VU Research Portal

Withholding consent

van Burgsteden, Lotte; te Molder, Hedwig

published in
Pragmatics and Society
2021

DOI (link to publisher)
[10.1075/ps.20032.bur](https://doi.org/10.1075/ps.20032.bur)

document version
Peer reviewed version

[Link to publication in VU Research Portal](#)

citation for published version (APA)

van Burgsteden, L., & te Molder, H. (2021). Withholding consent: How citizens resist expert responses by positioning themselves as 'the ones to be convinced'. *Pragmatics and Society*, 12(4), 669-695.
<https://doi.org/10.1075/ps.20032.bur>

General rights

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal ?

Take down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

E-mail address:
vuresearchportal.ub@vu.nl

Withholding consent: How citizens resist expert responses by positioning themselves as ‘the ones to be convinced’

Lotte van Burgsteden

Department of Language, Literature, and Communication
Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, the Netherlands

Hedwig te Molder

Department of Language, Literature, and Communication
Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, the Netherlands

Pragmatics & Society, 12(4), 669-695 (2021).

<https://doi-org.vu-nl.idm.oclc.org/10.1075/ps.20032.bur>

For any other (re-)use permissions, please contact the [Rights & Permissions department](#) of John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Abstract

This paper examines public meetings in the Netherlands where experts and officials interact with local residents on the human health effects of livestock farming. Using Conversation Analysis, we reveal a “weapon of the weak”: a practice by which the residents resist experts’ head start in information meetings. It is shown how residents draw on the given question-answer format to challenge experts and pursue an admission of, for example, methodological shortcomings. We show how residents’ first question functions as a ‘foot-in-the-door’, providing them with a strong basis for skepticism. By systematically challenging the expert responses, the residents exploit the interaction’s sequential organization, with the effect that the goal becomes them *being convinced* rather than *being informed*. Consequently, the withholding of consent becomes the residents’ ‘weapon’. Finally, we argue that in an age where expertise is increasingly contested, it is crucial to understand how, and to what end, this contestation may occur.

Keywords public meetings, challenging questions, contested expertise, withholding consent, conversation analysis, ‘weapon of the weak’ practice

1. Introduction

Public involvement is frequently presented as a democratic solution to the management of social issues with a major scientific or technological component, such as health or environmental problems. Yet, rather than being on equal footing with officials and experts in these public meetings, citizens typically have the less influential role of information receiver or provider of “lay opinions” (Boholm 2008; Buttny and Cohen 2015; Carvalho, Pinto-Coelho, and Seixas 2019). In contrast, officials and experts often have a more influential role and decisive voice as they have first access to “the facts” and determine what topics get addressed (Buttny and Cohen 2007, 2015). Moreover, studies on public involvement exercises around technological or environmental issues have pointed to the pervasiveness of science and technology in such interactions, with *all* parties treating technical-scientific knowledge as more important than experiential knowledge or value-related concerns (Davies 2011; Felt et al. 2009; Kerr, Cunningham-Burley, and Tutton 2007; Sprain and Reinig 2018).

The high value attached to technical-scientific facts in public meetings may result in a crucial inequity between experts and citizens. Scholars have noted that citizens will never possess the same kind of authority as experts to challenge or question technical-scientific claims because they are not in the position to draw upon “the same networks of support for their claims” (Myers 2003: 269; see Buttny and Cohen 2015; Felt et al. 2009; Kerr, Cunningham-Burley, and Tutton 2007; Mogendorff et al. 2014; Sprain and Reinig 2018). In general, the formats of these public meetings create a clear ‘divide and power’ difference between citizens as audience, and officials and experts as in charge of the meeting (Black, Leichter, and Gastil 2009). The very structure of these meetings, where officials and experts are the ones *inviting* citizens, instantiates experts’ and officials’ power as they “go first”, by providing information and distributing the speaking opportunities (see Molotch and Boden 1985).

Although quite some research has pointed to the relatively powerful position of experts and officials in public meetings, little attention has been paid to the ways in which the ones “going second” – citizens in this case – can simultaneously and successfully challenge those in charge. It is from this angle that we will examine how citizens can build a new consequential form of participation without departing from the meeting’s question-answer format. Using Conversation Analysis, we demonstrate what could be called a “weapon of the weak” (Scott 1985): a practice by which residents in public information meetings shift the organization of participation to their advantage. We reveal how residents start off by asking a question, which then provides the basis for pursuing an admission from the experts.

2. Questions as challenges

In general, the act of questioning implies that the questioner lacks knowledge or certainty and simultaneously proposes that the addressee does have the knowledge asked for (Heritage and Raymond 2012). However, questions can do all sorts of actions besides “asking for information”. Examples of such actions are challenging, confronting or criticizing (e.g., Hayano 2013; Heinemann and Traverso 2009; Koshik 2003; Schegloff 1988). When used in this sense, the meaning of the word “questioning” is different from asking a question to “become informed”, namely “to be sceptical, to doubt – in short, to question the truth or veracity of what someone has claimed” (Steensig and Drew 2008: 6).

Previous research has demonstrated a range of questions and question formats that may invoke challenges or convey a challenging stance (e.g., Bolden and Robinson 2011; Clayman 2002; Heinemann 2008; Heritage 2002; Koshik 2003, 2005; Raymond and Sidnell 2019; Schegloff 1997: 522-524). Challenging questions generally do not create a challenge on their own but often occur in “an already-established environment of disagreement, accusation, complaint, and the like” (Koshik 2003: 52). Compared to declaratives (e.g., “You’ve done a bad thing”), imperatives (e.g., “Don’t ever do that again”) or exclamations (e.g., “You’re wrong”), challenging questions (e.g., “You think it is true?”) are less explicitly confrontational and are downplayed less often (Hayano 2013: 411).

The predominant question-answer pattern found in institutional discourse typically allows institutional actors “to gain a measure of control over the introduction of topics and hence of the ‘agenda’ for the occasion” (Drew and Heritage 1992: 49). Importantly, a distinction can be made between how asymmetries are situated and accomplished in situ, versus asymmetries related to particular institutional roles. One context where this distinction comes up is the news interview, where journalists’ adversarial questions to politicians show how a powerful actor gets questioned (Clayman 2002). Studies on the ways that questions create challenges in everyday interaction have commonly addressed situations with symmetrical power relations (e.g., Reynolds 2015). Studies on institutional interaction, however, have predominantly addressed how the party who is typically in control of the discussion agenda can ask questions to challenge the recipient’s conduct or statements. These asymmetries have been the subject of a vast amount of research (e.g., Clayman 2002; Edwards 2006; Emmertsen 2007; Heritage 2002; Hutchby 1996; Rendle-Short 2007), none of which has focused on this ‘power play’ from the relatively less influential participant’s perspective.

In the current study we show a practice by which an ostensibly weak party can challenge the seemingly influential. We demonstrate how residents in information meetings initiate the sequence by asking a question which lays the foundation for pursuing an admission. By systematically challenging the expert responses, residents organize the interaction such that the goal becomes them *being convinced* rather than *informed*. In the following, we show how residents' withholding of consent becomes a "weapon of the weak".

3. Data and method

Our analysis focuses on public meetings concerning livestock farming in the Netherlands. The rapid expansion of large-scale livestock farms has led to increasing societal concerns regarding animal welfare, the environment, and human health (Breeman, Termeer, and Van Lieshout 2013). In 2007, an exceptionally large outbreak of Q-fever – a disease transmitted from infected goats to humans – occurred in the Netherlands, resulting in numerous patients and 95 fatalities (RIVM 2018). Moreover, recent research points to other risks of intensive livestock farming, such as pneumonia (IJzermans et al. 2018). Livestock-related human health effects have thus been firmly placed on the Dutch societal agenda and recurrently invoke heated public debate.

The data used for this study consist of five video-recorded information meetings held between 2016-2017 (total duration: approximately 9,5 hours) between (scientific) experts, government officials, and residents on livestock farming and human health¹. In all meetings, participants were told at the meeting's start that they could ask questions. While farmers were also present, they did not significantly contribute to the interactions. In the five meetings, there were around ten small contributions from farmers.

