1   Parentheticals in English: introduction

A monograph on parentheticals should reasonably begin with a definition of the phenomenon under investigation. Several definitions of parentheticals have already been offered in the literature, all of which have in common that a parenthetical is considered a linguistic entity which is linearly integrated in another linguistic structure but is unrelated to the surrounding linguistic material in one way or another, i.e. in terms of syntactic structure, semantic meaning and/or intonation. For example, Burton-Roberts (2006: 179) maintains that a parenthetical (P) is "an expression of which it can be argued that, while in some sense 'hosted' by another expression (H), P makes no contribution to the structure of H", i.e. it is structurally unrelated. Bussmann (1996: 349) makes a similar point in defining a parenthetical as an "[e]xpression (word, phrase, clause) inserted into a sentence from which it is structurally independent: *Her new boy-friend – his name is Jacob – will be coming over tonight*." She thus touches on the diversity in structural complexity: parentheticals can be anything from a single word to a full clause. Biber et al. (1999: 1067) add the aspect of meaning, defining a parenthetical as "an interpolated structure … a digressive structure (often a clause) which is inserted in the middle of another structure, and which is unintegrated in the sense that it could be omitted without affecting the rest of that structure or its meaning". Taglicht (1998: 195) defines a parenthetical provisionally as a non-initial and non-final "syntactic node for which the grammar specifies no function in relation to any sister node". De Vries (2012a: 153), maintaining that "it is far from obvious how to define parenthesis either syntactically or phonologically, even though everyone recognizes it intuitively", offers the following working definition: "parenthesis is a grammatical construction type that involves a message that is presented or perceived as secondary with respect to the host, where message covers propositions, modal propositions, questions, metalinguistic comments, and so on", leaving open what is included in "and so on". From a semantic point of view, Potts (2005) argues that parentheticals are perfect illustrations of conventional implicatures (CIs) as formulated by Grice (1975). According to Potts (2005, 2007), their content is speaker oriented and discourse-new, but de-emphasized in the given context; it is outside the regular content of

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the utterance; it is not contextually determined, but part of the conventional meaning of the words. Following Potts (2005), Kluck (2011: 229) includes speaker orientation in her (working) definition of parentheticals and states that parentheticals are expressions which are "structurally and semantically independent of [their] host" and express "speaker-oriented content". Moreover, it has been observed and often been taken for granted that parentheticals are "marked off from their hosts by some form of punctuation in writing or special intonation contour in speech" (Burton-Roberts 2006: 180). Dashes, commas or parentheses do the job in writing, while these devices correspond to tonal and temporal prosodic cues in spoken language. It follows from these definitions that parentheticals are a relevant phenomenon in the syntax, phonology and meaning components of the grammar, as well as at the respective interfaces. It is striking, however, that authors do not usually commit themselves to a final definition of the phenomenon and at the same time they fail to find previous definitions convincing enough to use them in their own work. In this study, I will follow recent accounts by Potts (2005) and in particular by de Vries (2007, 2012a, b), as outlined below. To begin, the following section will provide an overview of expressions considered parentheticals in previous work and introduce ways of classification. Throughout the book, parentheticals are in italics. The sources of the examples are given in parentheses. Following common practice, the sentence/utterance linearly integrating the parenthetical will be referred to as the 'host', 'host utterance' or 'host sentence/clause' throughout this study.

1.1   Parentheticals – a motley crew

Elements which have been considered parentheticals in previous literature form a heterogeneous set and there is no general agreement as to the exact delimitation of a potential class of parentheticals. As Dehé and Kavalova (2007: 1) put it, they are "a motley crew", although, as de Vries (2012a: 153) notes, "everyone recognizes [parenthesis] intuitively". The examples in (1.1) through (1.19) provide an overview of this heterogeneous family. While this list does not claim to be exhaustive, it does illustrate how parentheticals vary in length and complexity, syntactic category and projection level, and in function. According to Espinal (1991: 727), none of the parenthetical expressions are "parentheticals per se; rather, they are said to be like parentheses because they are identified as independent syntactic constituents or, more generally, as independent syntactic structures within another syntactic structure". According to de Vries (2012a: 153), the various types have in common the particular way in which they are syntactically related to their host, which he refers to as 'parenthetical merge' (see Chapter 2 below).

