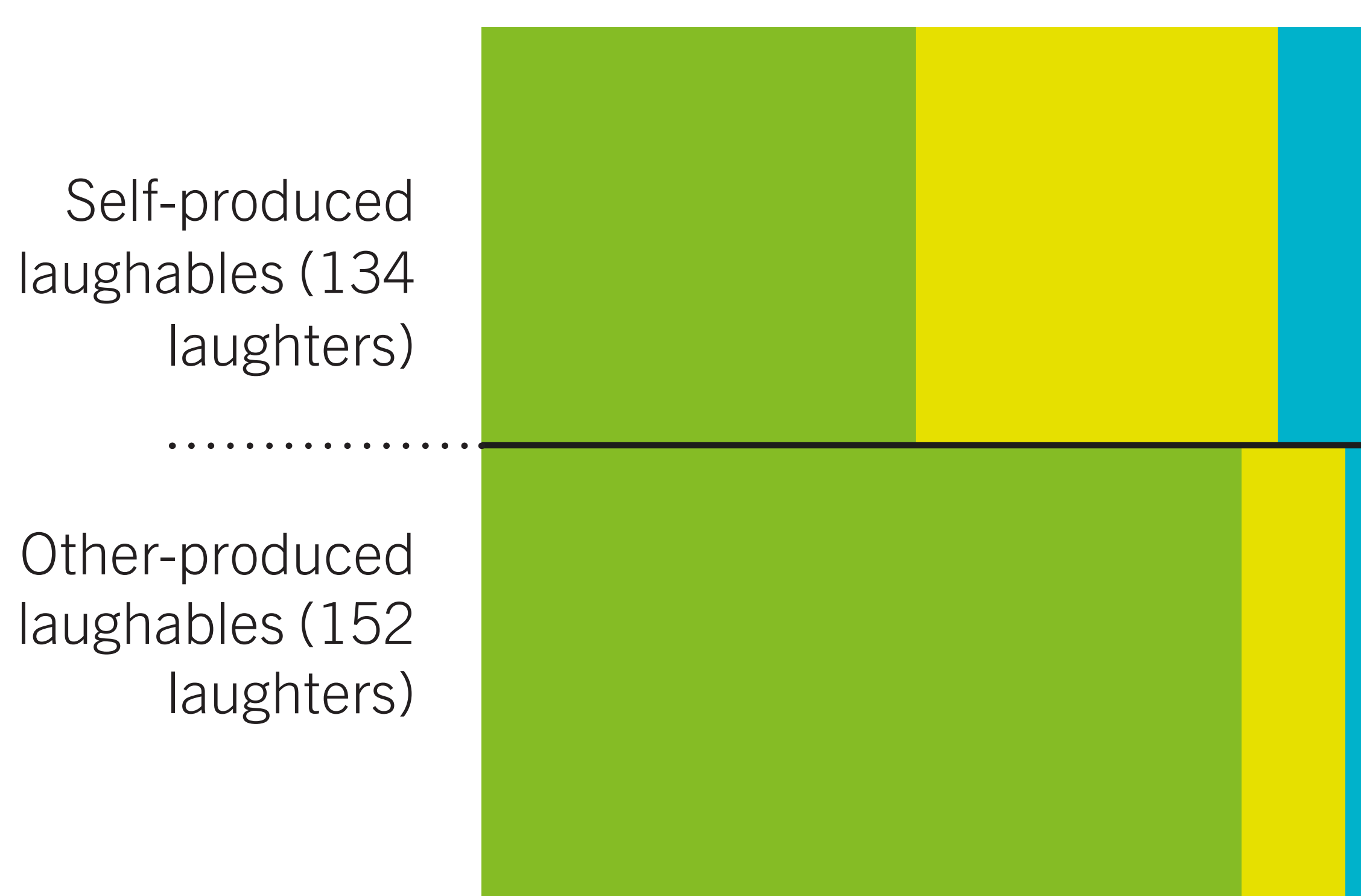


What are you laughing at?