Four of these meetings can be represented as follows. Residents are seated in the audience, and the scientist is in front of the audience²:

¹ Ethical clearance for this research was obtained from the Wageningen University and Research Social Sciences Ethics Committee and the Ethical Review Committee of Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam.

² The officials are seated with their backs to the residents

Figure 1. Visual representation of meetings 1–4

In two of these meetings (henceforth: “meeting 1” and “meeting 2”), two scientists from a university and public health institute presented their research conducted in the Netherlands on health risks of livestock farming. These meetings were led by a facilitator and attended by about 50 people. Two other meetings (henceforth: “meeting 3” and “meeting 4”) concerned a study conducted by a researcher from a public health institute on people’s experienced quality of life in a rural municipality. The study had a particular focus on livestock farming, and people’s perceived health and nuisance. In these meetings there was no formally appointed facilitator. Two municipality officials and an alderman (meeting 3), and a mayor (meeting 4), acted as facilitators. These meetings were attended by around 40 people.

The fifth recorded meeting (henceforth: “meeting 5”) concerned a goat farm’s possible expansion, which resulted in protests due to potential human health risks. To give nearby residents the opportunity to get informed about the risks, residents, the farmer, experts, and officials gathered in an information meeting. A facilitator led the discussion. This meeting can be represented as follows³:

³ In this meeting, 11 officials are present as an overhearing audience; they do not contribute to the interaction, nor do the other participants orient to them in their speech. They are therefore not relevant for the current analysis.

Figure 2. Visual representation of meeting 5

We examine these meetings using conversation analytic methods (Sidnell and Stivers 2013). This perspective offers a fine-grained and empirically-based analysis of the sequential unfolding of interaction through examinations of (video-)recordings of conversations and accompanying transcriptions (Ten Have 2007). Rather than trying to understand participants' 'actual' motivations or intentions, analysts examine what interlocutors make available and observable in their talk, and how they show to understand each other. Analyses are therefore grounded in the turn-by-turn development of interaction. These methods are thus appropriate for an analysis which aims to uncover real-time and real-life practices performed within public meetings, since they allow us to specify the details of participants' real-life practices, in what ways they get responded to, and how they actually function within these interactions. Such analyses can illuminate issues that could not be 'imagined', or which participants' retrospective accounts may not (be able to) address.

We transcribed the video-recordings according to Jefferson (2004) transcription conventions (see Appendix 1). Names of participants, municipalities, and places were replaced by pseudonyms. For this article, transcripts were translated from Dutch to English. Please note that some translations are grammatically incorrect. According to conversation analytic methods, transcripts represent talk as it is produced, not as it must have been produced or was supposed to be produced, and are also translated as such. Translations are as literal as possible, but in some cases practical concessions had to be made in order to ensure the translation's readability. The original Dutch transcripts can be found in the appendix.

Preliminary analyses of the data showed that “asking questions” was the most common contribution by residents. We made a distinction between questions in accordance with how they got treated by residents after an answer had been provided. By virtue of the basic tool of Conversation Analysis called the “next-turn-proof-procedure”, we need to employ a three-turn sequence to analyze whether or not an initial questioning turn, after having received an answer, gets “fully and intersubjectively ratified as having been a real question” (Heritage and Clayman 2010: 27) by the question-turn speaker. In some situations, after experts had answered residents’ questions, residents provided a response which conveyed they treated the answer as adequate or informative (e.g., “Oh”, Heritage 1984, or “Okay”, Beach 1995). Moreover, “routine forms of post-expansion” (Raymond 2018: 77), such as next-turn repair-initiations (e.g., clarification questions), also occasionally occurred after an answer had been provided. These expansions briefly resisted or delayed accepting the answer (ibid.) after which the interaction proceeded. Examples of the above described questioning situations are reflected in the excerpts below. After having received an answer to their question, the residents treat the answers as informative:

Excerpt 1. ‘Meeting 3’

951. Resident7 Were they also able to ↑expound on this question? or not.
952. Scientist No.
953. Resident7 ◦Okay◦

Excerpt 2. ‘Meeting 5’

386. Resident6 Does this only apply to new-establishments? or also to expansions.
387. Scientist3 everything. (.) everything.
388. Resident6 Okay.

The situations addressed in the current study, however, show a different pattern, which we now turn to.

4. Analysis

In the analysis, we focus on situations where residents’ questions to experts do not (solely) solicit information, which becomes clear in the ways they are formulated and residents’ subsequent treatment of answers. Instead of providing a response (e.g., “Oh”; “Okay”) that acknowledges the answer as adequate or informative (Heritage and Raymond 2012), residents

challenge the provided information, by which they present themselves as “entitled to an admission”, for example, regarding some deficiency in the research methodology used.

We will demonstrate this sequential pattern by first unpacking its beginning - a “foot-in-the-door” question that gives residents the basis for expanding on their challenge - after which we discuss a second step which shows how residents’ additional turns enable them to introduce a more substantial skepticism into the meeting. Finally, we show how, towards the end of the sequence, residents claim retroactively that they already knew the answer to their question(s), and thereby display that these questions were not initially intended for seeking information.

4.1 “Foot-in-the-door”: Setting up skepticism

As mentioned, residents’ turns make relevant an admission, an orientation which is observable both in their questions, which convey a challenging stance, and in their responses to experts’ answers. After residents have posed a question, they do not treat subsequent answers as informative or complete. Residents thereby use a format suggesting a knowledge asymmetry, but this format is then deployed for a different course of action by which residents indicate to evaluate the answers “*in light of the beliefs or assumptions [...] held prior to the query*” (Raymond 2018: 78, italics in original). Residents’ first question thus functions as a “foot-in-the-door” (see Freedman and Fraser 1966), laying the ground for the pursuit of an admission.

Take Excerpt 3. Prior to this fragment, one of the scientists mentions that goats nowadays get vaccinated against Q-fever, and that their milk gets checked for the bacteria (“coxiella bacteria”) that cause Q-fever. A resident elaborates on this by asking about the certainty of this type of monitoring:

Excerpt 3. ‘Meeting 5’

386. Resident4 → Uh the goats they are being vaccinated- uhm vaccinated and the bulk-tank milk
 387. that gets then checked?
 388. and are those good (.) indicato:rs- (.) indicators (.) do they PRT⁴ give certainty?
 389. (0.8)
 390. Resident4 >is- is< an indica:tion,
 391. (0.4)
 392. has that u:h- (.) has that been investigated in ↑such a way that that u:h (.)◦yes◦

⁴ Particle with no English equivalent

393. **that that really gives certainty?**
394. (0.5)
395. Scientist1 I think you can say that in this case.
396. yea:h look really one ↑hundred percent certainty is also difficult to ↑say right?
 [3 LINES OF ANSWER OMITTED]
400. Scientist1 and u:hm (.) yeah the extent to which you can say that is it totally gone?
401. I mean uh (.) the risk yeah [i-i-
402. Resident4→ **[But how about uh lambs then or uh the:- the: uhm**
403. Resident4 **the goats that for the first time uh (0.5) u:h (.) give birth and therefore**
404. **do not give milk uh (.) yet.**
405. (0.5)
406. Scientist2 U:hm (.) it's correct that they are not yet in the tank-bulk milk- (.) u:h (.) give milk?
407. so then you cannot find the bacterium in there?
408. u:h but if a goat is just ↑well-vaccinated? and especially if it has
409. been vaccinated (.) for a long time?=
410. =that is now the case?
411. then that bacterium is not (.) present anymore at that <enterprise.>

The resident could have accepted the answer (e.g., with “Oh”; “Okay”) but instead asks another question (402). Her turn starts with “but”, thereby positioning it as a challenge to the scientist’s answer (Rendle-Short 2007: 392). Moreover, the adverb “then” treats the answer as incomplete and indicates there is an outcome or upshot that has not been addressed. The resident’s questions thus make an admission relevant that the monitoring system is not totally safe by suggesting it does not include goats that just gave birth, nor does it include lambs. It shows how the resident’s initial question has functioned as a way in, allowing her to expand on her skepticism and pursue an admission. A second scientist indeed provides an admission by acknowledging that the system does not detect Q-fever bacteria in goats which do not give milk (406-407), but subsequently resists the implications by concluding there is (still) no issue (408-411).

