guideline to be neutral looks like in actual interaction; and chapter 5 provides more detail about how police officers ask for sources of knowledge. More in general, all analytical chapters place the application of the guidelines in their interactional context, that is, they show what happens before and after a turn that can be related to the guidelines. Moreover, the transcripts include interactional detail such as prefaces, pauses, laughter, prosody, speed, silence, volume, overlap and embodied behavior. The analyses make clear that this interactional context and interactional detail are important. For instance, including interactional context made it possible to see how instruction sequences sometimes wander away and paying attention to laughter in transcription helped to identify children's normative stance towards the account of their own role.

An example of an added dimension can be found in chapter 5. The analysis shows that questions about sources of knowledge invite the child to *transform* assertions about a suspect's inaccessible mental states (e.g. what the suspect wanted the child to do) into observable, verifiable and prosecution-relevant actions (e.g. saying that the child must do X), that are mainly produced 'for the tape'. The Manual focuses on the testing function of the questions about sources of knowledge, that is, the issue that questions about sources of knowledge supposedly elicit answers that allow evaluation of the reliability of the child's assertions. The transforming function of questions about sources of knowledge is not discussed in the SIK and could therefore be regarded as an example of how CA can add a dimension to the SIKs (Peräkylä and Vehviläinen 2003).

A possible missing link is identified between the guideline to instruct the child and instruction sequences that wander away. One of the ways of wandering away is that the police officer enquires about the child's address, related to the word "domicile". A possible explanation is that police officers attempt to follow different guidelines simultaneously, namely the guideline to let the child do as much talking as possible and the guideline to let the child get used to open questions in the introduction of the interview. Such interference of SIKs is what Peräkylä and Vehviläinen (2003) characterize as a missing link.

The Manual emphasizes possible cognitive trouble, such as forgetting instructions when too many instructions are delivered back to back and assumptions that the child might have about what the police officer wants to hear (section 3.2). Many of the SIKs are designed to address such cognitive problems. Yet, the guidelines need to be applied within an ongoing interactional context and the guidelines in the Manual do not include such interactional context[104] or interactional detail (sections 3.2, 4.3 and 5.2). Consequently, the Manual does not show or discuss different ways of applying the guidelines and their effects, nor does it discuss how children might respond and how that presents police officers with dilemmas. The Manual also does not include discussion of the interactional trouble that are caused by attempts to follow the guidelines. It is, of course, in the nature of a manual to be general.[105] Nevertheless, the Manual presents guidelines as mostly unproblematic, whereas guidelines themselves clearly can cause interactional trouble for both interactants.

6.2 Theoretical implications

The various findings relate to various focal interests of CA. The analysis of the instructions adds to the body of literature on directives in interaction, that is, how speakers hint, request, urge, suggest and order other people to do something[106]. An important feature of the instructions is that they are on the police officer's agenda and not on the child's agenda. Children therefore do not ask for instructions. This makes the findings different from, for instance, classroom interaction where children ask for the teacher's input on how to deal with math assignments (Koole 2010). Furthermore, the instructions in police interviews sometimes occur as distinct, agendized and independent activities. This makes the instructions different from directives during family

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[104] The instruction to ask test questions or questions about sources of knowledge comes with examples of more than one turn. However, these examples do not show the interactional context that leads to the question about sources of knowledge, nor is it clear if they are actual examples.

[105] There is also a possibility that some of the issues that emerge from the analyses are discussed when police officers discuss excerpts from actual interview as part of their training (section 1.1.2).

[106] Craven and Potter (2010) use "directives" in a different way, namely as "orders".

dinners (Craven and Potter 2010) or residents of a home for people with a learning disability (Antaki and Kent 2012), where directives are usually produced ad hoc and in direct response to what children and residents are doing. The upshot is that it is the police officer's task to inject and embed the instructions. The analysis demonstrates that this requires interactional work.

The instructions in the current analysis also differ from instructions to children in classroom interaction in that classrooms primarily exist to offer a learning environment for children, whereas explaining the instructions in police interviews happens in service of constructing evidence. The task of inserting the instructions also presents the police officer with a dilemma between continuing with other activities or inserting instruction-sequences. Providing the instructions delays other activities such as free recall or questioning the child. This leads to the paradoxical situation that even though the instructions serve the goal of truth-finding, delivering the instructions delays activities of gathering evidence. In sum, the instructions are one-sided agendized directives that are complex and create interactional challenges for both interactants, while it is unclear whether they accomplish what they set out to accomplish. This especially applies to practicing the instructions in its current ways of practicing. Consequently, the question is whether the outcome warrants the interactional effort from both participants.

The instructions and their practicing also form an interesting combination of directives and metatalk. Police officers who instruct child witnesses and practice the instructions deal with a possible future interactional situation. This leads to a very different use of metatalk than the kind of metatalk that is used to address actual problems in interaction (e.g. Jager and Stommel 2017; Van Nijnatten 2006). This orientation to future talk arguably makes the metatalk even more abstract. The context of police interviews with child witnesses therefore forms a suitable interactional environment to verify the suggestion by Antaki and Kent (2012: 887) that concrete, embodied actions are one of the factors that promote more entitlement in directives. In other words, when a requester asks an addressee to do something concrete in the here and now of the interaction (e.g. passing the salt) this is more likely and more appropriately done by *telling* the addressee than in case of asking something abstract or a future

action (e.g. instructing to provide a particular response in future talk). Antaki and Kent suggest that, in the abstract future case, it may be more appropriate to *request* than to tell. This would predict that police officers claim a low degree of entitlement or deontic authority. At the same time, another dimension mentioned by Antaki and Kent (2012: 886-887) – the degree to which a speaker is responsible for socializing the other person – possibly points in the opposite direction, as police officers are held responsible for socializing the child for the specific needs of the encounter. The discussion of the various characterizations that police officers use to refer to the instructions (instructing, explaining, giving permission) as well as the discussion whether saying "may" or "have to" is the better option (see section 3.2) point in the direction of a similar dilemma.

The discussion of neutrality in chapter 4 expands the previous CA studies on doing being neutral in institutional interaction, such as calls by truancy officers (Pomerantz 2004), news interviews (Clayman and Heritage 2002) and mediators (Garcia 2000). Yet, the various studies make clear that what constitutes neutrality is tightly related to the interactional goal. In case of the truancy calls, neutrality refers to avoiding premature accusations; in case of news interviews, the term refers to avoiding evaluations; in case of mediation, it refers to impartiality; in SIKs that are part of the current study, neutrality indicates avoiding presumptions about what happened. Moreover, the methods professionals use to orient to neutrality are also different in the studies mentioned so far. In the examples mentioned above, they vary from offering a legitimate reason to be absent at school by the truant officer (Pomerantz 2004) to not producing acknowledgements (e.g. "okay", "oh", "right") and to answers by news interviewers that pass on the answer to receive and evaluate for the overhearing audience (Clayman and Heritage 2002). This thesis adds to previous research into how police officers do being neutral by providing non-committing uptakes (Antaki et al. 2015b) as well as avoiding inferences (Antaki and Stokoe 2017). Thus, neutrality is an important part of the SIKs for various groups of professionals, with professionals displaying an orientation to that norm. At the same time, neutrality is conceptually different in various settings, and actual attempts to

be neutral take different shapes that characterize particular institutional settings.