The heterogeneous class of parentheticals includes main clauses and content clauses (e.g. declarative or interrogative, see (1.1)) which may or may

not be introduced by a connector (see (1.1) and (1.2), respectively), ellip-
tical clauses (see (1.3)), adverbial clauses (see (1.4)) and non-finite clauses
(see (1.5)), non-restrictive (appositive) relative clauses (NRRCs; see (1.6))
and nominal appositions (see (1.7)), lexical phrases of categories AP, PP,
NP (see (1.8)), interrogative parentheticals (see (1.9)), question tags (see
(1.10)), statement tags (see (1.11)a) and imperative tags (see (1.11)b), report-
ing verbs (see (1.12)), comment clauses (CCs; also known as *parenthetical
verbs*; see (1.13)), vocatives (see (1.14)), sentence adverbs (see (1.15)), other
one-word expressions (see (1.16)), and interjections and filled pauses (see
(1.17)). Finally, right-node raising constructions (see (1.18)) and syntactic
amalgamation (see (1.19)) have been analysed in terms of parenthesis.[1]

(1.1)   Clauses
      a.   When we were on holiday – *that reminds me, I must pick up the pho-
           tos* – we saw so many interesting places. (Wichmann 2001: 178)
      b.   Newcastle and North you find uhm there's a marvellous walled
           garden *I don't know where it is* with hyacinths (Dehé 2009: 579;
           ICE-GB: s1a-065 #298)
      c.   Well esterases are able in organic solvents to carry out a number
           of useful *can you hear me all right now?* organic uhm processes to
           produce things like food products (Dehé 2009: 579; ICE-GB:
           s2a-034 #13)

(1.2)   Clauses introduced by a conjunction
      a.   Her account – *and I must say I'm attracted to it* – suggests that
           we have to re-think the relationship between meaning and truth.
           (Blakemore 2006: 1671)
      b.   If he checks my story – *and he probably will* – I'll be sacked.
           (Huddleston and Pullum 2002: 1361)
      c.   Ames, *as the FBI eventually discovered*, was a spy. (Potts
           2002b: 624)
      d.   The Hawks will win, *or at least so I've been told*, by at least 10
           points. (Peterson 1999: 232)

(1.3)   Elliptical clause
      For those of us who remember nineteen sixty-five *one or two of our
      listeners may* Tory party leadership contests used to be as the cardi-
      nals in Rome and leaders would emerge (Dehé 2009: 570; ICE-GB:
      s1b-024 #1)

(1.4)   Adverbial clauses
      a.   John smokes, *'cos his place is full of dirty ashtrays*. (Haegeman
           1991: 232)

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[1] Not all authors writing on parentheticals include all types listed here in their class of paren-
theticals. For example, Altmann (1981: 64) explicitly excludes vocatives and interjections.

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b. I've just received the expected letter, *if that makes you feel any better*. (Espinal 1991: 726)

c. My idea, *if you really want to know*, was to treat the phenomenon as a conventional implicature. (Blakemore 2006: 1671)

(1.5) Non-finite clauses

a. *Having read the report*, Max was sure he had nothing to worry about. (Huddleston and Pullum 2002: 1360)

b. The most fundamental of all parental wishes *to educate our children in our own morality* is indoctrination and a denial of their free development (ICE-GB: s2b-029 #147)

(1.6) Non-restrictive relative clauses

a. He shouldn't have pushed that kid, *who is so conscientious*, out that door. (Emonds 1979: 226)

b. The singer, *who believes she is a rock diva trapped in the body of a pop star*, launched into her new single … (Loock 2010: 83; corpus example)

c. so the word disability *which is this nebulous thing that exists somewhere between the two people* has a part on each side (Dehé 2009: 570; ICE-GB: s1a-001 #59)