We see a similar phenomenon in Excerpt 4. The scientist states that the results of her study show that people experience trouble due to livestock farming in their area (112-116). One of the residents follows up on this and asks a question that involves a choice between two alternatives (117-118): whether the scientist refers to “people” (the municipality’s total population), or to “respondents” (the people participating in the research):

Excerpt 4. ‘Meeting 4’

112.	Scientist	physical complaints also around nine percent,
113.		bad sleeping around eight percent of the people,
114.		(0.8)
115.	Scientist	so this gets uh yeah by a number of people PRT really to some extent
116.		uh (0.4) ex <u>↑</u> perienced to some extent.
117.	Resident2 →	Is uh- can I ask a question for a moment?
118.		you say eight percent of the people? (0.5) or of the <u>respondents</u>?
119.	Scientist	These are u::h the respondents?=but they stand- u:h they-they- it’s <u>↑</u> calculated
120.		for the municipality of Lozen.
121.	Resident2 →	Yes no I get that,=
122.	Scientist	=so:=
123.	Resident2 →	=but=
124.	Scientist	=yes=
125.	Resident2 →	=if I just uh translate it to <u>myself</u>, (0.4) how many people experience
126.		nuisance, (0.3) among our <u>↑</u>citizens, (.) then that’s around ten percent.
127.		so around one thousand <u>↑</u>people.
128.		that’s going really fast I think °if I now put it like that but-°

129. **because (.) a respon↑de:nt? (.) represents a family.**
130. **And the average ↑family size is (.) two point two >or something<**
131. **or two point three?**
132. (0.8)
133. Scientist u::hm >well< “respondent” that stands for an ad- one of the adults in the
134. municipality of Lozen.

The resident’s “can I ask a question for a moment?” (117) casts what he is doing as a potentially minimal or temporary interruption of the meeting’s progress. Yet, he clearly goes on to have a more substantial agenda. That is, while the scientist referred to “people” (113-115), the resident provides the alternative of “respondents”, marked by emphatic stress. Through this, he sets up a contrast between these two, suggesting there may be something wrong with the reference to “people”. The scientist answers by stating she is talking about “respondents” but expands on it by indicating they have used measures to guarantee generalizability to the whole municipality population (119-120). As in Excerpt 3, the resident’s initial question ostensibly has laid the basis upon which he can pursue his skepticism. That is, in his next turn he treats the answer as incomplete and not informative: The “yes” treats the answer as the expected response, whereas the “no” comments on its adequacy, and the “I get that” rejects its informativeness (121). The resident points to possible deficiencies in the calculations of how many people experience nuisance as these calculations, according to him, omit that a respondent represents a whole family (129-131). He thereby suggests that the effects may actually be higher than those reported by the study. The subsequent 0.8 second gap projects trouble, which is also reflected by the speech perturbations “u::hm” and the discourse particle “well” (133), indicating that the scientist’s response will be negative or otherwise dispreferred (Heritage 2015).

In Excerpt 5, the resident’s first question shows more clearly what type of admission the question is about, compared to the previous excerpts. Earlier, the scientist mentioned that residents are most concerned about the health risks by livestock farming. She now concludes by mentioning that “yellow and orange together” (i.e., the diagram colors in the presentation standing for “extremely worried”) indicate that thirty percent of the people find it quite worrying (296-297). A resident subsequently inquires how they can reconcile these results with prior shown results as, according to him, there is a “mismatch” between these results (299-306). The scientist asks him which results and slides he is referring to (307; the lines where the

resident and scientist are looking for the slide are omitted) after which the resident repeats his question (315-320):

Excerpt 5. 'Meeting 3'

296. Scientist and >then we have< yellow and orange together= is around (.) thirty
297. percent of the people, (.) who uh yes who find that quite worrying.
298. (1.1)
299. Resident7 → **How can you reconcile that with- we just saw (.) about particulate ↑matter?-**
300. **emissions of particulate matter and such?**
301. **there we saw a really high percentage? (.) that's u:h (0.3) ↑worried about**
302. **that,=and here we see concerning exposure of particulate matter?**
303. **u:h thirty-three percent if I see it correctly, not concerned.**
304. Resident7 **[I see there a mis-**
305. Scientist **[is that- is that-**
306. Resident7 → **[mismatch?**
307. Scientist **[which one: you mean that particulate matter nuisance?**
[6 LINES OMITTED]
314. Scientist Yes (.) neh d-[d't
315. Resident7 → **[and there you see u:hm that uh that that is uh (.) considerable?**
316. **at the same time I see in that other sheet that they not con↑cerned?**
317. Scientist Yes
318. Resident7 **are.**
319. Scientist **[But yes-**
320. Resident7 **[here I see differences there right? ((makes interrogative gestures with hands))**
321. **((murmuring in the room))**
322. Scientist eight percent ge- yes this- this is- this is (0.3) nuisance? (.) right?
323. people- people experience nuisance of dust soot or smo:ke?
324. and the other is like >well yes< (0.3) "I know that that livestock farming
325. causes ↑particulate matter,=I know that particulate matter .hH is not good for
326. my health so I'm con↑cerned about that."
327. Scientist That's another- (.) another ↑aspect so then you get different numbers.
328. (0.5)
329. Resident7 → **Yes between the word "nuisance" or "con↑cerned."**
330. **but the one is the result of the ↑other.**
331. **((murmuring in the room))**
332. Scientist Not- not necessarily you- you can of course be concerned, (.) of something-(.) maybe-

333. maybe you ↑notice nothing of dust but you know that “well yes in my surroundings
 334. that appears to be high, (.) so I’m con↑cerned about that.”

The resident already hints at his turn being a challenge, since “how can you reconcile” communicates a bias towards the opposite valence than the utterance’s valence: “you cannot reconcile...” (Koshik 2005). Yet, he repairs this question into a description of the information just provided, and indicates that he sees a “mismatch” in the results presented in the slides, which he repeats in his next turns (315-316, 320). He thereby makes relevant a response from the scientist, since the information presented is a knowable that the scientist (having conducted the research) has rights and obligations to know (Pomerantz 1980). The scientist refutes the implications of the resident’s question as she indicates there are differences between “experiencing nuisance” and “being concerned”, resulting in different research outcomes (322-327). She thereby implies that there is no issue of a “mismatch”. As in the previous excerpts, the resident’s initial question has laid the ground for expanding on the challenge. His follow-up turn functions as a request for confirmation, in which he immediately rejects the answer and pursues an admission (329-330). He suggests that the scientist’s answer cannot explain the differences in results since “nuisance” and “concerned” may not be so different altogether, which the scientist now only needs to confirm. Yet, the scientist instead counters the resident’s suggestions by explaining what the differences between the terms are (332-334).

4.2 *In further pursuit of an admission*

In our data we also find situations which more explicitly show that these sequences are not resolved easily. In these situations, residents ask additional questions and treat the responses as uninformative or incomplete, showing that such sequences can take over the discussion agenda for quite some time.

The following excerpt shows the continuation of Excerpt 3. As mentioned, the scientist resists the implication of the resident’s question that there are problems with the Q-fever monitoring system. She concludes her answer by saying that the chance that “it” (the Q-fever bacterium) mutates, is “deemed very small” (420), and that the bacteria will eventually be detected (424). After the scientist has finished her answer, the resident asks the scientist to confirm her understanding of the prior talk, challenging the answer once more (428-432):

Excerpt 6. 'Meeting 5'

418. Scientist2 u:hm (.) it also was one of the other questions if- (.) if it then: (.) still
419. could circumvent that (.) vaccine?=so that it m:uta:tes,
420. u:hm that chance is also deemed very ↓small by the scientists
421. °in this case°
422. (0.6)
423. Scientist2 and then it wouldn't go really ↑quickly?
424. so then you will gather it (.) from the milk.
425. (0.7)
426. Resident4 → [Yes
427. Scientist2 [Many answers at [once?
428. Resident4 → [Yeah yeah
429. Resident4 **but (.) it-it ↑is possible.**
430. (0.4)
431. Scientist2 u:h
432. Resident4 → **z- uh it could happen.**
433. Scientist2 In theory <that could happen?> (0.3) but then: u::h everyone will (.)
434. I think (.) agree, (.) that that would not (.) in one fell swoop again
435. lead to an enormous ↑outbreak?
436. (0.3)
437. Scientist2 a:nd that that very gradually,- (.) <s-suppose> that- small chance- that it would
438. Mutate (.) would happen? that that would go so slowly that you definitely
439. detect that in the:- (0.3) in the detection system.

