

## **Intentions as the product of sequential coordination**

Formal models of dialogue, e.g. Grosz and Sidner (1990), Poesio and Rieser (2010), emphasize interlocutors' explicit formation and recognition of intentions and plans as the factors driving coordination. On the other hand, under Gricean assumptions, Clark's (1996) grounding model describes how co-ordination is achieved collaboratively through the establishment and incrementation of the "common ground". In general, dialogue models provide different accounts of which mechanisms are involved in co-ordination: the Interactive Alignment model (Pickering and Garrod 2004) stresses tacit co-ordination as provided by low-level mechanisms like priming, while in Grosz and Sidner's and the grounding model, specialised strategic co-ordination devices are the basis of the explanation.

To investigate these issues, we report a variant of the maze-task experiment (Garrod and Anderson 1987), used in combination with a novel chat-tool (Healey and Mills 2006). In this set-up, all turns generated by participants pass through a server that introduces artificial probe clarification questions that appear to participants to originate from each other. Probe clarifications are designed to elicit participants' descriptions of their intentions – ("why?", "why that?", "what for?"). In this talk, we present results of those experiments that show global and local patterns in maze-task dialogue that are not readily explained by existing models of dialogue. Through the differential interpretation that intention-probing clarifications receive according to levels of coordination, we argue that the notion of "intention" is context-bound, in that such attributions, whether to self or to others, only emerge and become effective as constructs "embedded" in established moves of a game involving sequential organisation of interleaved actions and utterances. We then sketch an approach that emphasizes how intentions are gradually co-ordinated in dialogue arguing that they are best characterized as an outcome, not a precondition, of successful interaction. In turn, when such a level of "intention"-coordination has been achieved, it allows the rapid development of highly elliptical and constrained interaction.