The findings in chapter 5 are a demonstration, within a very specific judicial context, that some institutional interaction makes use of special inferencing systems (Drew and Heritage 1992: 22). The inferencing system in investigative interviews requires inferences to be made explicit (Antaki and Stokoe 2017; Iversen 2018). This relates to the specific institutional goal of police interviews, namely producing evidence for the criminal procedure. This evidence needs to consist of unambiguous and explicit accounts of what happened (Antaki and Stokoe 2017). This requirement of unambiguousness and explicitness is arguably related to the legal language ideology that holds that langue is and should be a transparent way of transporting meaning (Ainsworth 2008). That is, legal professionals generally go with what is explicitly said and often neglect what is reasonably implied. In case of investigative interviews with child witnesses, this unknowing stance to what is implied seems to be reinforced by the emphasis put on avoiding presumptions and suggestion (Antaki et al. 2015b: 429; Iversen 2018: 15). Whereas such special inferencing systems are often unproblematic for lay people (cf. Antaki and Stokoe 2017; Drew and Heritage 1992: 24), the current analysis demonstrates that lay participants sometimes do orient to a tension between inferencing systems in mundane versus institutional talk.

The analysis also offers an institutional perspective on epistemics and evidentiality in interaction. The issue of who knows what and how is highly salient in police interviews. The importance of knowledge and knowledge rights does not remain implicit: the questions about sources of knowledge topicalize the issue of how the interlocutor, in this case the child, knows. This is different from most everyday interaction, in which sources of knowledge are rarely explicitly questioned. The encounters analyzed in this thesis thus offer a natural experiment that shows what happens if speakers ask for information that they can reasonably be expected to know (Iversen 2018). Furthermore, they form an environment that allows the study of what types of questions police officers can legitimately ask versus when they are held accountable for their questions. The analysis also offers different resources for negotiating the legitimacy of a question, including prosody that

makes the answer sound impatient thus challenging the question's legitimacy, and the prosodically highlighted "okay" that retrospectively treats the answer as informative and thus defends the question as a genuine question. The analysis furthermore shows that epistemics and evidentiality can be dealt with at various levels in one turn. At one level, children provide sources of knowledge and demonstrate their knowledge; at another level they hold the police officer accountable for the unknowing stance conveyed by the question. This thesis thus suggests that instutional setting should be involved in the analysis of epistemics in interaction because these settings provide insight into how participants in interaction negotiate their mutual epistemic stance.

The analyses reported in chapters 3-5 have implications on how research may look at children as participants in interaction. They show that children are capable contributors to the interactional setting. Despite trouble, they deal with the abstract metatalk of instructions, they present themselves as actively resisting the suspect, portray themselves as believable victims and orient to the interview as an encounter where issues of blame are relevant, they subtly pursue affiliative uptakes, and they appropriately orient to the challenging actions that questions about sources of knowledge establish and to the redundant character of these questions. Children therefore demonstrate in many ways that they are capable interactants (cf. Hutchby 2007; Lamerichs et al. in press), even in a difficult and new interactional situation like a police interview.

Related to children's demonstrations of interactional competence is their active participation in interaction. They provide unsolicited accounts and sometimes pursue an affiliative uptake, and they resist the terms of the question, push back, or respond defensively when asked for their sources of knowledge. All such contributions create an interactional situation for the police officer to deal with (cf. Fogarty 2010). Thus, the police interview is not a matter of one-sided influence from the police officer on the child; rather, the child and police officer co-construct the interaction and the child therefore also affects the police officers' turns (cf. Fogarty 2010) and what these turns are doing (for example: disapproval when the police officer provides a neutralistic uptake after a self-deprecation). It is therefore

important to acknowledge that police officers cannot one-sidedly determine how the interview unfolds. Research should take into account the directly subsequent and preceding interactional context when testing recommended practices to establish what such practices are accomplishing in actual interviews.

The findings cover all four relations between SIKs and CA research as described by Peräkylä and Vehviläinen (2003). Some findings do not seem to fit in any of these four relations per se. The analysis of practicing instructions shows that the ways in which the SIKs are followed are at odds with other SIKs. This does not fit in the category of 'missing links', because that category indicates cases of professionals trying to live up to two (or possibly more) intervening SIKs and resolving the conflict between the SIKs. The analysis therefore expands the list of possible relations of CA findings and SIKs with the option that CA shows how applications of SIKs can be in conflict with each other.

6.3 Practical implications

The findings have various implications for everyday police interviewing practice. First, chapter 3 offers various reasons to reconsider the ways in which instructions are given and practiced. In that chapter, I discussed some problems with instructing the child and practicing the instructions. These problems included that seeking a demonstration of understanding treats claims of understanding as insufficient, that test questions convey knowledge asymmetries and that practicing happens in a way that is unlikely to be representative of the interview-proper. One way to deal with these problems would be to take a radically different approach to practicing. This way of practicing would take inspiration from the Conversation Analytic Role-play Method or CARM method (Stokoe 2014). The CARM training method is designed to avoid problems of representativeness that can be identified in role play training methods (Stokoe 2013). In a CARM training, participants work through excerpts of real, anonymized interactions line by line. The choice of excerpts is based on thorough conversation analytic study. Similarly, police officers could show children anonymized excerpts from actual interviews in which the police officer asks a question and the child

claims not knowing or not understanding or in which the child corrects the police officer. The police officer could stop the excerpt after the child's response and discuss what happened in the tape, for example that the child in the excerpt did not know the answer. After that, the police officer could show the uptake on tape (e.g. "that's okay" or "good that you say so") and explain that police officers are happy when children say so if they don't know the answer to a question. It would also *show* – rather than only claim – child witnesses that other children provide responses like "I don't know" and show that police officers treat these responses as unproblematic. This way of practicing solves the artificial examples, as well as the problem that test items highlight knowledge asymmetry.

Second, there is a more general dilemma related to the instructions that requires attention. On one hand, the instructions probably make children aware of the importance of doing as instructed and hopefully contribute to a reliable report. On the other hand, the fact that police officers instruct children portrays children as probably *not* volunteering corrections of the police officer, *I don't know*-answers and *I don't understand*-requests for clarifications on their own. Consequently, providing the instructions conveys that children's responses might not be truthful, because the responses could be the result of not daring to answer *I don't know*, *I don't understand* or not daring to correct the police officer (cf. Aldridge and Luchjenbroers 2011; Richardson, Stokoe and Antaki 2018). The instructions thus highlight that the reliability of the child's testimony is possibly problematic. This raises the principal question of the importance of instructing the child on one hand and the portrayal of the child as potentially overly compliant or suggestible (and therefore untruthful) on the other. It is especially relevant for the judicial field to be aware of the problems of portrayal.