As before (see Excerpt 3), the resident treats the answer as incomplete and uninformative by following up on the answer. The turn-initial “but” (429) particularly reveals she is not satisfied with the answer. By formulating (her understanding of) the scientist’s talk using declarative syntax, the resident asks the scientist to confirm her understanding of that talk. By summarizing the scientist’s words into “it is possible” or “could happen”, with emphasis on “is”, and “could”, the resident treats the outcome, at least partially, as an admission, which now only has to be confirmed. However, the scientist resists the question’s constraints (Stivers and Hayashi 2010) and refutes rather than confirms the implications (433-435). The extreme case formulations (“everyone”; “one fell swoop”; “enormous outbreak”) are seemingly used to persuade the resident that what is mentioned is reasonable or believable (Pomerantz 1986). Consequently, the fact that the resident was seeking an admission, retrospectively also shows that the resident’s

first question (386-393 in Excerpt 3) was making relevant an admission that the monitoring system is not safe.

Prior to Excerpt 7, the resident asked a question on Q-fever vaccination, yet he treats the subsequent answer as not informative by suggesting he already knew the answer (not shown). He then immediately continues with a next question, asking why the scientists check the goats' milk, but not other factors, to diagnose whether Q-fever bacteria are still present in goats (647-649):

Excerpt 7. 'Meeting 5'

647. Resident7 → **And why do you take (.) the <milk> then as a ↑parameter**
 648. **to ↑diagnose this.**
 649. **and not ↑other factors**
650. Scientist2 U::hm
 651. Resident7 **I- [for instance the faeces or-or**
 652. Scientist2 [for instance- yes
 653. Resident7 **I ↑know- just to name something funny[=u:h**
 654. Scientist2 [Okay
 655. Scientist2 U::h[m
 656. Resident7 → **[Why- why the ↑milk**
 657. Scientist2 U:hm can I just get a few things on that what I- (0.3) just-
 658. I will answer in a bit ↑PRT but (.) u:h there's also a
 659. ↑coupling effect of vaccination?
 660. so (.) if you vaccinate the ↑whole group of goats?
 661. at a certain moment that bacterium disappears. (0.4) from the couple.
 662. so if you just keep vaccinating ↑long enough?
 663. even if the vaccine isn't per↑fect,
 664. at a certain moment (0.3) the farm is (.) <free>
 665. then the animals are (.) ↑free from the bacterium.=
 666. =so I think that that's (.) where we are [at this moment?
 667. Resident7 → **[and (.) how does that get checked**
 668. Resident7 **that they are free?**
 669. Scientist2 U::hm:: well (0.5) I-(0.3) that g- I'm not in charge of that but that's indeed
 670. the bulk-tank ↑milk?=
 671. =you ask why the bulk-tank milk why not another way?
 672. u::hm (0.3) there are indeed disadvantages

[4 LINES OF ANSWER OMITTED]

677. (1.2)

678. Scientist2 u::hm:(1.3) but in the gr-current situation, (0.6) I think it's f:i:ne,

By prefacing his turn with “and”, the resident links this question to his preceding question, which marks this question as “agenda-based” rather than “contingent” (Heritage and Sorjonen 1994). This shows that his question is part of a larger project. The “why”-interrogative (647) displays a challenging stance since it treats the current ways of monitoring Q-fever as “problematic”, and therefore in need of an account (Bolden and Robinson 2011). The scientist also treats his turn as a challenge. She reveals having trouble in answering the question, and explicitly indicates she is circumventing it (657-658). The resident’s subsequent question treats the answer as not informative (667-668). He asks how scientists check whether goats are free from coxiella bacteria, despite having already asked why the scientists take the milk of goats to check this (see lines 647-648). Through this, he already suggested knowing how they check this: they take the milk as a parameter. Still, the resident asks about it again. Observably, the scientist treats the resident’s turns as challenges that invite an admission. By stating that there are “*indeed* disadvantages” (672), she conveys that she is confirming something already suggested in the resident’s turns. Yet, after relatively long silences (677-678), she resists the implications of the resident’s question (678).

4.3 Retroactively positioning oneself as already knowing the answer to the question(s)

The previous sections have shown that in the addressed situations residents do not position themselves as (mere) information recipients, but (also) as participants entitled to an admission. In this final section, we show that in retrospect residents explicitly claim to already have had a set of beliefs about the things they ask about. In cases where residents’ first questions already reveal what type of admission their question is about (see e.g., Excerpt 5), residents ultimately demonstrate that they stick to what they implied through their first question or display skepticism about the given answer(s). In other cases, residents independently draw the conclusion that there *are* deficiencies in research methodologies, risk surveillance, or risk-reducing technologies. Accordingly, in all these situations, they retroactively make explicit that their questions were not intended to solicit information, by demonstrating that when they asked their questions, they already had “a “correct” answer in mind” (Hayano 2013: 411).

Excerpt 8 is a continuation of Excerpt 5, where a resident asked about ostensible “mismatches” in the research results. After having been provided with the scientist’s answers,

the resident demonstrates “sticking to” the information implicated in his first question (i.e., that there *is* a mismatch) despite the scientist not “admitting” this, by indicating the scientist and he “probably have different perceptions” (336):

Excerpt 8. ‘Meeting 3’

333. Scientist maybe you ↑notice nothing of dust but you know that “well yes in my surroundings
 334. it appears to be high, (.) so I’m con↑cerned about that.”
 335. (0.8)
 336. Resident7 → **Probably different perceptions ((raises eyebrows and smiles))**

The resident's assertion is accompanied by raised eyebrows and smile. He thereby shows doubt about whether the scientist's answer adequately explains the "mismatch" in the results he pointed to earlier (see Excerpt 5).

Excerpt 9 is a continuation of Excerpt 7. After the resident has asked a series of questions about the current ways of monitoring Q-fever and the scientist has answered these, the resident shows to independently draw a conclusion (702-703):

Excerpt 9a. ‘Meeting 5’

698. Scientist2 it has now become clear that other tests are not suitable?
 699. to indicate for an individual animal (0.5) whether it’s (0.5) been infected yes or no.
 700. (1.1)
 701. Scientist2 The swabs (0.3) [there- those were-
 702. Resident7 → **[so basically- BASICALLY**
 703. Resident7 **we don’t have a good parameter right so to say.**
 704. Scientist2 Not of an individual animal.
 705. Resident7 **No.**

By initiating his turn with “basically”, the resident indicates that he summarizes what he regards as being the most important elements of the provided information, which is that there are deficiencies in the current measurements of Q-fever bacteria. When the scientist confirms the resident’s conclusion (704), though with an adjustment to components of the resident’s question (Stivers and Hayashi 2010), and the resident once more acknowledges this, the conversation has seemingly ended. But, as Excerpt 9b demonstrates, the matter keeps coming back. While

the resident has continuously asked about the monitoring of goat milk, he reveals he already believed that Q-fever does not get spread through milk (758):

Excerpt 9b. ‘Meeting 5’

734. Facilitator can you formulate this as a <question?>
735. so that we can write it down?
[11 LINES ON PROCEEDINGS OF WRITING DOWN QUESTION OMITTED]
747. Resident7 I- yes [that- that- yes
748. Facilitator [What is your question.
749. Resident7 → **let me differently- I-I- just want to ↑know(.) that (.) at a certain moment—**
[5 LINES OMITTED]
755. Resident7 **=we know from the ↑past that especially from e↑missions (0.4) there’s**
756. **contamination with Q-fever.**
757. **(0.8)**
758. Resident7 → **Well those e↑missions in my view do not come <from the milk of the goat.>**

The resident initiates his response by stating he “just wants to know”, which, as becomes clear in the remainder of the conversation (after 758, omitted from transcript), is about him wanting to know that a good measuring instrument is available. He mentions it is known that especially through emissions (of Q-fever bacteria), people get contaminated with Q-fever (755-756). When claiming he does not believe that these emissions come from goat milk (758), he makes explicit that, according to him, the current monitoring system (in which samples are taken from the milk) is not reliable or valid. Consequently, here the resident explicitly shows that his questions were not designed to solicit information; instead he conveys that they have been asked in the service of pursuing an admission that current ways of surveillance are not trustworthy.