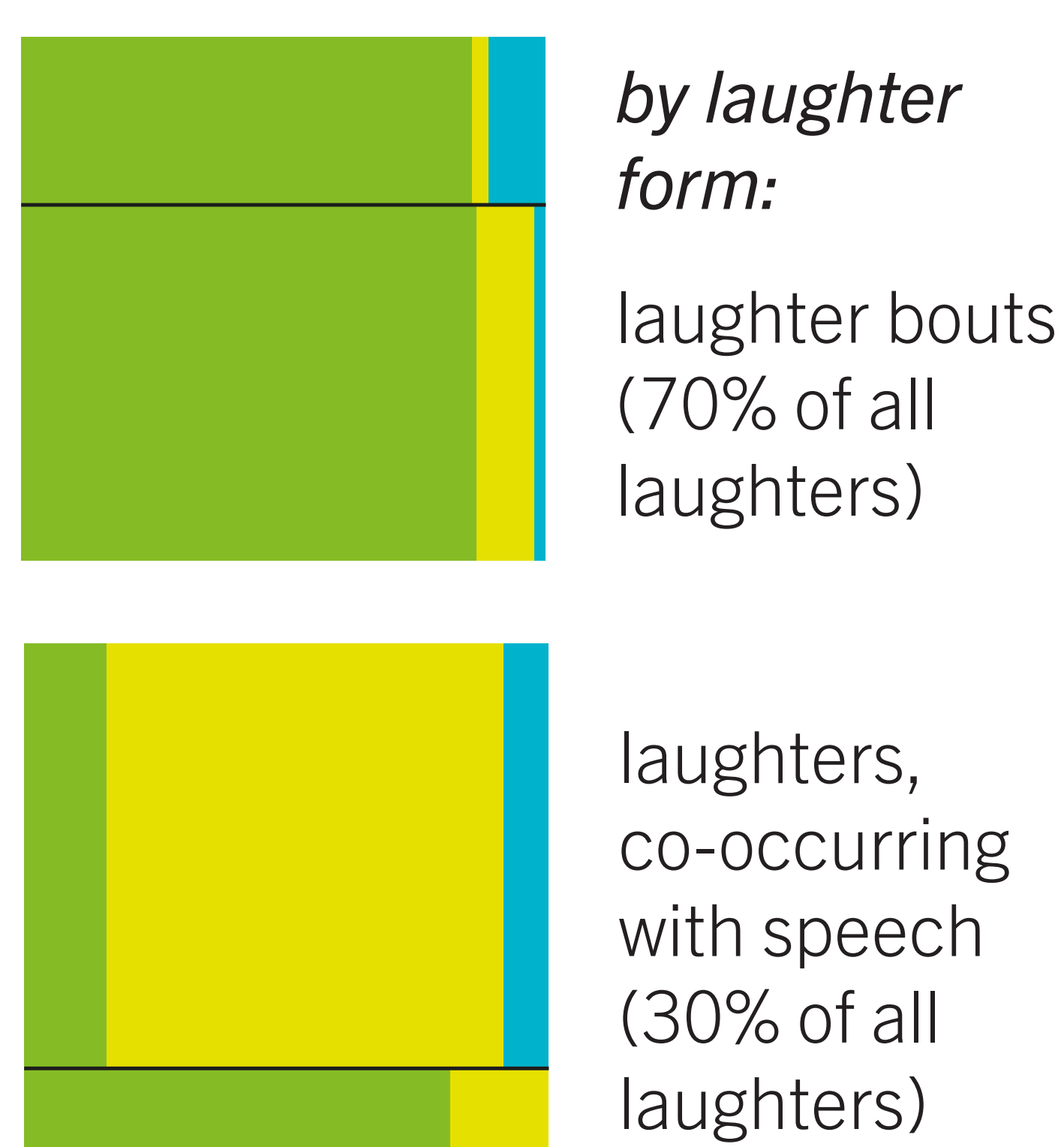
Incremental processing of laughter in interaction

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- We are laughing *at* LAUGHABLES — what laughter is “pointing at” (Glenn, 2003).
- We laugh a lot: laughter is 17% of dialogue (Tian et al., 2016).
- 90% of laughables are present in the dialogue (endophoric).
- Laughter does not necessarily follow the laughable.
- Laughter does not only occur at phrase boundaries.



Figures: Distribution of laughers that follow, overlap or precede the endophoric laughable (from Mazzocconi et al., 2019)



Laughter in Dynamic Syntax

— What is Dynamic Syntax?

It is an action-based grammar (-as-parser) framework.

— How is it helpful?

It directly captures the time-linear, incremental nature of comprehension and production. It also models dialogue phenomena, such as grounding and split utterances.