(1.7) Nominal appositions

a. A university lecturer, *Dr Brown*, was arrested for the crime. (Huddleston and Pullum 2002: 1358)

b. A surprise present, *a bouquet of roses*, was delivered to my door. (Huddleston and Pullum 2002: 1357)

c. John McClave, *my neighbor*, is a nice guy. (Heringa 2011: 1)

(1.8) Lexical phrases: AP (a), PP (b), NP (c)

a. The secretary *well-mannered as anybody* will present an apology. (Espinal 1991: 726)

b. Her husband had always been quite irresponsible. Bill *on the contrary* appeared to be completely trustworthy. (Espinal 1991: 727)

c. Robert, *no genius*, is applying for a scholarship to Harvard. (Huddleston and Pullum 2002: 1358)

(1.9) Interrogative parentheticals

a. Is he going *do you know/think* (Mittwoch 1979: 402–403)

b. Isn't that a bit of an imposition *don't you think* (Mittwoch 1979: 409)

c. Is it safe, *would you say*? (Huddleston and Pullum 2002: 895)

(1.10) Question tags

a. He suffered great mental distress *didn't he* after the war (Dehé and Kavalova 2007: 3; ICE-GB: s1b-032 #164)

b.   Oh it's not very valuable *is it*? (Tottie and Hoffmann 2006: 283)
c.   Lucy can play the viola, *can she*? I didn't know that. (McCawley
     1998: 501)

(1.11)   Statement tags (a) and imperative tags (b)
a.   John will go to Spain, *he will*. (Knowles 1980: 380)
b.   Turn out the light, *won't you*? (Knowles 1980: 380)

(1.12)   Reporting verbs
a.   The reason for the Prime Minister's resignation *she said* was to
     enable Cabinet colleagues to enter the ballot (Dehé 2009: 570;
     ICE-GB: s2b-020 #13)
b.   The Hawks will win, *says John*, by at least 10 points. (Peterson
     1999: 233)

(1.13)   Comment clauses[2]
a.   There were no other applicants, *I believe*, for that job. (Quirk
     et al. 1985: 1113)
b.   Charles wouldn't, *I imagine*, have done such a thing. (Nespor
     and Vogel 1986: 190)
c.   Only if, *I fear*, we work like dogs, will we be able to save this
     company. (Asher 2000: 39)
d.   John and, *I think*, Mary will play the next round. (Peterson
     1999: 238)

(1.14)   Vocatives (noun phrases)
a.   Today's topic, *ladies and gentlemen*, is Nuclear Magnetic
     Resonance. (Espinal 1991: 727)
b.   If Mary had tutored him, *John*, Bill would have passed.
     (Burton-Roberts 2006: 180)
c.   *Jean*, could you check the mail for me (Hock and Dutta 2010: 2)

(1.15)   Sentence adverbs
a.   He is, *unfortunately*, ill. (Urmson 1952: 486)
b.   He described himself, *engagingly*, as an economist on leave.
     (Wichmann 2001: 179)
c.   *Frankly*, my dear, I don't know how to handle that. (Espinal
     1991: 726)
d.   I don't agree with you, *personally*. (Astruc-Aguilera and Nolan
     2007a: 242)

(1.16)   One-word expressions (other than sentence adverbs)
a.   I've been dreaming of winning a gold medal for *what* 20 years
     now (Dehé and Kavalova 2006: 289)

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[2] Comment clauses and reporting verbs are elliptical clauses in some sense. The missing
object of the verb corresponds to the host clause (see also Peterson 1999: 233 and Sections
2.3.4 and 2.3.5 below).