The final case is shown in Excerpt 10. Prior to this fragment, the resident asked if the scientists have considered that not only the agricultural sector is responsible for air quality. One scientist responds this is a political issue (1420-1423) which “cannot be solved overnight” (1431). As in the previous extract, the resident eventually draws a conclusion herself by indicating that the scientists logically should mention in their research that certain issues have not been included (1433-1439):

Excerpt 10. 'Meeting 1'

1420. Scientist2 Well yes that-that-that you (.) almost cannot ask US that,
1421. because- because u:h it goes- what's going to happen now of course is that also in
1422. political pro- uh (also) considerations?(.) is going to be looked at what-what-what
1423. kind of ↑measures are possible.=
[7 LINES OF ANSWER OMITTED]
1431. Scientist2 but yes (.) one cannot solve this overnight of course
1432. this- this is [a-
1433. Resident9 [↑No:
1434. Resident9 → well ↓yes the- I get that, but (.) I don't always ↑fully agree
1435. with what is being said tonight,
1436. → but it could of course be mentioned in the research that (0.3) ↓yes (.)
1437. it's not been taken into account (.) the habits of the (.) various
1438. people with whom you (.) have executed your research.
1439. that you- that's also a research phenomenon- explanation [()
1440. Scientist1 [Can we PRT be quick?
1441. Facilitator Yea:h well this- I think that we should have this discussion maybe later [after uh
1442. Scientist1 [Yes yes
1443. Facilitator afterwards PRT more profoundly.

In conclusion, the resident presents her questions as having been used to elicit an admission.

This fragment is also an example of a situation where residents' turns get disrupted. Here, a researcher interrupts the resident, asking if "they can be quick" (1440), indicating she wants to continue. The facilitator responds by mentioning they should have "this discussion afterwards more profoundly" (1441, 1443). As in two other moments in our corpus where residents' turns are interrupted, the turns get framed as a "discussion" or "debate". This appears to be the only way to escape residents' turns, namely by entirely aborting the sequence and reframing it, moving to a meta-discursive level (Buttny 2010).

5. Concluding comments

In this study, we demonstrated how residents challenge experts by pursuing an admission of, for example, methodological shortcomings rather than (merely) demonstrating a need for information. In the ways in which such public meetings are structured, there is a clear divide

and difference in influence between officials and experts on the one hand, and residents on the other. This division is not something that merely exists a priori, but is also demonstrated for example, by experts and government officials “going first”, and residents not departing from the meeting’s question-answer format by “going second”. This paper has focused on one possible route by which the ostensibly “weaker” party may challenge those “in charge” and set up an alternative agenda.

As political scientist Scott (1985) indicates in his seminal study of poor peasants’ everyday fights with their oppressors, evasion and circumspect struggle, as opposed to an outright confrontation, are very powerful means. Our study has also focused on these “everyday forms of resistance”. We demonstrated how participants who are not in the lead of the meetings analyzed, organize the interactions such that the goal of the meeting becomes them *being convinced* rather than (merely) *informed*. Residents’ first question provides them with a foot-in-the-door of the discussion agenda (see Freedman and Fraser 1966), establishing the basis for expanding on their skepticism. This becomes particularly clear in the ways residents treat subsequent answers: as incomplete or uninformative and as not being the correct answers, of which they show to already have had a clear grasp (see Raymond 2018: 75-81).

Residents do not display explicit resistance against the meeting’s format (see Davies 2011; Buttny and Cohen 2015). Instead, consciously or not, they turn the meeting’s question-answer structure to their advantage such that they can challenge observations and conclusions where necessary and convenient. The power of this sequential pattern can be explained by putting it into the broader perspective of two countervailing pressures that are available and oriented to in the meetings. On the one hand, residents *are* in the weaker position of not being the first to provide information or being in charge of the speaking rights. However, within democratic societies, the weaker party still needs to be willing to assert the information they are said to have been given. In other words, officials and experts still need the residents’ consent or acquiescence for them to proceed and affirm the asymmetry. In that sense, the residents’ withholding of consent is a way to increase their influence. Stivers (2005) encountered a similar phenomenon in her study, albeit in a different context (interactions between pediatricians and parents), and by different means (i.e., by not including challenging questions). One of the resources parents used to negotiate treatment outcomes so as to conform with their own wishes, was by treating an outcome as a proposal that made acceptance relevant rather than acknowledgement, and subsequently withholding that acceptance.

The fact that “just” questions are being asked here, puts the experts and officials in a catch-22 situation. They have to choose between treating the question as either exploitative or

genuine, and neither of these options seems satisfactory or adequate. The socially acceptable thing to do is to treat the question as genuine, which then gives residents the material they need to perform resistance in third position. If, on the other hand, experts and officials treat it as exploitative, they simultaneously position the residents as insincere or manipulative. Asking questions is socially unobjectionable: one cannot object to persons asking a question. Yet once they have asked the question, it may prepare the ground for expanding on their skepticism and setting up an alternative project. In that sense, the residents here use the foot-in-the-door question as a basis for exploiting a given sequence organization.

Residents' turns imply that the health effects discussed are different from what experts indicate, by which residents suggest a lack of impartiality – or vice versa: “investedness” – on their part (see Edwards and Potter 1992; Potter 1996). Yet these implications are not made explicit by any of the participants, resulting in these concerns remaining hidden or at least not getting addressed during the meetings. This may actually be part of what makes these challenges effective. Residents do not have to make an explicit technical argument, putting methodologies, risk surveillance or technologies on challengeable ground – they just have to raise doubt.

Now that expertise is increasingly being contested (see Oreskes and Conway 2010), it is essential to understand how and to which ends this contestation may occur. Although institutions may frame it as a form of “anti-expertise” (Wynne 2006), we argue that contestation can also be considered as a way for residents to set scientific and governmental institutions in motion. By consistently questioning the technical or scientific basis of the issues at hand, they also provide experts with the message: “It’s not that I’m not trusting you; it’s just that I’m not *blindly* trusting you” (i.e., not taking things at face-value, see Garfinkel 1963). While science is still routinely presented as if it does not involve or support normative choices (Welsh and Wynne 2013), one way for residents to determine if they can trust the science or policies based on that science is by asking for their scientific basis. Rather than analyzing residents’ challenging turns as a sign of sheer distrust, we may also see them as a way of getting institutions to act responsibly based on the right facts (Szerszynski 1999). The challenging questions in the current context bear similarities to the practices of adversary questioning in journalistic interviews, where interviewers are expected to actively challenge political actors rather than being their mouthpieces (Heritage and Clayman 2010). Interviewers thereby act as watchdogs, and are expected to question public figures on behalf of “the public” (Clayman 2002).

The situations we addressed point to a mismatch between experts' and residents' projects. From one perspective, it can be argued that these situations have the characteristics of a trap, with experts being pressured by residents to admit to certain deficiencies. From another perspective, however, it is clear that the structure of these meetings limits the residents' actions, so they maximize the one dimension of influence that they have. This misalignment ostensibly makes it hard for participants to achieve closure, given that neither of the parties is abandoning the project they are pursuing, nor are they able to get the other to go along with them (see Raymond and Zimmerman 2016).

This study is therefore not about the existence of an ostensibly weak versus a more influential party, but about a much more complicated political reality. If it only concerned the weak versus powerful, the powerful would eventually dominate. Yet, as we have shown, such assumed relations of asymmetry are much more indeterminate in practice. Without the consent of the weak, it is hard or even impossible for the influential to proceed.

Funding information

This work was supported by the Netherlands Organization for Health Research and Development (ZonMw) under grant number 50-52200-98-325. Prof dr Hedwig te Molder

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to acknowledge Liesbeth Claassen, Valérie Eijrond, Joke van der Giessen, Renske Nijdam, Danielle van Oudheusden, Joost van der Ree, and Danielle Timmermans for their advice, and Geoffrey Raymond for helpful feedback on earlier versions.