The third question is whether the instructions actually need to be delivered during the interview itself. The fact that they are now given during the interview, suggests that they are also produced for the tape and the later overhearing audience. An alternative is to provide the instructions in the house visit prior to the interview, (audio) record that visit and report it in a police record. This would reduce the dilemma of when to insert the

instruction during the interview and solve potential problems of portrayal that were raised above.

Fourth, it is important to realize that the guidelines cannot be relied on to accomplish *only* what is assumed by the guidelines. What seems to be an application of guidelines usually has additional effects that are sometimes the opposite of what was intended. Recall that forcing an opening to insert the *I don't know*-instruction by asking the child to reproduce the police officer's name leads to socially awkward situations, that attempting to be neutral can be disaffiliative and that asking for a source of knowledge can risk rapport and be challenging. The question is whether and, if so, how such issues can be resolved. One possibility is to try and eliminate unwanted interactional effects. For example, police officers could attempt to make questions about sources of knowledge more affiliative by including accounts in the questions and by framing them as silly questions (Steensig and Drew 2008; Stokoe and Edwards 2008). Another possibility is that police officers explain that they sometimes ask questions that may seem silly or challenging in the introduction (Antaki et al. 2015c) or debriefing (Fogarty 2010). Police officers could add that they need to do so because they need to make it very clear what happened, to avoid any mistake. Explanations during the introductions enable police officers to refer to this explanation during the interview-proper, especially when a child seems to treat the question as unwarranted or as challenging. The obvious problems with such solutions are that they cannot take away basic inferencing rules (as has been argued in this thesis) and that they add to the list of issues to tackle for the police officer.

Another way of approaching the problem of unwanted interactional effects is to accept that they are partly inevitable, but that police officers' awareness of interactional effects may enhance their interactional competences. Police officers and other legal professionals can use the outcomes of this thesis and other interactional work on police interviews with child witnesses to reconsider whether the attempts to follow the guidelines at an informational level (for example by 'doing being neutral') are always worth the costs at an interactional level. This requires a shift in language perception and language ideology from language as a transparent and neutral conduit of transporting meaning to language as social action. Such a shift in thinking can be helpful to both individual police officers and

other participants in the criminal procedure. The judicial system would therefore benefit from insights about language use, pragmatics, speech acts and inferencing in everyday interaction.

A fifth suggestion based on this thesis will probably assist in a shift in perceptions of language use but will also be valuable its own right. This thesis has shown that it is useful to study excerpts that are transcribed in interactional detail and that provide interactional context. Using such excerpts, for instance in the Manual, helps to make clear that the meaning of police officers' contributions is not pre-established but negotiated while the interaction unfolds. It also facilitates discussion of the interactional dilemmas police officers face as well as showing different options and their effects. Moreover, including more interactional detail makes it clear that interactional trouble does not necessarily take the shape of explicitly mentioning trouble, such as "I don't understand" or "that's a stupid question" and can still be interpretable as such. In general, including more interactional detail in (the discussion of) examples would do greater justice to the complexity of interviewing children.

The sixth and final point that I would like to make here follows from the active work that children do to portray themselves as a real victim. Children treat the interview as an encounter in which it is not only important to provide information, but also to establish being a real victim and a credible witness. Hence, while police officers attempt to enter the interview to determine what happened and thus to do truth-finding (as reflected by the term witness interviews), children orient towards the stake they have in the story. Their contributions regularly orient to the norm that victims of sexual abuse should resist and, therefore, that there are good and bad reactions to abusers. In the data presented in chapter 4, police officers hardly challenge these norms (see also MacLeod 2016). This raises the question whether police officers should challenge these norms in ongoing interaction, given the fact that such norms are problematic and harmful. This, in turn, will create new dilemmas, such as a dilemma between moving forward the process of evidence gathering and pausing to challenge underlying victim blaming norms. Additionally, there will sometimes be dilemmas between doing what is interactionally relevant (e.g. approving of resistance), withholding such approval to avoid implicit confirmation that victims should resist and actively

contesting the underlying norm that not resisting is a failure on the part of the child. Another factor that is likely to be important is the role of the defense attorney. If children stopped reporting their resistance, defense lawyers are likely to attack the child's testimony because of that. They can treat a lack of reported resistance as against common sense and therefore deem the child's testimony unreliable (Ehrlich 2001; Komter 1995). However, it might already help if police officers challenge the most overtly normative orientations to resistance. In any case, given the harmful nature of the norm of resistance, it is important that the police and other participants in the criminal procedure consider if, how and when they can challenge these norms.

6.4 Suggestions for further research

In general, I hope my thesis will encourage researchers who study police interviews with child witnesses from other standpoints than CA perspectives to consider interactional properties of language. This would mean that such studies acknowledge the action component of language as well as the interactional capability of children.

This dissertation furthermore gives rise to concrete new research questions. One question considers how instructions in police interviews with child witnesses are formulated and how that relates to interaction-related instructions in other contexts, for instance parent-child interaction, children in research interviews and educational settings. Police officers sometimes instruct children in terms of what they "have to" do, whereas on other occasions (that can occur in the same interview), they say what children "may" do, and sometimes a grammatically descriptive form is used "you (just) say so" and other varieties occur as well. Police officers explicitly mention it as a dilemma how to formulate these instructions. A comparative study is called for of how instructions are formulated in different settings, when the various forms are used in other settings and therefore what might be the more appropriate form. Such a study could also lend substance to the three dimensions suggested by Antaki and Kent (2012; see also section 6.2) as being relevant for the degree to which interactants claim entitlement. In particular, it would explore their speculation that the abstract-concrete

dimension is relevant in the sense that requests about more abstract requested behavior push towards claiming less entitlement.

A second question is how professionals in various types of institutional encounters orient to neutrality and what that reveals about that particular interactional setting. Neutrality is an important part of different SIKs, but it plays out differently in different types of encounters. Such a study would yield insights into the various conceptualizations of neutrality, aspects they have in common as well as differences.

The third question also emerges from the analysis in chapter 4 in relation to the approval that is made relevant by children, namely how are compliments and approval recognizably invited and made relevant in interaction? Pomerantz (1978b; 1984a) has shown that compliments make relevant the interfering preferences of avoiding self-praise versus the preference for approval, and how that is observable in the responses (see also e.g. Golato 2002; 2005). However, the question how compliments and approval are embedded in sequential context has hardly been addressed (but see Jager et al. 2015). This question is important because compliments, like any other type of turn, are not produced in isolation. Moreover, compliments seem an important device in social interaction that allows people to affiliate. The ways compliments and approval are brought about may also have consequences for the relevant uptake of the compliment (Gathman, Maynard and Schaeffer 2008).