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    b. I mean it wouldn't be very proper just to go and – *well*– "live" with him. (Nosek 1973: 112)

    c. In that case – *yes* – in that case I think I can speak freely (Nosek 1973: 106)

    d. Certainly in an area like that successful known prosecutions of police officers for racism I think will do more to improve the confidence of the black community in the complaints procedure than *say* a hundred plus programmes uh put on by the Metropolitan Police (Dehé 2007: 273; ICE-GB: s1b-033 #125)

(1.17) Interjections and filled pauses

    a. He is *oh!* so smart. (de Vries 2007: 204)

    b. My knowledge of this sort of thing, I admit, comes chiefly from the – *um* – popular press. (Nosek 1973: 106)

(1.18) Right node raising

    a. Amanda is, *or at least she used to be*, my best friend. (Peterson 1999: 232)

    b. Amanda is, *and there is no doubt in my mind that she always will be*, my best friend. (Peterson 1999: 232)

(1.19) Syntactic amalgamation

    a. John invited *you'll never guess how many people* to his party. (Lakoff 1974: 321)

    b. John is going to *I think it's Chicago* on Sunday. (Lakoff 1974: 324)

The examples in (1.20) illustrate that it is not uncommon to find combinations of different types of interpolations next to each other, as well as multiple occurrences of the same type within one host sentence, and we also find syntactically complex interpolations, which might in turn be the host for another interpolation. The examples in (1.21) illustrate that strings which may not be obvious candidates for parentheticals in the syntax may be marked prosodically and contribute a secondary communication such that they function as parentheticals. In (1.21)a, a restrictive relative clause is marked prosodically as a parenthetical, in (1.21)b it is a conjoined noun together with a comment clause which stands out prosodically (rather than, for example, the comment clause on its own). See also the discussion of example (2.43)b/Figure 2.2 in Section 2.2 below.

(1.20) Multiple and complex parenthesis

    a. For over three months – *since July, Colonel!* – we've been having poisoned darts thrown at our backs. (Nosek 1973: 105)

    b. Marcia, *who you wanted to meet, didn't you?*, has just arrived. (Loock 2010: 11)

    c.   John will finally marry – *I should imagine (but that's his lookout) he will have a church wedding* – next Sunday. (Espinal 1991: 727)

    d.   *Professionally a lawyer*, *that is to say associated with dignity, reverse, discipline, with much that is essentially middle-class*, he is compelled by an impossible love to exhibit himself dressed up, disguised – *that is*, *paradoxically, revealed* – as a child, and, *worse*, as a whore masquerading as a child. (Huddleston and Pullum 2002: 1356; my italics according to Huddleston and Pullum's explanations)

    e.   When the opportunity comes, *and it will, I'll bet, sooner than you expect*, you've got to be ready to grab it. (Bolinger 1989: 186)

    f.   They both skip around their cities *around Los Angeles in Frank's case or London in Ron's case* dropping in and out of schools of architecture dropping in and out of parties dropping in and out of architects' gatherings and not least *and I think this is very important* dropping in to other people's studios (ICE-GB: s2a-040 #41)

    g.   A long-lived scar on the American psyche *second only I suspect to the one marked Vietnam* bore the name of Iran (ICE-GB: s2b-034 #101)

(1.21)   Syntactic non-parenthesis marked prosodically as parenthesis

    a.   The story I told you – *that you enjoyed so much, remember?* – was one I made up for our daughter when she was six. (Bolinger 1989: 193)

    b.   And one must also remember that uh the same Arnold Bax has written poetry *and I think plays* under the pseudonym of Dermot O'Brien (ICE-GB: s1b-032 #114)

The interruption of the main clause/proposition caused by parenthetical insertion is sometimes marked by backtracking, i.e. repetition of some part of the utterance, leading back to the main proposition; see (1.22), the repeated material is underlined. Biber et al. (1999: 1067f) describe the use of backtracking as a marker of disfluency and a direct consequence of online processing. Kavalova (2007) finds backtracking in 9 per cent of her set of 70 *and*-parentheticals from the ICE-GB and DCPSE corpora.[3] She sees it as "a device to remind the hearer that what he has just heard was only a quick diversion, an aside, and is not to be treated as part of the main utterance. It also assists the hearer to quickly resume the interpretation of the main utterance, i.e., to pick it up where it was left" (Kavalova 2007: 160).