References

- Beach, Wayne. 1995. "Conversation Analysis: 'Okay' as a Clue for Understanding Consequentiality." In *The Consequentiality of Communication*, ed. by Stuart Sigman, 121-161. Hillsdale: Erlbaum.
- Black, Laura, James Leichter, and John Gastil. 2009. "Communicating Trust, Community, and Process in Public Meetings: A Reflection on How Close Attention to Communication Can Contribute to the Future of Public Participation." *International Journal of Public Participation* 3: 143–159.
- Boholm, Åsa. 2008. "The Public Meeting as a Theater of Dissent: Risk and Hazard in Land and Environmental Planning." *Journal of Risk Research* 11: 119-140.
- Bolden, Galina, and Jeffrey Robinson. 2011. "Soliciting Accounts with Why-Interrogatives in Conversation." *Journal of Communication* 61 (1): 94-119.
- Breeman, Gerard, Catrien Termeer, and Maartje van Lieshout. 2013. "Decision-making on Mega-Stables: Understanding and Preventing Citizens' Distrust." *NJAS-Wageningen Journal of Life Sciences* 66: 39-47.
- Buttny, Richard. 2010. "Citizen Participation, Metadiscourse, and Accountability: A public Hearing on a Zoning Change for Wal-Mart." *Journal of Communication* 60 (4): 636-659.
- Buttny, Richard, and Jodi Cohen. 2007. "Drawing on the Words of Others at Public Hearings: Zoning, Wal-Mart and the Threat to the Aquifer." *Language in Society* 36: 735-756.
- Buttny, Richard, and Jodi Cohen. 2015. "Public Meeting Discourse." In *The International Encyclopedia of Language and Social Interaction*, ed. by Karen Tracy, Cornelia Ilie, and Todd Sandel, 1242-1252. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

- Carvalho, Anabela, Zara Pinto-Coelho, and Eunice Seixas. 2019. "Listening to the Public-Enacting Power: Citizen Access, Standing and Influence in Public Participation Discourses." *Journal of Environmental Policy & Planning* 21 (5): 563-576.
- Clayman, Steven. 2002. "Tribune of the People: Maintaining the Legitimacy of Aggressive Journalism." *Media, Culture & Society* 24 (2): 197-216.
- Davies, Sarah. 2011. "The Rules of Engagement: Power and Interaction in Dialogue Events." *Public Understanding of Science* 22 (1): 65-79.
- Drew, Paul and John Heritage. 1992. *Talk at Work*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Edwards, Derek. 2000. "Extreme Case Formulations: Softeners, Investment, and Doing Nonliteral." *Research on Language and Social Interaction*. 33 (4): 347-373.
- Edwards, Derek. 2006. "Facts, Norms and Dispositions: Practical Uses of the Modal Verb *Would* in Police Interrogations." *Discourse Studies* 8 (4): 475-501.
- Edwards, Derek, and Jonathan Potter. 1992. *Discursive Psychology*. London: Sage.
- Emmertsen, Sofie. 2007. "Interviewers' Challenging Questions in British Debate Interviews." *Journal of Pragmatics* 39 (3): 570-591.
- Felt, Ulrike, Maximilian Fochler, Annina Müller, and Michael Strassnig. 2009. "Unruly Ethics: On the Difficulties of a Bottom-up Approach to Ethics in the Field of Genomics." *Public Understanding of Science* 18 (3): 354-371.
- Freedman, Jonathan, and Scott Fraser. 1966. "Compliance without Pressure: The Foot-in-the-Door Technique." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 4 (2): 195-202.
- Garfinkel, Harold. 1963. "A Conception of, and Experiments with, 'Trust' as a Condition of Stable Concerted Actions." In *Motivation and Social Interaction: Cognitive Approaches*, ed. by O.J. Harvey, 187-238. New York: Ronald Press.

- Hayano, Kaoru. 2013. "Question Design in Conversation." In *The Handbook of Conversation Analysis*, ed. by Jack Sidnell and Tanya Stivers, 395-414. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Heinemann, Trine. 2008. "Questions of Accountability: Yes-no Interrogatives that Are Unanswerable." *Discourse Studies* 10 (1): 55–71.
- Heinemann, Trine, and Veronique Traverso. 2009. "Complaining in Interaction." *Journal of Pragmatics* 41 (12): 2381–2384.
- Heritage, John. 1984. "A Change-of-State-Token and Aspects of Its Sequential Placement." In *Structures of Social Action*, ed. by Maxwell Atkinson and John Heritage, 299-345. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Heritage, John. 2002. "The Limits of Questioning: Negative Interrogatives and Hostile Question Content." *Journal of Pragmatics* 34 (10-11): 1427–1446.
- Heritage, John. 2015. "Well-Prefaced Turns in English Conversation: A Conversation-Analytic Perspective." *Journal of Pragmatics* 88: 88-104.
- Heritage, John, and Steven Clayman. 2010. *Talk in Action: Interactions, Identities and Institutions*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Heritage, John, and Geoffrey Raymond. 2012. "Navigating Epistemic Landscapes: Acquiescence, Agency and Resistance in Responses to Polar Questions." In *Questions: Formal, Functional and Interactional Perspectives*, ed. by Jan-Peter de Ruiter, 179-192. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Heritage, John, and Marja-Leena Sorjonen. 1994. "Constituting and Maintaining Activities across Sequences: *And*-prefacing as a Feature of Question Design." *Language in Society* 23: 1-29.
- Hutchby, Ian. 1996. "Power in Discourse: The Case of Arguments on a British Talk Radio Show." *Discourse & Society* 7 (4): 481-497.

- IJzermans, Joris, Lidwien Smit, Dick Heederik, and Thomas Hageraars. 2018. *Veehouderij en gezondheid omwonenden-III* [Livestock farming and neighbouring residents' health]. NIVEL-report.
- Jefferson, Gail. 2004. "Glossary of Transcript Symbols with an Introduction." In *Conversation Analysis: Studies from the First Generation*, ed. by Gene Lerner, 13-31. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Kerr, Anne, Sarah Cunningham-Burley, and Richard Tutton. 2007. "Shifting Subject Positions: Experts and Lay People in Public Dialogue." *Social Studies of Science* 37: 385-411.
- Koshik, Irene. 2003. "Wh-questions Used as Challenges." *Discourse Studies* 5 (1): 51-77.
- Koshik, Irene. 2005. *Beyond Rhetorical Questions*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Myers, Greg. 2003. "Discourse Studies of Scientific Popularization: Questioning the Boundaries." *Discourse Studies* 5 (2): 265-279.
- Mogendorff, Karen, Hedwig te Molder, Cees van Woerkum, and Bart Gremmen. 2014. "We Say: '...', They Say: '...': How Plant-Science Experts Draw on Reported Dialogue to Shelve User Concerns." *Discourse & Communication* 8: 137-154.
- Molotch, Harvey and Deirdre Boden. 1985. "Talking Social Structure: Discourse, Domination and the Watergate Hearings." *American Sociological Review* 50: 273-288.
- Oreskes, Naomi and Erik Conway. 2010. *Merchants of Doubt. How a Handful of Scientists Obscured the Truth on Issues from Tobacco Smoke to Global Warming*. New York: Bloomsbury.
- Pomerantz, Anita. 1980. "Telling My Side: "Limited Access" as a "Fishing" Device." *Sociological Inquiry* 50 (3-4): 186-198.

- Pomerantz, Anita. 1986. "Extreme Case Formulations: A Way of Legitimizing claims." *Human Studies* 9: 219–229.
- Potter, Jonathan. 1996. *Representing Reality: Discourse, Rhetoric and Social Construction*. London: Sage.
- Raymond, Geoffrey. 2003. "Grammar and Social Organization: Yes/no Interrogatives and the Structure of Responding." *American Sociological Review* 68 (6): 939-967.
- Raymond, Geoffrey. 2018. "Which Epistemics? Whose Conversation Analysis?" *Discourse Studies* 20 (1): 57-89.
- Raymond, Geoffrey, and Jack Sidnell. 2019. "Interaction at the Boundaries of a World Known-in-Common: Initiating Repair with 'What do you mean?'" *Research on Language and Social Interaction* 52 (2): 177-192.
- Raymond, Geoffrey, and Don Zimmerman. 2016. "Alignment and Misalignment in Sequence and Call-closings in Institutional Interaction." *Discourse Studies* 18 (6): 716-736.
- Rendle-Short, Johanna. 2007. "Neutralism and Adversarial Challenges in the Political News Interview." *Discourse & Communication* 1 (4): 387-406.
- Reynolds, Edward. 2015. "How participants in arguments challenge the normative position of an opponent." *Discourse Studies* 17 (3): 299-316.
- RIVM [Dutch National Institute for Public Health and the Environment]. 2018. *Q-koorts*. Available at: https://www.rivm.nl/Onderwerpen/Q/Q_koorts. (accessed September 28, 2019).
- Schegloff, Emmanuel A. 1988. "From Interview to Confrontation: Observations of the Bush/Rather Encounter." *Research on Language and Social Interaction* 22 (1-4): 215–240.