A fourth question is how epistemics are dealt with in institutional settings. As argued in section 6.2, the analysis of institutional interaction provides a better understanding of how epistemic stance is negotiated in interaction. Institutional interaction may show friction between inferencing systems and consequently be informative on how and when the institutional inferencing system is different from mundane inferencing systems. Studying epistemics in institutional encounters gives insight into how lay and professional participants deal with such friction and the resources they employ to do so. For instance: how do participants resolve a situation in which an institutional representative asks for known information or for information that the lay person (clearly) cannot provide? Another question that adds to the understanding of epistemics in instititutional interaction concerns what counts as a sufficient or appropriate source of knowledge,

e.g.: when are further answers pursued and when do police officers treat sources of knowledge as sufficient? And how does that relate to other settings? This yields insights in what types of knowledge are oriented to as valuable and which less so, as well as which types are more important in which kinds of settings.

I have often claimed that my data set in itself offers sufficient material for five other theses. I will highlight two important overarching issues here. One is embodied behavior, i.e. non-verbal behavior. Interviews are recorded to give participants in the criminal procedure insight into physical behavior during the interviews. However, it is unclear how embodied behavior should be interpreted. Studying various aspects of embodied behavior in their sequential context would offer a better understanding of how children are constructing their story. For example, the study by Childs and Walsh (2018) shows how embodied behavior can support or undermine invitations for the child to address issues that have not been addressed thus far over the course of the interview.

One way to study embodied behavior to look at what police officers treat as relevant embodied behavior. Police officers sometimes formulate embodied behavior for the tape (Stokoe 2009), "I see that you're pointing up there, to your upper leg" or "you're nodding". However, there are many aspects of embodied behavior that could be verbalized (e.g. handshape, speed of movement, amount of repetitions, size of the movement, accompanying gaze). Consequently, police officers treat some features of embodied behavior as more relevant than others, while all features are potentially significant in interaction. Therefore, it is the question which of these aspects of embodied behavior are verbalized by the police officer, and therefore made hearable on the tape and how that relates to the police officer's tasks. Just as relevant is which aspects of embodied behavior are downplayed and therefore: which aspects are not included in the verbal version of the story and therefore not part of police officers' interpretation of the child's story (Malsch et al. 2015). A study of embodied behavior and formulation of that behavior contributes a specific institutional perspective to the increasing body of research into embodied conduct in interaction.

Related to formulating for the tape is the matter of the transcripts produced by the police or by writing interpreters (see section 1.1.3). I mentioned in section 2.3.1 that one of the police stations provided me with verbatim transcripts of some of the interviews. These transcripts are referred to by police officers as verbatim, precise and including all "uh's" and "uhm's". This sets them apart from the *processen-verbaal* of many Dutch police interviews with suspect (Van Charldorp 2011). Van Charldorp notes that suspect's stories are written up in various reporting styles. Some of these styles are recognizably edited versions of what was said and can therefore be taken as a summary (see also Malsch et al. 2015). By contrast, the transcripts of police interviews with child witnesses are presented as complete and precise. Compared with the summarizing reporting styles they are indeed precise, but I noticed that various aspects of talk are not included in the transcripts consistently, such as pauses, overlap, laughter, hesitations, inhales and exhales and volume. Other features do not appear at all, such as lip smacking and speed. In line with CA research in general, my thesis demonstrates that such detail can be important for the interpretation of what participants in interaction do. For instance, laughter by the child is mentioned in all three analytical chapters and it accomplishes different things in different sequential environments that have been discussed in this thesis (see also Carter 2011). Hence, the question is which aspects of talk are omitted in the relatively precise transcripts, when they are omitted, whether these omissions follow patterns, what this tells us about police interviews and the legal setting in general, and how the choices of when to transcribe and when not to transcribe influence the presentation of the child's story.

Children as conversational partners in institutional settings make a fascinating topic for CA. Their talk demonstrates the problems interactants have who are new to an institutional context and thus allow scholars to investigate in a living lab how people employ competence from mundane interaction in the institutional context, as well as how this can cause friction.

Appendix A: Transcription conventions

The transcription conventions are based on Jefferson (2004), Mazeland (2003) and Hepburn (2004).

P	Police officer's speech
K	Child's speech
P2	Police officer 2's speech

(1.5)	silence of 1.5 seconds
(.)	silence shorter than 0.2 seconds
(..)	silence longer than 0.2 seconds

=	no noticeable silence between two sequentially following speaker's turns or between intonation units by the same speaker

[over]lap
[of talk]   the speech between square brackets is overlapping

.	Stopping fall in tone (at the end of an intonation unit)
;	Slightly falling intonation (at the end of an intonation unit)
,	Rising, 'continuing' intonation (at the end of an intonation unit, not necessarily the end of a sentence)
?	Strongly rising intonation (at the end of an intonation unit, not necessarily a question)
Sto-	sharp cut-off to the prior word or sound

:	The speaker has stretched the preceding sound or letter.
Emphasis or letter	the speaker has emphasized the underscored sound, syllable
LOUDER	stretch of speech produced noticeably louder
°quieter°	stretch of speech produced noticeably quieter

>quicker<	stretch of speech produced noticeably quicker
<slower>	stretch of speech produced noticeably slower
↑↓	marked rise or falling intonational shift
.h	hearable in breath
·pt	lip smacking
(h)	laugh
@smiley@	smiley voice
#creacky#	creaky voice
~tremble~	trembling voice
((comment))	comments by the transcriber or anonymizations
→	specific part discussed in the text
(unsure)	the transcriber is not sure about what the speaker says
(xx xx)	the transcriber is not sure about what the speaker says, but it is hearable that there are two syllables
(xx/yy)	the transcriber is not sure about what the speaker says, but hears it as xx or yy
Translation	translations in English are in italics
//translation//	untranslatable parts of speech or added words in the translation because of different grammatical constructions

Embodied behavior based on Mondada (2014)

…	Embodied behavior by the child, synchronized with stretches of talk
%...%	Embodied behavior by the police officer, synchronized with stretches of talk
*--->	The action described continues across subsequent lines
---->*	until the same symbol is reached
>>	The action described begins for the excerpt's beginning
--->>	The action described continues after the excerpt's end
….	Action's preparation
,,,,,	Action's retraction

  * (1.   *1)   k's nodding ends before the silence ends
k:*nods*

p: Police officer's embodied behavior when (s)he is not
                  speaking
k: Child's embodied behavior when (s)he is not speaking

Appendix B: Overview of interviews

Interviews about the same event are highlighted in grey.

Interviews that were only included for the last analysis (chapter 3) are in italics.

I only have the year of birth of the children interviewed in interview room B, therefore I calculated both possible ages.