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[3] The Diachronic Corpus of Present-day Spoken English (DCPSE), developed by the Survey of English Usage at University College London, contains more than 400,000 words from the ICE-GB and 400,000 words from the London-Lund Corpus. See the DCPSE website for more information: www.ucl.ac.uk/english-usage/projects/dcpse/ (last accessed on 9 September 2013). The International Corpus of English (ICE-GB) will be introduced in Section 1.2 below.

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(1.22)   Backtracking
a.   Mr Lehrer are you *I want to be clear about this* <u>are you</u> telling us that this is your interpretation of what he was telling you or what he was actually telling you (ICE-GB: s1b-064 #167)
b.   What is unfair *and I think what Tony Travis has failed to point out* is that by setting the ceiling *and we understand so far there are seven bands though well they may be dithering into nine* <u>by setting a ceiling</u> you're in fact giving people in high-valued property a subsidy and you're then making those in lower-valued properties pay more (ICE-GB: s1b-034 #68)
c.   But a different role uh because when we get to the time of uh Ezra *as with the more classical Wellhausen uh hypothesis* <u>when we get to the time of Ezra</u> we have the further narrowing of the office of priest (Dehé and Kavalova 2007: 3; ICE-GB: s1b-001 #9)
d.   And I think that the Iraqi people *and there are large numbers of them honourable and decent who have been suppressed and repressed and tortured and beaten and bombed over all of these years* <u>that they</u> are going to exert their view (Kavalova 2007: 161; ICE-GB: s1b-036 #71)
e.   And it would seem to me – that unless this morning's exercise – *which has been so rewarding and so profitable* – <u>unless this morning</u>'s exercise is to dissipate – into another piece of feeling – and er – pleasurable discussion – then we ought to take quite seriously – the, the words of Jesus. – Go and do! (Biber et al. 1999: 1068)

Classifications of clausal parentheticals have been suggested based on the presence or absence of an 'anchor' in the host. For example, Kavalova (2007: 149–52) distinguishes between *anchored* and *floating* parentheticals, Kluck (2011: 234f) between *anchored* and *free* parentheticals. Both dichotomies have in common that anchored parentheticals (or an anaphoric element contained in the parenthetical) refer back to an anchor, often a noun phrase, in the host; see (1.23)a and b (the anchor is underlined; the anaphoric element is in small capitals). Kavalova (2007: 150) notes that anchored parentheticals of the clausal kind in (1.23)b correspond to non-restrictive relative clauses (see (1.23)c). Kluck's (2011) *free* parentheticals correspond to Kavalova's (2007) *floating* parentheticals such that parentheticals of these types, or any anaphoric element within them, do not refer to any constituent in particular in the host but rather to the main proposition as a whole; see (1.24). While the parentheticals in (1.24) are not anchored, they are yet semantically related to the host. Specifically, there is a relation such that the parentheticals provide further information about something expressed in the host sentence or comment on the main proposition, which in (1.24) is the reference of *this*. In

cases like (1.24), it is thus the host clause that functions as the anchor (Huddleston and Pullum 2002: 1351). Thus *anchored* and *free/floating* parentheticals have in common that they are semantically related to the host. In contrast, the parentheticals in (1.25) have no semantic relation with the host but are related to the host utterance only via the discourse situation or they contribute to the relation between the interlocutors established by the situational context. Examples (1.25)a–c are taken from unscripted speeches or demonstrations such as academic presentations. In (1.25)a, the speaker interrupts his sentence to make sure that he can be heard all right and receives the answer 'Yes' from the audience before carrying on. In (1.25)b the speaker interrupts her presentation in order to turn a projector off and to comment on what she is doing. In (1.25)c, it seems to occur to the speaker that the audience might not be able to read the slides and he reacts accordingly. In (1.25)d, the speaker interrupts the utterance in order to ask the interlocutor to take a seat. I will refer to parentheticals of this kind as *detached* parentheticals.