- Schegloff, Emmanuel A. 1997. "Practices and Actions: Boundary Cases of Other-Initiated Repair." *Discourse Processes* 23: 499-545.
- Scott, James C. 1985. *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Sidnell, Jack, and Tanya Stivers (eds). 2013. *The Handbook of Conversation Analysis*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Sprain, Leah, and Lydia Reinig. 2018. "Citizens Speaking as Experts: Expertise Discourse in Deliberative Forums." *Environmental Communication* 12: 357-369.
- Steensig, Jakob, and Paul Drew (eds.). 2008. "Introduction: Questioning and Affiliation/Disaffiliation in Interaction." *Discourse Studies* 10 (1): 5-15.
- Stivers, Tanya. 2005. "Parent Resistance to Physicians' Treatment Recommendations: One Resource for Initiating a Negotiation of the Treatment Decision." *Health Communication* 18 (1): 41-47.
- Stivers, Tanya, and Makoto Hayashi. 2010. "Transformative Answers: One Way to Resist a Question's Constraints." *Language in Society* 39 (1): 1-25.
- Szerszynski, Branislow. 1999. "Risk and Trust: The Performative Dimension." *Environmental Values* 8 (2): 239-252.
- Ten Have, Paul. 2007. *Doing Conversation Analysis: A Practical Guide* (2nd ed.). London: Sage.
- Welsh, Ian, and Brian Wynne. 2013. "Science, Scientism and Imaginaries of Publics in the UK: Passive Objects, Incipient Threats." *Science as Culture* 22: 540-566.
- Wynne, Brian. 2006. "Public Engagement as a Means of Restoring Public Trust in Science—Hitting the Notes, but Missing the Music?" *Community Genetics* 9: 211-220.

Appendix 1 – Transcription conventions

(Jefferson 2004)

(1.5)	Silence with duration of indicated seconds in between brackets
(.)	Silence shorter than 0,2 seconds
text= =text2	There is no observable silence in between two adjacent turns-at-talk of two different speakers, or in between two adjacent turns-at-talk of same speaker
[speaker1 [speaker2	these two conversation partners start their turn simultaneously
.	Falling intonation
,	Slightly rising intonation
?	Strongly rising intonation at the end of particular part of utterance
↑	Sharp rising intonation
↓	Sharp falling intonation
<u>emphasis</u>	Underscore = stress/emphasis
stre::tch	Prolongation/stretching of sound
(h)	Laughter
£	Smiley voice
HELLO	Pronounced relatively loud
°hello°	Pronounced relatively soft
hel-	Speaker terminates production of a word or utterance-part abruptly
>word<	Increased speaking rate (speeding up)
<word>	Decreased speaking rate (slowing down)
.Hh	Clearly hearable in-breath; every 'h' indicates duration of approximately 0,2 seconds. Capital 'H' indicates relatively louder in-breath
((moves))	Characterization of non-verbal activities or other remarkable phenomena
()	Parentheses indicate inaudible speech
(something)	Parentheses indicate uncertain word

Appendix 2 – Original Dutch transcripts

Excerpt 1. ‘Meeting 3’

951. Resident7 Hebben ze deze vraag ook nog kunnen ↑toelichten? of niet.
952. Scientist Nee.
953. Resident7 °Oké°

Excerpt 2. ‘Meeting 5’

386. Resident7 Geldt dit alleen voor nieuwvestiging? of ook voor uitbreidingen.
387. Scientist3 alles (.) alles.
388. Resident7 Oké.

Excerpt 3. ‘Meeting 5’

386. Resident4 Eh de geiten die worden geënt- ehm geënt en de tankmelk
387. die wordt dan gecontroleerd?
388. en zijn da goede (.) indicato:ren- (.) indicatoren (.) bieden die ook zekerheid?
389. (0.8)
390. >is- is< een indi↑ca:tie,
391. (0.4)
392. is dat e:h- (.) is dat ↑zo onderzocht dat dat e:h (.) °ja°
393. dat dat echt zekerheid geeft?
394. (0.5)
395. Scientist1 Ik denk dat je dat wel mag zeggen in dit geval.
396. ja: kijk echt ↑honderd procent zekerheid is ook lastig te ↑zeggen hè?
[3 LINES OF ANSWER OMITTED]
400. Scientist1 en e:hm (.) ja in hoeverre je kan zeggen van is het helemaal weg?
401. Scientist1 kbedoel eh (.) et risico ja [i-i-
402. Resident4 [Maar hoe zit et dan met eh lammeren of eh de:- de: ehm
403. Resident4 de geiten die voor de eerste keer eh (0.5) e:h (.) lammeren en dus
404. nog geen melk eh (.) geven.
405. (0.5)
406. Scientist2 E:hm (.) et klopt dat die daar nog niet in de tankmelk- (.) e:h (.) melk, (.) geven?
407. dus daar kan je dan de bacterie ook niet in vinden?
408. e:h maar als een geit gewoon ↑goed gevaccineerd is? en vooral als et
409. langdurig (.) al gevaccineerd is?=
410. =da’s nu et geval?

411. dan is die bacterie niet meer (.) aanwezig op dat <bedrijf.>

Excerpt 4. 'Meeting 4'

112. Scientist lichamelijke klachten ook zo'n negen procent,
113. slecht slapen zo'n acht procent van de mensen,
114. (0.8)
115. Scientist dus dit wordt eh ja door een aantal mensen toch echt wel iets
116. eh iets (0.4) er↑varen.
117. Resident2 is eh- mag ik even een vraag stellen?
118. u zegt acht procent van de mensen? (0.5) of van de respondenten.
119. Scientist Het zijn e::h de respondenten?=maar ze staan e:h ze- ze- et is ↑doo:rgerekend
120. voor de gemeente Lozen.
121. Resident2 Ja nee dat snap ik,=
122. Scientist =dus:=
123. Resident2 =maar=
124. Scientist =ja=
125. Resident2 =als ik et eve:: eh voor me↑zelf vertaal, (0.4) hoeveel mensen hebben er nu
126. last van, (0.3) in onze be↑volking, (.) dan is dat ruim tien procent.
127. dus ruim duizend ↑mensen.
128. dat gaat al heel snel denk ik oals ik dat nou zo zeg maar-o
129. want (.) een respon↑de:nt? (.) vertegenwoordigt een gezin.
130. En de gemiddelde ge↑zinsgrootte is (.) twee komma twee >of zoiets<
131. of twee komma drie?
132. (0.8)
133. Scientist e::hm >nou ja< "respondent" die staat voor een vol- één van de volwassenen in de
134. gemeente Lozen.