Overview of interviews

	Room	Pseudonym child	Boy / Girl	Age	Alleged offence	Pseudonym police officer	Length recording
1	A	Felix	Boy	8	Babysitter puts hand in brother's pants	Jennifer	0 h 58 m
2		Lisa	Girl	6	Known boy puts penis in girl's buttock	Anna	1 h 0 m
3		Luca	Boy	6	Boy is playing outside with three other children. Unknown man picks him up and takes him to a car near the playground.	Floortje	0 h 50 m
4		Zoë	Girl	6	Babysitter pulls his pants down in girl's bedroom and her brother's bedroom	Heidi	0 h 55 m
5		Robby	Boy	6	Babysitter pulls his pants down in boy's bedroom and his sister's bedroom	Jennifer	0h 56 m
6		Ben	Boy	6	Boy and teenage cousin rub body parts together, including noses, bellies, buttocks and private parts	Heidi	1 h 1 m
7		Wencke	Girl	8	Girl is playing outside with a girlfriend.	Floortje	0 h 47 m

8	Jentl	Girl	7	Unknown man pulls her on his lap twice. Girl is playing outside with a girlfriend. Unknown man pulls her friend on his lap twice.	Heidi	0h 42 m
9	Vera	Girl	8	Unknown man pulls girl onto lap sideways in restaurant	Rogier	0 h 56 m
10	Karin	Girl	9	Flasher approaches girl and friends when they are playing outside	Floortje	1 h 10 m
11	Yasha	Girl	9	Flasher approaches girl when she is on her way from school to home on her bike	Sophia	1 h 13 m
12	Merel	Girl	10	Friend's father puts his hand in girl's pants when she is playing on the computer with her friend.	Heidi	0 h 48 m
13	Adrienne	Girl	11	Divorced father abuses girl and her younger sister during visiting arrangements	Anna	1 h 27 m
14	Suzanna	Girl	7	Unknown man wants to play a game in the bushes called "who can sit the longest", but disappears when police officer happens to walk by	Anna	1 h 22 m
15	Delphine	Girl	9	Repeated abuse by divorced father during visiting arrangements	Jennifer	1 h 17 m
16	Karin	Girl	7	Girl is playing outside when unknown man asks her if she wants candy,	Floortje	1 h 40 m

				he invites her to his home and asks her to lick his private parts and show her bottom		
17		Brian	Boy	8	Repeated abuse by grandfather, "playing" with boy's private parts	Rogier	2 h 32 m
18		Teun	Boy	6	Boy is playing outside when he is approached by a flasher who also asks the boy to "touch" his private parts	Rogier	1 h 6 m
19		Myrthe	Girl	10	Girl is playing online game with friend, is approached online by unknown man/adolescent. He then approaches them via skype and asks them to show their bellies	Anna	1 h 34 m
20		Pien	Girl	10	Girl is playing online game with friend, is approached online by unknown man/adolescent. He then approaches them via skype and asks them to show their bellies	Rogier	1 h 29 m
21	B	Kevin	Boy	6/7	Abuse by older brother	Erna	0 h 56 m
22		Alexander	Boy	8/9	Abuse by mother	Carmen	1 h 29 m
23		Harmen	Boy	6/7	Boy is biking in the park with a friend. Unknown boy tried to lick his teeth	Wilma	1 h 4 m
24		Emiel	Boy	10/11	Unknown man shows fake penis and actual private parts to boy and his friend; asks boy and	Alexia	1 h 9 m

				friend to show their private parts		
25	Dorien	Girl	10/11	Repeated abuse by family friend	Aafke	1 h 11 m
26	Antje	Girl	6/7	Repeated abuse by girl's father	Coby	1 h 8 m
27	Babette	Girl	6/7	Girl was biking around the house, unknown boy grabs her bike and asks if he can lick her teeth	Aafke	1 h 1 m
28	Lieke	Girl	9/10	Unknown man talks with girl at a festival, pushes her over and tries to put his hand in her pants	Hans	0 h 58 m
29	Jan	Boy	6/7	Boy's sister was taken by two unknown boys and was forced to lick their private parts	Hans	1 h 30 m
30	Francesco	Boy	7/8	Unknown man hurts boy by putting stick in anus	Sophia	1 h 24 m
31	Cecile	Girl	10/11	Abuse by neighbor in his house and in the shed	Aafke	1 h 42 m
32	Larissa	Girl	6/7	Girl's friend (boy) with intellectual disability had to lick other children's private parts (two times)	Tara	0 h 55 m
33	Liselot	Girl	9/10	Neighbor has touched girl, one time on the street, one time in a shed. He also did it to a neighbor girl	Tara	1 h 25 m
34	Cornelis	Boy	6	Older brother puts private parts between boy's buttocks	Aafke	1 h 25 m
35	Jasper	Boy	9/10	Abuse by grandfather and grandmother during slumber party	Tara	2 h 6 m

36	*Siri*	*Girl*	*10/11*	*Someone in a care center laid down on top of girl and pulled her pants down*	*Tara*	*1 h 36 m*
37	Jenna	Girl	8/9	Brother flashes private parts in girl's room	Wilma	1 h 16 m
38	*Stans*	*Girl*	*8/9*	*Violence and sexual abuse at girl's father's place (parents are divorced)*	*Aafke*	*2 h 11 m*

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Samenvatting (Summary in Dutch)

Politieverhoren met kind-getuigen: een conversatieanalyse

1 Politieverhoren met kind-getuigen, onderzoeksonderwerp en theoretisch kader

In dit proefschrift doe ik verslag van mijn onderzoek naar politieverhoren met kind-getuigen over seksueel geweld. Zulke verhoren vinden meestal plaats in kindvriendelijke verhoorstudio's. Die zijn minder zakelijk ingericht dan de meeste verhoorruimtes om kinderen zoveel mogelijk op hun gemak te stellen. De ruimtes zijn ook uitgerust met camera's en een microfoon waarmee de politie de verhoren opneemt.

Verhoorders van kind-getuigen (of, korter en in politieterminologie: studioverhoorders) zijn uitvoerig getraind door de politieacademie om kinderen te horen. De training heeft vooral als doel een zo betrouwbaar mogelijke verklaring uit te lokken en suggestie zoveel mogelijk te vermijden. Een belangrijke techniek hiervoor is het scenariomodel. Dit model heeft als doel het kind zoveel mogelijk zelf aan het woord te laten in elk stadium van het verhoor. Een andere techniek om suggestie te zoveel mogelijk te vermijden is open vragen stellen. Studioverhoorders worden ook getraind om actief te zoeken naar *andere* verklaringen voor de verdenking van misbruik.

Veel verhooradviezen aan studioverhoorders zijn gebaseerd op onderzoek naar hoe een verhoorder een versie van 'wat er gebeurd is' kan uitlokken op zo'n manier dat het verhoor zelf het verhaal niet beïnvloedt. Vanuit interactioneel perspectief is deze visie op verhoren problematisch: gespreksdeelnemers stemmen namelijk voortdurend hun gespreksbijdragen af op hun gesprekspartner (*recipient design*). De ene gesprekspartner beïnvloedt dus onherroepelijk de ander.