Some of the examples presented so far also show that the illocutionary force does not have to be identical in parenthetical and host: for example, in (1.1)c (= (1.25)a) an interrogative parenthetical clause is wedged into a declarative host sentence; in (1.22)a the host is interrogative, while the parenthetical is declarative; see also (2.8) in Chapter 2 below for more examples.

(1.23)   Anchored parentheticals
　　　　　a.　I saw that <u>Bob</u>, *WHO just got fired*, was booking a flight to Brazil. (Kluck 2011: 234)
　　　　　b.　Because on this on <u>this theory</u> *and IT's very deeply held* uh good educational news is by definition inadmissible as evidence (Kavalova 2007: 149; ICE-GB: s2a-021 #91)
　　　　　c.　Because on this theory, *WHICH is very deeply held*, …

(1.24)   Free/floating parentheticals
　　　　　a.　Bill – *and this is so typical* – was dating several women at the same time. (Kluck 2011: 235)
　　　　　b.　What this graph represents is the fact that for English uhm *and this work owes uh not a little debt to Eileen Whitley* uhm we have syllables which are distinct in being Y or W that is roughly front spread back rounded being short or long (Kavalova 2007: 151; from ICE-GB: s2a-030 #85)

(1.25)   Detached parentheticals
　　　　　a.　Well esterases are able in organic solvents to carry out a number of useful *can you hear me all right now?* organic uhm processes to produce things like food products (= (1.1)c: Dehé 2009: 579; ICE-GB: s2a-034 #13)

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b. So what we can do in fact *I'll just turn it off* is to use that signal to train people's ability to perceive voicing distinctions in speech and their ability to actually produce them (ICE-GB: s2a-056 #87)

c. It's occurred it occurred to me on the train to sort out this business of weak and strong learning organisations to try out a kind of three three level *don't worry if you can't read it I I'll read it for you* a sort of three levels or three a s a three step hierarchy if you like of uh degrees of learning formats in organisations (ICE-GB: s2a-049 #61)

d. The main point – *Why not have a seat?* – is outlined in the middle paragraph. (Burton-Roberts 2006: 180)

While some types of parentheticals, in particular anchored parentheticals such as nominal appositions, non-restrictive relative clauses and anchored *and*-parentheticals (e.g. (1.23)), have been shown to be more restricted in their distribution than others such that their default position is next to their anchor (see Section 2.3.3 below for exceptions), the places of other types of parentheticals are generally variable. They include positions such as between subject and finite verb (e.g. (1.2)a, c, (1.4)c, (1.5)b, (1.14)a), within the verbal complex (e.g. (1.13)b, (1.27)a, d), between a lexical verb and its complement (e.g. (1.28)a–c), between a preposition or noun and complement ((1.28)d–e), between a nominal head and a postmodifier (e.g. (1.1)b, (1.27)b, c), interrupting a sequence of premodifiers within a noun phrase (e.g. (1.1) c), between a possessive pronoun or a determiner and a noun (see (1.29)), among others; see also the example in (1.26). The position of the parenthetical within its host clause may (but does not have to) affect its semantic scope and interpretation (e.g. Ifantidou 2001: 138–146; Grenoble 2004: 1966–7).

(1.26) Positional flexibility (from Kavalova 2007: 151; @ indicates possible positions)

a. I personally take the view *and I've informed the Soviet Government of this* that that visit of the Ballet would be more acceptable to all of our people including myself.

b. I personally take the view @ that @ that visit @ of the Ballet @ would be @ more acceptable @ to all of our people @ including myself.

(1.27) Parenthetical positioned within verbal complex (a, d) or between N and postmodifier (b–c)

a. Raids on Baghdad's forces by the Allies would *he said* end the murderous terrorist attacks from Iraq (ICE-GB: s2b-005 #97)

b. but there'd been no response not the slightest sign *he said* from Iraq (ICE-GB: s2b-010 #124)