Excerpt 5. 'Meeting 3'

296. Scientist en >dan hebben we et< (.) geel en oranje bij elkaar=is zo'n (.) dertig
297. procent van de mensen, (.) die eh ja die dat toch wel zorgwekkend vindt.
298. (1.1)
299. Resident7 Hoe kunt u dat rijmen met- zojuist zagen we (.) over fijn↑stof?-
300. uitstoot van fijnstof en dergelijke?
301. daar zagen we dus een heel hoog percentage? (.) dat zich (0.3) daar e:h ↑druk over

302. maakt,=en hier zien we dus over blootstelling van fijnstof?
303. e:h drieëndertig procent als ik et zo goed zie, niet bezorgd.
304. Resident7 ['k zie daar een mis-
305. Scientist [is dat- is dat-
306. Resident7 [mismatch?
307. Scientist [welleke: bedoelt u die fijnstofhinder?
[6 LINES OMITTED]
314. Scientist Ja (.) nee d- [d't
315. Resident7 [en daar zie je dus e:hm dat eh dat dat toch eh (.) behoorlijk is?
316. tegelijkertijd zie ik in die andere sheet dat men zich niet be↑zorgd?
317. Scientist Ja
318. Resident7 is.
319. Scientist [Maar ja-
320. Resident7 [hier zie ik daar verschillen hè? ((maakt vragende gebaren met handen))
321. ((gemompel in de zaal))
322. Scientist acht procent ge- ja dit- dit is- dit is (0.3) hinder? (.) hè?
323. mensen- mensen ervaren hinder van stof roet of roo:k?
324. en de andere is van >nou ja< (0.3) “ik weet dat die dierhouderij
325. voor ↑fijnstof zorgt,=ik weet dat fijnstof .hH niet goed is voor
326. mijn gezondheid dus ik maak me daar be↑zorgd over.”
327. Scientist Dat is een ander- (.) ander a↑spect dus dan krijg je ook andere cijfers.
328. (0.5)
329. Resident7 Ja tussen et woordje “hinder” of “be↑zorgd.”
330. maar et ene is et gevolg van et ↑ander.
331. ((gemompel in de zaal))
332. Scientist Hoef- hoeft niet je- je kunt natuurlijk ook wel bezorgd zijn, (.) van iets- (.) misschien-
333. misschien ↑merk jij niets van stof maar weet je dat “nou ja in mijn omgeving schijnt dat
334. hoog te zijn, (.) dus ik maak me daar ↑zorgen over.”

Excerpt 6. ‘Meeting 5’

418. Scientist2 e:hm (.) was ook één van de andere vragen of- (.) of ie dan: (.) nog
419. dat (.) vaccin zou kunnen omzeilen? (.) dus dat ie m:utee:rt,
420. e:hm die kans wordt ook door de wetenschappers heel erg ↓klein geacht
421. °in dit geval.°
422. (0.6)

423. Scientist2 en dan zou et niet heel ↑snel gaan?
 424. dus dan pik je em wel weer op (.) via de melk.
 425. (0.7)
 426. Resident4 [Ja
 427. Scientist2 [Heel veel antwoorden in één [keer?
 428. Resident4 [Ja ja
 429. maar (.) et- et ↑kan we:l,
 430. (0.4)
 431. Scientist2 e:h
 432. Resident4 z- eh zou kunnen.
 433. Scientist2 In theorie <zou dat kunnen?> (0.3) maar dan (.) e::h is iedereen d'r wel (.)
 434. volgens mij (.) over eens, dat dat niet (.) in één klap weer tot een
 435. enorme ↑uitbraak zou leiden?
 436. (0.3)
 437. Scientist2 e:n dat dat heel graduee:l, (.) <s-stel> dat- kleine kans dat ie zou
 438. muteren, (.) zou gebeuren? dat dat zo langzaam gaat dat je dat echt wel
 439. detecteert in de:- (0.3) in et detectiesysteem.

Excerpt 7. 'Meeting 5'

647. Resident7 **En waarom neemt u dan (.) de <melk> als ↑parameter**
 648. **om dit te diagnosti↑ceren.**
 649. **en niet ↑andere factoren.**
 650. Scientist2 E:::hm
 651. Resident7 **ik- [bijvoorbeeld de ontlasting of- of**
 652. Scientist2 [bijvoorbeeld- ja
 653. Resident7 **weet ↑ik- ik noem maar iets geks.[=e:h**
 654. Scientist2 [Oké
 655. E::h[m
 656. Resident7 [Waarom- w'rom de ↑melk
 657. Scientist2 E:hm mag ik nog even een paar dingetjes d'r op krijgen wat ik- (0.3) nog even-
 658. ik zal zo antwoorden ↑hoor maar (.) e:h d'r is ook nog een
 659. ↑koppeleffect van vaccinatie?
 660. dus (.) als je de ↑hele groep geiten vaccineert?
 661. op een gegeven moment verdwijnt die bacterie. (0.4) uit et koppel.
 662. dus als je maar ↑lang genoeg volhoudt met vaccineren?

663. ook al is et vaccin niet per[↑]fect,
 664. op een gegeven moment (0.3) is et bedrijf (.) <vrij>
 665. dan zijn de dieren (.) [↑]vrij van de bacterie.=
 666. =**dus ik denk dat we** (.) daar [op dit moment zijn?
 667. Resident7 **[en (.) hoe wordt dat gecontroleerd**
 668. Resident7 **dat ze vrij zijn?**
 669. Scientist2 **E::hm:: nou (0.5) ik- (0.3) dat g- daar ga ik niet over maar dat is inderdaad**
 670. **de tank[↑]melk?=
 671. =u vraagt waarom de tankmelk waarom niet een andere manier?**
 672. e::hm (0.3) d'r zitten inderdaad nadelen aan
 [4 LINES OF ANSWER OMITTED]
 677. (1.2)
 678. Scientist2 e::hm (1.3) maar in de gr- huidige situatie, (0.6) is et denk ik wel p:r:ima,

Excerpt 8. 'Meeting 3'

333. Scientist misschien [↑]merk jij niets van stof maar weet je dat “nou ja in mijn omgeving schijnt dat
 334. hoog te zijn, (.) dus ik maak me daar [↑]zorgen over.”
 335. (0.8)
 336. Resident7 Waarschijnlijk een andere beleving ((haalt wenkbrauwen op en glimlacht))

Excerpt 9a. 'Meeting 5'

698. Scientist2 het wijst er nu van dat andere tests niet geschikt zijn?
 699. om van een individueel dier te zeggen (0.5) of et (0.5) geïnfecteerd is of niet.
 700. (1.1)
 701. De swabs (0.3) [daar- die waren-
 702. Resident7 **[dus in feite- FEITE**
 703. **hebben we geen goeie parameter hè dus zeg maar.**
 704. Scientist2 Van een individueel dier niet.
 705. Resident7 Nee.

Excerpt 9b. 'Meeting 5'

734. Facilitator kun jij dit als een <vraag> formuleren?
735. zodat we em kunnen noteren?
[11 LINES ON PROCEEDINGS OF WRITING DOWN QUESTION OMITTED]
747. Resident7 Ik- ja [dat- dat- ja
748. Facilitator [Wat is jouw vraag.
749. Resident7 laat ik et anders- ik- ik wil gewoon ↑weten (.) dat (.) op een gegeven moment=
[5 OMITTED]
755. Resident7 =we weten uit et ver↑leden, dat met name vanuit uit↑stoo:t (0.4) er
756. besmetting met Q-koorts is.
757. (0.8)
758. Resident7 Nou die ↑uitstoot die komt in mijn ogen niet <van de melk van de geit.>

Excerpt 10

1420. Scientist2 Nou ja dat- dat- dat kan u (.) ONS natuurlijk bijna niet vragen,
1421. want- want e:h et gaat- wat er nu natuurlijk gaat gebeuren is dat er ook in
1422. politieke pro- eh (ook) afwegingen? (.) gekeken gaat worden wat- wat- wat
1423. voor ↑maatregelen d'r mogelijk zijn.=
[7 LINES OMITTED]
1431. Scientist2 maar ja (.) je kan dit natuurlijk niet van vandaag op morgen oplossen
1432. dit- dit is [een
1433. Resident9 [↑Nee:
1434. Resident9 nou ↓ja de- dat snap ik, maar (.) ik ben et er niet altijd hele↑maal mee eens
1435. met wat er vanavond wordt gezegd,
1436. maar het kan in et onderzoek natuurlijk vermeld worden dat er (0.3) ↓ja (.)
1437. geen rekening is gehouden met (.) de gebruikgewoontes van de (.)verscheidene
1438. personen waarmee je (.) je onderzoek hebt uitgevoerd.
1439. dat je- dat is ook een onderzoeksverschijnsel verklaring [()
1440. Scientist1 [Kunnen we even snel zijn?
1441. Facilitator Ja: nou dit- ik denk dat we deze discussie misschien maar straks even [na eh
1442. Scientist1 [Ja ja
1443. Facilitator naderhand nog eve: diepgaander moeten voeren.