In mijn proefschrift onderzoek ik die interactie en kijk ik hoe verhoren met kind-getuigen zich beurt voor beurt ontwikkelen. Daarbij maak ik gebruik van, en bouw ik voort op, inzichten uit conversatieanalytisch onderzoek. Ook

onderzoek ik hoe de interactie zich verhoudt tot professionele kennis en idealen over interactie; deze kennis en idealen worden in conversatieanalytische literatuur ook wel aangeduid als *professional Stocks of Interactional Knowledge* (verder SIKs; Peräkylä and Vehvilainen, 2003).

2 Data, methode en ethische kwesties
In hoofdstuk 2 beschrijf ik mijn werkwijze, mijn onderzoeksmateriaal en de ethische kwesties die verbonden waren aan werken met dit materiaal.

Om te beginnen heb ik de SIKs grotendeels ontleend aan de *Handleiding het kind als getuige* (verder: de Handleiding; Dekens en Van der Sleen 2013). Dit boek dient als studiemateriaal en naslagwerk voor studioverhoorders. Inzichten uit de Handleiding heb ik aangevuld met interviews met docenten aan de politieacademie, studioverhoorders en één van de auteurs van de Handleiding, en een observatie van een terugkombijeenkomst van verhoorders. De resultaten uit het veldwerk heb ik ook gebruikt bij de contextbeschrijving van studioverhoren met kinderen (hoofdstuk 1), in de databeschrijving (hoofdstuk 2), als ondersteuning in de keuze van de te analyseren fenomenen (hoofdstuk 2) en als achtergrondinformatie bij de analyse (hoofdstuk 3 t/m 5).

De conversatieanalyse in dit proefschrift is gebaseerd op video-opnamen gemaakt door de politie voor het strafproces die al gemaakt waren vóór de start van dit onderzoeksproject. Voordeel van het gebruik van bestaande opnamen is dat de verhoren niet beïnvloed kunnen zijn doordat er onderzoek werd gedaan; ik kon dus de zogenaamde *observer's paradox* (Labov 1972) vermijden. Een nadeel was dat er vooraf geen toestemming gevraagd was aan de kinderen of hun wettelijke vertegenwoordigers voor wetenschappelijk onderzoek. Er was dus niet voldaan aan het gebruikelijke ethische vereiste van *informed consent*. Dit onderzoek is echter een vorm van archiefonderzoek, ofwel onderzoek aan bestaande data opgenomen voor andere doeleinden. Juist omdat dergelijk onderzoek geen actieve interventie vereist in het leven van deelnemers, zijn soms uitzonderingen mogelijk op *informed consent*. Hieraan worden meestal de voorwaarden verbonden dat de data van oorsprong met *informed consent* zijn gemaakt en verzameld, dat het onderzoek niet strijdig is met de oorspronkelijke doelen van verzamelen en dat extra zorg wordt besteed aan het verhullen van de

identiteit van de betrokkenen. Nu aan deze voorwaarden zo goed mogelijk is voldaan, stel ik me op het standpunt dat onder deze omstandigheden het onderzoek ethisch verantwoord is.

Toestemming voor gebruik van de verhoren voor dit onderzoek is onder andere verkregen via het College van Procureurs-Generaal (verder: PAG). Aan gebruik van de data werd een aantal voorwaarden verbonden waarbij beschermen van de anonimiteit en belangen van de betrokkenen centraal stond.

De verzameling van verhoren werd samengesteld in overleg met de contactpersonen bij twee verhoorstudio's die speciaal voor verhoren met kinderen zijn ingericht. Dit heeft geleid tot een dataset van in totaal 38 verhoren uit 2011 en 2012. Dit zijn eerste verhoren over zedendelicten, met jongens en meisjes in de leeftijd van 6-11 jaar, door zoveel mogelijk verschillende verhoorders, zowel mannen als vrouwen, zonder tolk, die niet veel in de publiciteit waren (zie bijlage B voor meer details).

Voor analyse heb ik volgens de principes van conversatieanalyse een data-gestuurd of inductief proces gevolgd. Terwijl ik de data bekeek, beluisterde, transcribeerde en analyseerde, raakte ik geïnteresseerd in drie fenomenen: instructies aan kinderen, kinderen die ongevraagd iets over hun eigen rol tijdens het seksueel geweld vertellen en vragen naar bronnen van kennis over wat er gebeurd is.

3 "Wat is jouw domicilie": inbedden van instructies in het verhoor

Het eerste analytische hoofdstuk gaat over gespreksinstructies aan het kind. Verhoorders moeten het kind een aantal zaken uitleggen. Daartoe behoort onder andere dat het kind 'ik weet niet' moet antwoorden als het een antwoord op een vraag niet weet, dat het 'ik snap het niet' moet zeggen als het de verhoorder niet begrijpt en dat het de verhoorder moet verbeteren als de verhoorder iets verkeerd zegt.

De eerste vraag is hoe verhoorders instructies invoegen. De eerste manier waarop verhoorders dat doen is door de volgende fase van het gesprek aan te kondigen ("nou ga ik herhalen – nog een keer zeggen wat jij gezegd hebt"). Dit maakt het mogelijk de instructie als een relatief voor de hand liggend onderdeel van de volgende fase te presenteren. De tweede

manier is aankondigen van de instructie zelf ("dan heb ik altijd een paar afspraakjes die ik ga maken"); dit legt meer de nadruk op de instructies als afzonderlijke activiteit. De derde methode is de instructie koppelen aan iets wat het kind zegt ("dat weet je niet, nou, dat is goed dat je dat zegt, want als we straks gaan praten…"). Dit laatste is een advies uit de Handleiding, maar het kan een plotselinge overgang creëren van een relatief informele gesprekssituatie naar een institutionele. Bovendien sturen verhoorders regelmatig aan op een *ik weet niet*-antwoord om daar dan de *ik weet niet*-instructie aan te kunnen koppelen. De verhoorder vraagt dan of het kind weet hoe de verhoorder heet. Als het kind de naam van de verhoorder niet meer weet, dwingt de vraag het kind tot een interactioneel gedisprefereerd antwoord. Bovendien zijn er duidelijk goede en foute antwoorden op deze vraag.

Een andere aanbeveling aan verhoorders is dat ze het kind de instructies moeten laten oefenen. Verhoorders formuleren 'testitems' meestal als het begin van een *als-dan*-constructie: "want als ik aan jou vraag: wat is jouw domicilie". Lastig aan deze constructie is dat het onduidelijk is wie de *dan*-clause zal produceren: de verhoorder ("dan kun jij zeggen: dat woord snap ik niet") of het kind ("wat is dat?"). Vaak verloopt de beurtwisseling dan ook niet soepel op dit punt. Verhoorders lossen dit bijvoorbeeld op door te wachten of door het kind expliciet de beurt te geven. Een ander belangrijk punt is dat de manier van oefenen om verschillende redenen niet representatief is voor het 'echte' verhoor, bijvoorbeeld omdat verhoorders jargon als 'domicilie' proberen te vermijden.