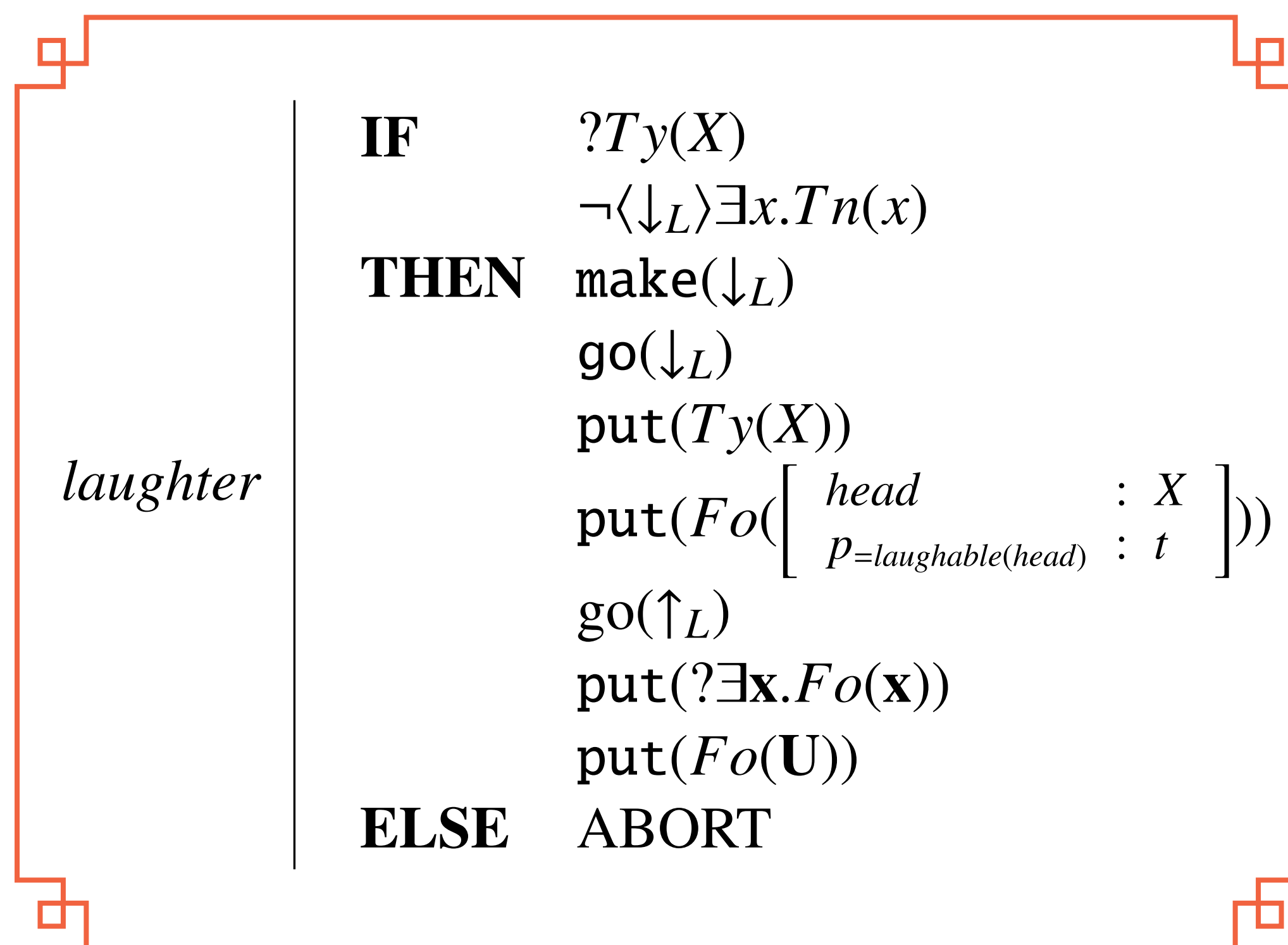
— Why is it good for modelling laughter?

Laughter is a dialogue phenomena, and incrementality is vital, so we get many things “for free” with DS.

— How can we do it?

