

Coordinated cooperation or inappropriate intrusion?

Cooperative Interruptions

Agreement

First let's check if it - Yes the stomach, yeah

Assistance

And they look like eh, like- Like little blisters

Clarification

Allergic to everything and- To everything?



During the phase of problem presentation, most interruptions by GPs were done to show agreement or to ask for clarification. Patients' interruptions in this phase often were for the purpose of assistance, and to show agreement.



In the phase of diagnosis/treatment, the number of GPs' assistance interruptions increased, whereas the use of clarification interruptions decreased. Patients made less assistance interruptions in this phase, but increased their use of agreement and clarification interruptions as compared to the previous phase.



Most cooperative interruptions in consultations with female patients (57.1%).

In both first-visit and follow-up consultations, most interruptions (respectively 82.2% and 82.3%) were cooperative.



Quantitative analysis of form and function of interruptions in 40 interactions between general practitioners and patients with common somatic symptoms.



352 vs. 57

Form: questions/paraphrasing

434 vs. 97

Form: statements

Various interruption patterns in two different consultation phases: the phase of *problem presentation*, and the phase of *diagnosis/treatment*.



The extensive use of cooperative interruptions throughout the consultation shows that GPs and patients build the interaction together.

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Intrusive Interruptions

Disagreement

Nothing to worry ab- Well, it is actually quite scary

Floor taking

I couldn't sleep that- And still the results look good

Topic change

I can imagine that it is- Oh and about my knees

Tangentialization

And the intense sweat- Yeah, yeah I know, you told me



During the phase of problem presentation, GPs mainly made floor taking interruptions, and a few tangentialization interruptions. Patients' interruptions were most often floor taking interruptions or to show disagreement.



In the phase of diagnosis/treatment, GPs increased their use of all types of intrusive interruptions, in particular disagreement and topic change interruptions. Patients made more floor taking and topic change interruptions in this phase as compared to the previous phase.



Most intrusive interruptions in consultations with male GPs (60.7%).

Interruption patterns, either cooperative or intrusive, do not seem to affect important patient outcomes such as satisfaction and anxiety.



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