Verhoorders en kinderen moeten de instructiesequentie ook een keer afsluiten. In veel gevallen sluit de verhoorder af door nogmaals te zeggen wat het kind moet doen (bijvoorbeeld de verhoorder verbeteren) of wat het doel is van de instructie. Dit is heel duidelijk en benadrukt het instructieve karakter van dit onderdeel van het interview. De tweede variant van afsluiten is dat de verhoorder bijvoorbeeld "ja" zegt, met sterk stijgende intonatie en/of luider dan andere spraak. De verhoorder geeft zo de gelegenheid aan het kind om (nogmaals) te bevestigen dat het de instructie begrepen heeft of niet en dus of de verhoorder verder kan gaan. Kinderen maken daar soms wel en soms geen gebruik van. Deze variant rondt implicieter af en toont meer vertrouwen in het begrip van het kind. Tot slot

komt het met name bij de *ik snap niet*-instructie voor dat de focus verwijderd raakt van de instructieactiviteit. Verhoorders stellen dan eerst de testvraag 'wat is je domicilie' en leggen deze vervolgens uit als 'waar woon je'. In een aantal gevallen construeert de verhoorder deze vraag niet alleen als uitleg, maar ook als een uitnodiging aan het kind om adresgegevens te geven. Hiermee verandert de activiteit in ondervragen. Deze manier van beëindigen van de instructie ondersteunt de instructietaak niet.

4 Onuitgelokte accounts door kinderen en de illusie van een neutrale reactie

Het tweede analytische hoofdstuk (hoofdstuk 4) gaat over hoe kinderen zich verantwoorden zonder dat de verhoorder om een verantwoording (*account*) vraagt. De analyse laat zien dat deze onuitgelokte accounts bijdragen aan een slachtofferidentiteit doordat kinderen benadrukken dat ze het misbruik niet wilden, dat ze het misbruik niet uitlokten en dat ze het niet aan zagen komen. Daarnaast benadrukken kinderen regelmatig met deze accounts dat ze zich verzet hebben tegen de verdachte.

Kinderen presenteren dit verzet in veel gevallen ook als iets wat normatief gewenst is, bijvoorbeeld door verantwoording af te leggen waarom ze géén verzet hebben gepleegd, door hun verzet te presenteren als iets waar ze trots op zijn ondersteund met lachen of een lachende stem, en door expliciete zelf-oordelen over hun (gebrek aan) verzet. De norm van verzet die kinderen relevant maken vertoont opvallende gelijkenis met verkrachtingsmythen (*rape myths*) een verzameling van *common sense* regels over wat verkrachting is en wie een slachtoffer van verkrachting is. De onuitgelokte accounts lijken dus bij te dragen bij aan een verhaal dat voldoet aan de *common sense* ideeën over slachtofferschap van seksueel geweld. Kinderen behandelen slachtofferschap daarmee als een identiteit die in het leven moet worden geroepen in het gesprek. Tegelijkertijd pareren ze mogelijke beschuldigende interpretaties van het verhaal, bijvoorbeeld interpretaties waarin het kind deels verantwoordelijk wordt gehouden omdat het zich niet verzet heeft.

Als een reactie op de onuitgelokte relevant is, reageren verhoorders meestal op een 'neutralistische' manier. 'Neutralistisch' betekent dat reacties er neutraal uit kunnen zien (bijvoorbeeld stiltes, 'hmhm', 'ja', 'oké'

of volgende vragen), maar dat echte neutraliteit in gesprekken een illusie is. Dat blijkt vooral wanneer het kind duidelijk een normatieve houding aanneemt. Als het kind zich verontschuldigt en claimt niet anders te hebben gekund, maakt dat geruststelling relevant; als kinderen hun eigen gedrag rapporteren als iets goeds, maakt dat goedkeuring relevant. Als een dergelijke reactie uitblijft - wat vaak het geval is bij neutralistische reacties - , is dat onder omstandigheden interpreteerbaar als afkeuring (een vorm van *disaffiliation*). Kinderen behandelen zulke minimale reacties dan ook soms als problematisch door vervolgens nogmaals een betrokken (*affiliative*) reactie relevant te maken. Dit plaatst de verhoorder voor een dilemma tussen neutraal doen en de richtlijnen volgen enerzijds en anderzijds doen wat interactioneel relevant is. Dit is soms ook zichtbaar in de interactie, namelijk aan de terughoudend-affiliatieve reacties van verhoorders.

Deze analyse draagt bij aan literatuur die laat zien dat de buismetafoor (*conduit metaphor*) van communicatie, die impliciet ten grondslag ligt aan veel gespreksadviezen, problematisch is. Deze metafoor van communicatie presenteert woorden als pakketten van betekenis, die een spreker kan verzenden en die een ontvanger vervolgens uit kan pakken. In die opvatting is taal een neutrale manier om gevoelens gedachten en herinneringen te transporteren. Eerder conversatieanalytisch onderzoek (Hutchby 2005; 2007; Phillips 1999) heeft laten zien hoe 'neutrale' gespreksbijdragen juist duidelijk institutionele gespreksdoelen dienen en dus niet neutraal zijn. Dit hoofdstuk bevestigt dit en voegt toe dat pogingen tot neutraal-doen soms worden behandeld als niet-passend en problematisch.

5 Hoe kinderen reageren op vragen naar bronnen van kennis
In het derde en laatste analytische hoofdstuk (hoofdstuk 5) ga ik in op *hoe weet je dat*-vragen en vooral hoe kinderen deze vragen behandelen. De Handleiding adviseert dit soort "toetsvragen" te stellen met "als doel de herkomst van bepaalde informatie te achterhalen en inzicht te krijgen in oorzaak en gevolg" (Dekens en Van der Sleen 2013: 92). Deze formulering presenteert vragen naar bronnen van kennis vooral als vragen om informatie, terwijl zo'n vraag ook begrepen kan worden als een verzoek om *verantwoording* en daarmee als een kritische benadering van wat het kind beweert.

Vaak gaan vragen naar bronnen van kennis over de mentale gesteldheid of bedoelingen van iemand anders, meestal de verdachte ("maar hoe weet je dan dat je naar boven moet?", "dat zegt ie dan"). Met deze vragen en antwoorden transformeren de verhoorder en het kind gezamenlijk uitspraken van het kind over deze mentale gesteldheid tot een observeerbaar en rapporteerbaar feit, dat bovendien veelal wordt toegeschreven aan de verdachte. De vragen naar bronnen van kennis dragen zo bij aan de constructie van het gedrag van de verdachte als intentioneel.