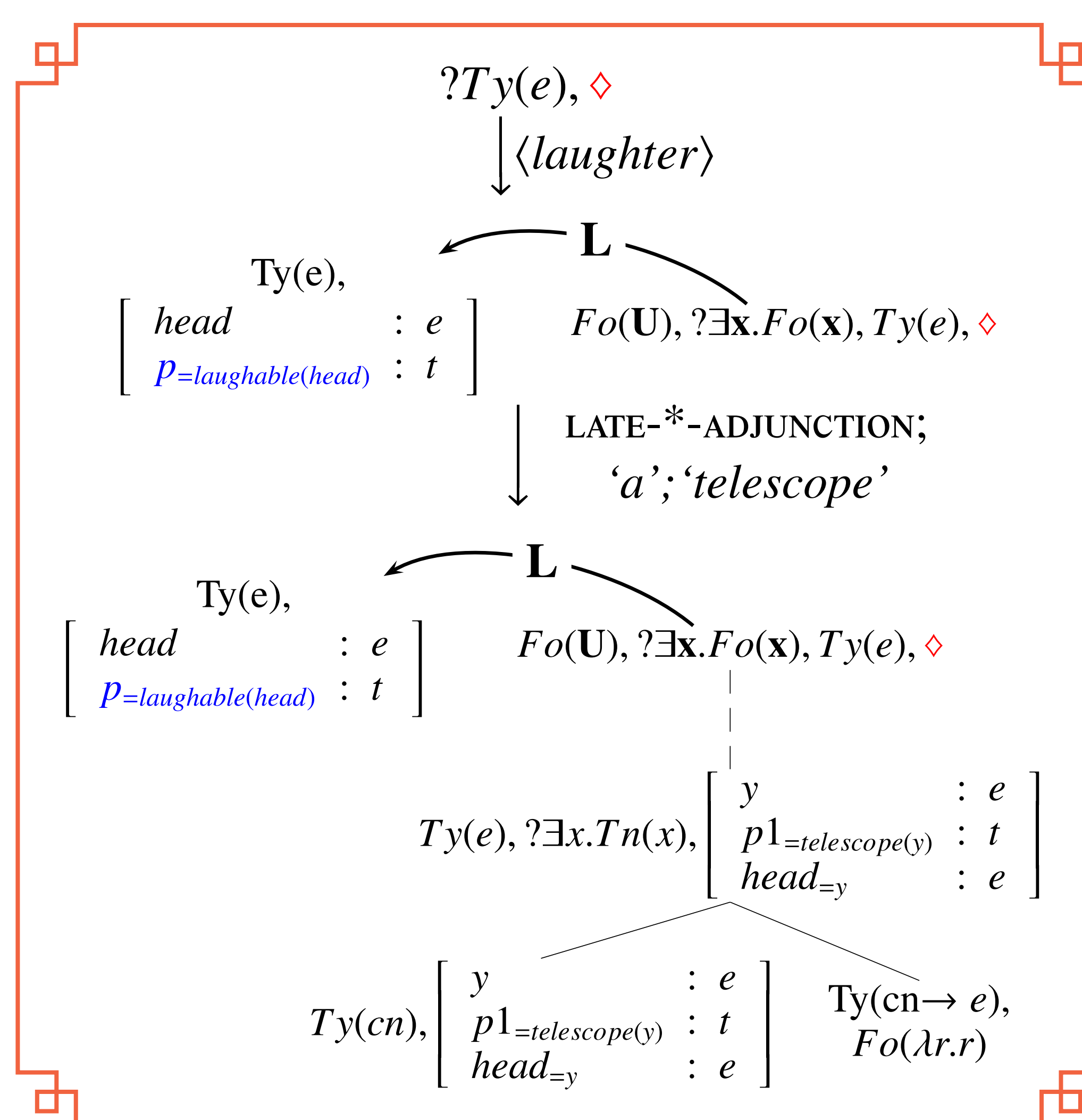
We treat laughter in a way similar to pronouns, but with additional semantic information that the referent (laughable) is laughed at.

— I already know what Dynamic Syntax is, can you be more technical?



Yes. Here we present the *lexical entry for laughter* (↑) and example of processing

(←) forward-looking laughter in DS.



GET THE PAPER AND REFERENCES:



Backward-looking

Nicola This is a lovely surprise
Thank you!
It's very nice nice of you!

Linda Have a nice day!

Nicola <laughter> Doing the hoovering
<...> [BNC JNW 372–376]

Distant backward-looking

Ian have to be away and we don't hear from you we think, [Oh you naughty boy, yes].

John [You might get worried, yes.]

Ian We'll take him off the scheme

John <laughter>

Ian because he hasn't replied to any of our correspondence

John Yes. [BNC JNW 372–376]

Forward-looking

Michael Heseltine (*talking about his experience in the hospital*): Erm e e they're all individual and mine I think, looking back, was erm erm er a light er experience and I mean as I've said, the <laughter> the erm er w this telescope they shove up you, er I mean, Chris Patton had the same thing. [BNC K6A 90]