Een groot deel van de reacties op vragen naar bronnen van kennis laat problemen zien. In veel gevallen worden antwoorden niet-vloeiend geproduceerd, bijvoorbeeld met uitstel en zelf-herstel. Ook worden vragen naar bronnen van kennis regelmatig herhaald, hetgeen interactionele moeilijkheden impliceert. Bij de analyse werden vier typen antwoorden geïdentificeerd:

- antwoorden die de vraag impliciet ter discussie stellen; is de vraag wel gerechtvaardigd en had de verhoorder niet zelf het antwoord moeten weten,
- antwoorden die de vraag behandelen als een vraag die hun kennis ter discussie stelt; het kind behandelt de vraag als een vraag om verantwoording, niet slechts als een vraag om informatie,
- antwoorden die inconsistenties vermijden waarmee kinderen een oriëntatie laten zien op het belang van consistentie,
- reacties die defensieve elementen bevatten; kinderen reageren alsof de verhoorder suggereert dat het kind iets verkeerd gedaan heeft.

Kinderen behandelen vragen naar bronnen van kennis dus regelmatig als méér dan alleen een vraag naar hun bron van kennis. De analyse laat ook zien dat vragen naar bronnen van kennis volgens regels voor alledaagse gesprekken overbodig kunnen zijn.

6 Conclusie en discussie

Het onderzoek maakt duidelijk dat een conversatieanalyse waardevolle inzichten kan bieden in hoe gespreksadviezen in de praktijk uitpakken. De vier verschillende relaties tussen SIKs en analyses die Peräkylä en Vehviläinen (2003) bespreken, komen aan bod: conversatieanalyse kan SIKs 1) corrigeren en 2) detailleren, 3) dimensies toevoegen aan SIKs en 4) *missing links* laten

zien. De corrigerende functie van conversatieanalyse is te vinden in hoofdstukken 4 en 5; deze hoofdstukken laten opnieuw zien dat een uiting niet echt neutraal kan zijn en dat een vraag niet alleen maar een vraag is om informatie. De detaillerende functie van CA komt voor in alle analytische hoofdstukken: de analyses in detail zien hoe relevante gespreksadviezen voor verhoorders in de praktijk vorm krijgen. Ook laten de gedetailleerde transcripten zien dat details over *hoe* verhoorder en kind dingen zeggen van groot belang zijn (detaillerende functie). Een voorbeeld van een toegevoegde dimensie is te vinden in hoofdstuk 5: de vragen naar hoe het kind weet wat iemand anders wilde of bedoelde transformeert een ontoegankelijke mentale gesteldheid van een persoon in een observeerbare en verifieerbare actie die relevant is voor eventuele vervolging. Een voorbeeld van een *missing link* komt voor in hoofdstuk 3. Het is niet zonder meer duidelijk waarom verhoorders het kind vragen om adresgegevens: ze zouden ook alleen kunnen *uitleggen* dat domicilie hetzelfde is als 'waar je woont'. De verklaring, of *missing link*, is hier mogelijk dat verhoorders in de introductie óók proberen het kind te laten oefenen met open vragen beantwoorden.

In algemene zin valt op dat de Handleiding vooral gericht is op mogelijke cognitieve problemen. De Handleiding adviseert bijvoorbeeld instructies te spreiden om te voorkomen dat het kind teveel informatie in eens krijgt en een instructie vergeet. Deze adviezen moeten echter ingevoegd worden in interactie die zich beurt voor beurt ontwikkelt. De Handleiding presenteert de gespreksadviezen meestal los van interactionele context en als onproblematisch, terwijl de analyses laten zien dat de richtlijnen duidelijk kunnen zorgen voor interactioneel lastige situaties voor beide gesprekspartners.

Het onderzoek draagt op verschillende vlakken bij aan conversatieanalytische literatuur. De analyse van instructies sluit aan bij literatuur over directieven, dat wil zeggen: hoe mensen andere mensen commanderen, instrueren, verzoeken, suggereren of hinten iets te doen en bij literatuur over praten over taal (*metatalk*). De analyses van de neutralistische *uptakes* en het vermijden van inferenties over hoe kinderen iets weten door de verhoorder sluiten aan bij eerder onderzoek naar hoe professionals in verschillende contexten proberen een neutrale positie in te

nemen. De bevindingen over vragen naar bronnen van kennis zijn een aanvulling op de literatuur over *epistemics* en evidentialiteit in interactie in die zin dat het onderzoek laat zien wat er gebeurt wanneer bronnen van kennis expliciet gemaakt worden. Bovendien vormen deze bevindingen een voorbeeld van hoe institutionele interactie gepaard kan gaan met specifieke inferentiële kaders.

De analyses hebben ook implicaties voor hoe onderzoekers kijken naar kinderen als gesprekspartners. Ondanks verschillende moeilijkheden blijken kinderen op allerlei manieren competente en actieve gesprekspartners te zijn. Politieverhoren met kinderen zijn dus geen kwestie van eenzijdige beïnvloeding van de verhoorder op het kind; de verhoorder en kind construeren samen de interactie en het kind beïnvloedt dus ook de beurten van de verhoorder en wat deze doen in de interactie.

Dit onderzoek heeft ook een aantal praktische implicaties. Die gaan onder meer over de manier waarop instructies geïntroduceerd en worden. Daarnaast wordt de vraag opgeworpen wat de consequenties zijn van instructies voor het beeld van het kind. Een ander belangrijk punt is dat de gespreksadviezen niet zonder meer alléén doen wat ermee beoogd wordt. Als adviezen in het gesprek worden toegepast, heeft dit vaak onverwachte bijeffecten die soms tegengesteld zijn aan de bedoelingen van de richtlijnen. Een manier om dit punt op te pakken is door meer uitleg te geven; een andere manier zou kunnen zijn te accepteren dat dit soort onverwachte bijeffecten nu eenmaal optreden en de kennis hierover bij verhoorders te beschouwen als competentie van de verhoorder. Daarnaast zou het meer recht doen aan de complexiteit van verhoren om meer voorbeelden met interactionele context op te nemen in de Handleiding.

Curriculum vitae

Guusje Jol was born in The Hague, the Netherlands, on 15 October 1975. She attended Zandvliet secondary school in The Hague between 1988-1994. She subsequently obtained an MA degree in criminal law at Erasmus University Rotterdam in 1999 and worked for the public prosecutor's office as a legal assistant between 2000-2005 in Amsterdam, Utrecht and The Hague respectively. From April 2005 - April 2006, she worked as a volunteer in Sri Lanka. With her return to the Netherlands, she returned to the public prosecutor's office in The Hague. This time, she combined the job of legal assistant with a role as a campaign assistant at Amnesty International in Amsterdam for one year. In 2007, she started a part-time study of Dutch Language and Culture at the Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam. This led to a BA degree in 2011 and a MA degree in 2012. In November 2013, Guusje made the step from the public prosecutor's office to a PhD project at the Department of Dutch Language and Culture and Centre for Language Studies at Radboud University Nijmegen. Her project concerned police interviews with child witnesses, studied from a conversation analytic perspective. Besides working on her dissertation, she helped organize conferences and symposiums, contributed to the department's blog and the course 'Language in Action: Discourse Analysis', gave several guest lectures on various topics in a variety of courses. She also became a member of the executive committee of Anéla (the Dutch Society for Applied Linguistics). She started working as a lecturer of applied linguistics for the Open University in February 2019.